



CUSTOMER SERVICE GUIDE



West Yorkshire
Fire & Rescue Service

Making West Yorkshire Safer
www.westyorksfire.gov.uk

Welcome to the Customer Service Guide which has information on the services provided by West Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service (WYFRS).

Within this guide you will find useful information on how services are delivered, how you can access them and how you can make yourselves safer from fire and other incidents.

Our ambition is "**Making West Yorkshire Safer**" and our aim is to "**provide an excellent fire and rescue service working in partnership to reduce death, injury, economic loss and contribute to community well being**".

To achieve this we have four priorities:



Deliver a pro-active community safety programme



Deliver a professional and resilient emergency response service



Provide a safe skilled workforce that serves the needs of a diverse community



Provide effective and ethical governance and achieve value for money

Who we are

West Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Authority is required by law to provide a number of functions including the provision of fire stations, fire engines and trained people in order to deliver a fire and rescue service. We have a duty to provide fire safety in the form of information and advice and we are the enforcing authority for fire safety legislation. We also make provision for other emergency incidents such as vehicle collisions, building collapses and chemical contaminations.

We also have a statutory duty to plan and prepare for incidents that may affect the people of West Yorkshire such as terrorist-type incidents or natural occurrences like landslips, earth tremors or wide-area flooding.

We serve a population of more than 2.2 million people within an area of 800 square miles, covering each of the five local authority districts across the county: Bradford, Calderdale, Kirklees, Leeds and Wakefield with the headquarters based at Birkenshaw.

Services we provide

We operate and provide to the people of West Yorkshire, a professional and skilled emergency response service 24 hours per day, every day of the year, as well as providing a range of other services and functions.

Preventing

Fire Prevention

We believe the most effective way to save lives, reduce injuries and other losses through fire and other emergencies is to reduce the number of incidents that occur.

We therefore instigate and support the development and implementation of a range of partnership working initiatives aimed at preventing incidents.

We do this by focusing on risk reduction for vulnerable people and by raising awareness about risk to the wider community.

Education

We:-

- engage with local and national agencies to identify good practice to improve service delivery and community safety.
- work in co-operation with the local community, talking to other organisations to identify and reduce risks from fire and other hazards which affect people's lives.

- visit schools and deliver structured educational fire safety programmes to pupils aged between nine and 10, as part of the national curriculum.

We also provide several programmes to young people, including Safety Rangers and youth inclusion initiatives undertaken in partnership with other agencies such as the police.

The highly successful 'Young Firefighters' scheme that provides young people with an academic qualification has been shown to positively influence the way firefighters are viewed by the local community.

We also have in place risk reduction teams to access and engage with those people most vulnerable to fire. They provide information, education and where necessary additional protection measures.

For FREE fire safety advice visit www.westyorkshirefire.gov.uk

Protecting

Fire Protection

We have a dedicated enforcement team which provides advice, guidance and support in discharging our statutory duties.

A fire safety officer will respond within 24 hours to all complaints of dangerous fire safety conditions.

Fire safety information is also available on our website
www.westyorkshirefire.gov.uk

We carry out operational fire risk assessments on non-domestic properties.

We have arson task forces, which work in a number of areas to reduce the large number of deliberate and nuisance fires started within West Yorkshire.

If you are concerned about a fire risk, contact your local fire station or district fire safety office. Telephone numbers can be found on our website www.westyorksfire.gov.uk or in your local telephone directory.

Fire Safety legislation and standards of service you can expect

The enactment of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 means that the Authority has direct responsibility to enforce fire safety legislation in a wider range of premises than previously permitted.

West Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Authority works to the Government's 'Regulatory Compliance Code' www.berr.gov.uk/files/file45019.pdf in relation to fire safety enforcement activity.

Responding

We fight fires

If you have a fire or suspect a fire of any size dial 999 and ask for "FIRE".

Your service provider will then put you through to the Control Centre which will request further information before mobilising appliances as required.

All front-line fire engines are equipped with state-of-the-art rescue equipment; in addition we have several specialist appliances which are mobilised to larger incidents.

On arrival at an incident, our trained firefighters will use their expertise to

extinguish the fire and endeavour to minimise further property damage.

Following a fire we will provide advice in the form of a leaflet 'After the Fire / Flood', this should assist you in getting things back to normal.

We rescue animals

By working closely with the RSPCA if an animal is in distress we may, if necessary, assist with the safe rescue of the animal.

We deal with other emergencies

We also provide other services which are referred to as 'Special Service Calls' and may be emergency or non-emergency.

There may be a charge for these services for example lift rescues, domestic flooding or making safe / removal of dangerous structures.

Resilience

We are trained and equipped to deal with a wide range of major and headline-hitting emergencies such as:

- spillages of hazardous chemicals, which endanger life or the environment
- major fires
- localised and wide-area flooding
- road traffic collisions
- aircraft incidents

- railway incidents
- building collapse

At events like this we work closely with the police, ambulance service and local councils to ensure that we deal with the incident safely and effectively.

We are 'Category One' responders under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 and have plans prepared to deal with many different emergency incidents.

As well as our own fleet, we also have equipment provided by the Government, which can assist in dealing with national incidents such as wide-area flooding, other natural disasters and terrorist attacks.

Our commitment to the environment

WYFRS is committed to safeguarding the environment. We have a responsibility to protect the community we serve and to nurture the natural environment.

