



RISTWATCH

RCVFD Quarterly Newsletter P. O. Box 2, Bellvue, CO 80512 Issue No. 96 October 2020

Letter from the President

Thankful: a word frequently on my heart, especially over these past six weeks. The Oxford English Dictionary defines “thankful” as being—among other descriptors—an “expression of gratitude and relief”. In considering our community, and our RCVFD firefighters, I believe that being “thankful” is quite appropriate . . . if not an understatement!

The commitment made by our RCVFD volunteer firefighters is truly honorable. In addition to the hundreds of hours of training they receive (not counting any continuing education), they maintain a necessary level of personal fitness and proficiency and unhesitatingly respond to emergent calls at all hours of the day and night. In many instances, this may be after a full shift at their “day job” or after a long day of helping a neighbor with fire mitigation.

They serve our community selflessly and, in many cases, anonymously . . . they are here for YOU and your loved ones (as well as folks just “passing through”)! They are a truly remarkable “family” of individuals . . . and they have my utmost respect!

During our recent nearby fire activities, I was not surprised when our RCVFD firefighters were tapped by outside governmental agencies to assist in critical capacities not typically fulfilled by “volunteer” organizations. I also received numerous emails and phone calls from members of the public, praising the efforts of—and appreciation for—our firefighters! I could not be any more thankful for our RCVFD volunteers and their families!

Two other things I am also thankful for are: Our local community and supporters of RCVFD. The ongoing financial support, as well as the prayers, thanks and encouragement received by RCVFD, is truly remarkable, and very much appreciated. Since 1975, RCVFD has relied solely upon the generosity of our community and supporters, with the occasional supplement from a successful grant application. If it were not for the financial generosity and relational support of our community (both immediate and extended), RCVFD would cease to exist. If this were to happen, the limited options we would then have for medical and firefighting services would be either significantly (and perpetually) more financially demanding, or they would be minimal—if even available.

Community Alerts!

Information about community events, evacuation orders, current active fires and more are delivered directly to your Inbox by signing up for Community Alerts. Just go to RCVFD.org and scroll to the very bottom of the Home Page. There you’ll enter your email address and first and last names, then click Subscribe. This is a great way to get the most up-to-date information from the RCVFD.

Continued on Page 3

Your Local "Market in a Minute"

To all our friends within the Cameron Peak Fire area we are thinking of you and praying you , your family, and your home are safe.

During this time insurance companies are under a Moratorium to not provide insurance policies until the fire is 100% contained.

As your neighbor, feel free to contact me with any questions about Real Estate updates and concerns.



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Letter from the President, cont'd.

Last, but by no means least: I am thankful for the courage and willingness of our volunteers who have “stepped up” to serve our community. Their dedication and professionalism (though they are not truly “paid” professionals) is highly commendable, and their ongoing service is personally rewarding in ways that are intangible, yet of incredible worth! I’d encourage everyone in our community to prayerfully consider serving as a volunteer with RCVFD. If you are physically able to do so, I would highly recommend that you consider contacting our Fire Chief (Jeff Elsner) and discussing what opportunities may be available for you. If you are otherwise able, RCVFD has many other opportunities to volunteer and become more familiar with others in our community, while helping to meet our collective ongoing needs. Whether it be as a “Book Bee”, “Friend of the Festival”, member of the Board of Directors, or somewhere else where you can exercise your gifts and talents, RCVFD is an integral part of our community, and I encourage you to see what opportunities to serve may be waiting for you!

Moving on to other matters...

2020 ANNUAL MEETING

Our Annual Meeting (held on the first Saturday of November) will be significantly different this year, due to the local responses to the COVID-19 virus. While we can arrange for a facility where we can meet in-person and accommodate the social distancing requirements for our typical attendance of 60 people, the majority of the RCVFD Board of Directors recommended that this year’s meeting be held virtually (via Zoom). A subsequent unofficial polling of our members was conducted via a Community Alert, which further indicated the majority of members responding preferred a virtual

meeting, as well. Accordingly, our Annual Meeting on November 7 will be held virtually (via the internet) using the Zoom teleconferencing application. Further details regarding the meeting, as well as web links to access and download the Zoom app, will be made available via a Community Alert message as we draw closer to the date of the meeting. If you are unable to connect via your computer, there will also be a toll-free number available, which you may call via your phone (landline or mobile).

I would be remiss if I did not exercise my due diligence and encourage folks to prayerfully consider supporting RCVFD financially. With the absence of this year’s Annual Festival, our annual income has been negatively impacted; with the recent fire activity, we’ve incurred additional expenses not typical in an uneventful year as well. While everyone is encouraged to respond to any one of our periodic fundraising letters, anyone at anytime may also make a donation directly to RCVFD via our web site (<https://rcvfd.org>). Two other very simple ways to contribute effortlessly include designating RCVFD as the recipient of a portion of your purchases on Amazon (<https://smile.amazon.com>) and at your local King Soopers (with your King Soopers Rewards Card account). You may also give through organizations like ColoradoGives (<https://coloradogives.org>) and Benevity (<https://benevity.org>). As the saying goes, “many hands make light work”; if everyone gives a little bit throughout the year, we can comfortably and collectively fund RCVFD’s annual budget. Any donation is always welcome and is genuinely appreciated!

If you are interested in learning more about RCVFD, our community or to ask about any opportunities for you to help, please contact me at president@rcvfd.org.

Take care, stay safe and may you and your loved ones have safe travels during the upcoming holiday season!

Will RCVFD find you when they need to? Consider purchasing a reflective sign. Just \$15! All we need is your address. Order today! Call Louise Creager at 970/217-6843.