We encourage environmentally-sound activity and minimisation of wasteful and damaging practices. Often a more environmentally-friendly way also means operating more cost-effectively; saving energy means saving money. We can then make better use of our resources to help the people in West Yorkshire to lead safer lives. This helps us to serve the public better in line with our aim to 'provide an excellent fire and rescue service working in partnership to reduce death, injury, economic loss and contribute to community well being.'

As we go about achieving these goals, we are increasingly aware of the impact we have upon the environment.

National standards

We constantly strive to meet high standards and to continuously improve our services. To achieve this, we regularly undertake both internal and external assurance assessments such as those shown below:

Customer Service Excellence

Since 1998 WYFRS has consistently attained the Government's national standard of Customer Service Excellence for organisations delivering public services. It is both a standard and a quality improvement tool, to assist organisations to improve service delivery to customers. It focuses on results and the service the customer actually receives for which WYFRS has been assessed as delivering continued high standards. The standard contains concepts primarily based on key drivers of satisfaction. The focus is particularly on delivery, timeliness, information, professionalism and staff attitude.

Equality and Diversity

We are committed to meeting, and where possible, exceeding the requirements of equality legislation and public sector equality duties. Achievement of the Excellent Level of the Equality Framework in 2010 remains the benchmark for future performance ensuring equality embedded in service delivery.

Customer service standards

Customer service and customer care is an important and integral part of our service and we constantly strive to deliver and maintain high standards.

We have in place customer service standards to help us achieve this, and ensure we provide a friendly, helpful, efficient and consistent service to all our customers.

Telephone standards

We will endeavour to answer telephone calls within three rings. You will be greeted with "good morning/afternoon" "fire and rescue service" and/or department and name.

Your name/organisation will be taken and passed on with any information already discussed if your call is to be transferred and you will be given the name of the person you are being transferred to.

Where it is necessary to put your call on hold you will be asked if it is convenient for you to wait and the wait will be kept to a minimum.

If we are unable to put your call through we will check if anyone else is available to help. If not, we will take a message and advise you when the contact will be available.

Written correspondence

We will endeavour to answer all letters, emails and faxes within seven working days. If we cannot, we will send out an acknowledgement letter within the same timescale until a full response can be given.

All mail received will be stamped with the date of receipt.

All correspondence received will be monitored within the individual department it is referred to.

Comments, compliments and complaints

We constantly strive to meet high standards and improve our services where possible. In order for you to help us to improve we welcome any comments or compliments you may have. If for any reason you are dissatisfied with our performance or service received, we would like to hear from you.

It is our intention to rectify all expressions of dissatisfaction at the point of service delivery. If this is not possible, our service standards officer will guide you through the procedure until a resolution is reached.

Resolution of Complaints

- Stage 1 complaint resolved at point of service delivery
- Stage 2 complaint resolved by the service standards officer
- Stage 3 complaint resolved by the authority's complaints appeals panel
- Stage 4 complaint resolved by the Local Government Ombudsman

- All correspondence will be dealt with in the strictest confidence and complaints will be acknowledged within three days of receipt.
- All complainants have the right to discuss the issue with a senior officer and, if outside normal office hours, an officer will make contact with the complainant within one hour.
- In all cases, a full reply or an indication of when a full reply can be provided will be given within seven days.

Should you wish to compliment us or make a complaint, you can:-

- Contact your local fire station, the telephone number is in the phone book and on our website.
- Contact headquarters on telephone number 01274 682311
- Ring the complaints telephone line on 01274 655873
- Email us at complaints.compliments@westyorkshirefire.gov.uk
- Full details of the complaints procedure are available on our website.
www.westyorkshirefire.gov.uk

Listening to our customers

We regularly consult with the community in order to give local people the opportunity to tell us what they think about the services provided. This information assists us to provide better and more responsive services. Feedback from consultations can be found on our website www.westyorkshirefire.gov.uk.

Fire safety advice

Make the community safer

- Contact your local fire station with details of people at risk from fire, particularly the elderly.
- If you spot a fire or genuinely believe there is a fire, call 999 and ask for 'FIRE'. Do not ring your local fire station.
- Do not make hoax calls – all calls for assistance are monitored and callers will be challenged.

Make yourself safer

- Fit smoke alarms at home and make checking your smoke alarm part of your regular household routine.
- Test your alarm - press the button until the alarm sounds; if it doesn't sound, you need to replace the battery.
- If your smoke alarm starts to bleep on a regular basis, replace the battery immediately.

How to contact us

Emergency calls

In an emergency call 999 and ask for the fire service.

West Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service

Oakroyd Hall, Bradford Road, Birkenshaw, West Yorkshire, BD11 2DY

Telephone | 01274 682311

Fax | 01274 651315

If you need to contact us regarding fire safety issues (education or legislative) out of normal office hours, you can contact our district offices or local fire stations, telephone numbers are available in the telephone directory and on our website.

Should you require this information in another format or language, please telephone 01274 682311

Further information

We aim to ensure we communicate well with our customers and make information easily accessible on our website www.westyorkshirefire.gov.uk

We support a culture of transparency, openness and accessibility and comply with the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

Should you require further information please email
information@westyorkshirefire.gov.uk



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REVISED JANUARY 2016

If you would like this information in another format or language,
please telephone **01274 682 311**

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