*Kindest Regards,
Jeff Vanberry
RCVFD President*

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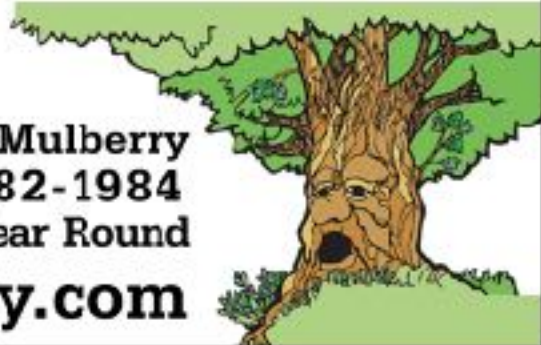


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Chief's Report

No one reading this update will be surprised to hear that the last couple of months have been very busy ones for our department. Since the beginning of August, we have responded to a total of six wildland fires. On August 2, we responded to a half-acre fire off Springtown Gulch Road on National Forest land, assisted by Loveland Fire Rescue Authority via mutual aid, as well as USFS firefighters. On August 6, a multi-mission aircraft (MMA) flight detected a lightning strike on private land, which we were able to extinguish before it expanded beyond one tree. Starting August 22, the Lewstone Fire burned 165 acres north of Rist Canyon Road near Pine Acres. On August 26 we were paged out for two lightning-caused fires at the same time: the Picnic Rock Fire near the base of the canyon in the mutual aid zone with PFA, and the Wright Fire near Station 1. We were released from Picnic Rock so that we could focus on our area, and again we were able to extinguish that fire before it expanded beyond a single tree. And of course the Cameron Peak Fire has been burning since August 13, demanding our attention several times as it repeatedly threatened our community and those of our neighboring departments with whom we provide mutual aid.

Poudre Canyon, Redfeather and Glacier View have all assisted us in the past, and of course we answered their call this year during the Cameron Peak Fire. Between our efforts at home and abroad, the Cameron Peak Fire has cost us time, fuel, equipment and wear-and-tear on our trucks. Rist Canyon VFD has done fire mitigation of about 100 homes in the Crystal Mountain area and provided hands-on training to residents in the process. We have done structure protection in our own community as well as in others. We have opened roads and scouted escape routes through private land, and have leaned heavily on the time and resources of our dedicated volunteers. Over Labor Day Weekend, the Cameron Peak fire threatened several communities at once, stretching thin the resources of the Larimer County Sheriff; so RCVFD assisted with evacuation notices throughout the western half of our response area.

We have greatly stepped up our outreach efforts, despite the challenges provided by Covid-19, by conducting online Community Meetings. We have answered residents' questions about the various fires, shared information about mitigation strategies around our homes, and brought in folks from the Type 2 team assigned to Cameron Peak. Several times the ongoing fires have interrupted or undermined these efforts, but we kept at it because of the importance of the material.

As I write this in late September, the weather is starting to cool, giving us some relief in terms of fire behavior from the Cameron Peak Fire, but the story is far from over. We continue to be committed to the safety of our community, and will respond in whatever way is needed. Let us all hope that October brings some snow!

Jeff Elsner
RCVFD Chief



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RCVFD Logo Contest

RIST CANYON VFD IS HAVING A LOGO CONTEST TO UPDATE OUR EXISTING LOGO.

The new logo will be used on our trucks, letterhead, shirts and patches for uniforms and caps. The contest is open to all residents of the RCVFD response area, from Whale Rock to Pennock Pass.

Here are the contest rules:

1. Entry must be from a resident of RCVFD's response area.
2. Logo must be easily digitized for screen printing and embroidery.
3. Entry must be submitted by December 31, 2020 at 11:59 PM.
4. The winning logo becomes the property of the RCVFD.

We are looking for a design that will be unique to our department, area, topography, people or history. For logo ideas and examples, go to www.pinterest.com/firedepartments/fire-department-logos.

The winning logo will be chosen by current active firefighters and the winner will be announced by January 31, 2021. And what does the winning entry win? Bragging rights for creating the most interesting, creative, enviable logo in all the land!

We will make patches that we will trade with other fire departments across the state, country and world, a common practice among fire departments.

We know that we have a lot of creative talent in our response area and are excited to see the fantastic entries. Our job of picking the best entry will be a hard one.

Submit your entry to: chief@rcvfd.org
Any questions, email: medical@rcvfd.org

Thank you in advance for your participation!

RCVFD Monthly Meeting Schedule

All meetings begin at 7 PM at Firehouse #1 on Rist Canyon Road

Operations —1st Wednesdays
Board Meeting—3rd Wednesdays

Fire Training—2nd Wednesdays
Medical Training—4th Wednesdays

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Three Easy Ways to Help the RCVFD



Spread the Word!

One of our biggest fundraisers is the King Soopers Rewards Card. If everyone in the Rist Canyon area used this program, it could make a HUGE difference in our fundraising. This generous program gives the RCVFD 5% of all of your purchases at King Soopers. This includes groceries, toiletries, supplies, clothing, gas and even prescriptions.

- **The process only takes a few minutes.** If you don't already have a free King Soopers Rewards Card, request one from your cashier or the service desk. Once that's done, jump on your computer and go to www.kingsoopers.com/communityrewards. Click on the link to enroll.
- Set up an account, or sign in if you already have one. Then click on Community Rewards from the list on the left. Use the "Find an Organization" box to enter our NPO number, **YP687** and click Search. It will verify that you have selected the RCVFD. Click "Enroll" and you're done!
- **Always scan your Rewards Card when shopping.** As a Rewards member, you'll save money and earn points towards gas discounts; and the RCVFD will receive 5% of your purchases. If you have any questions about the King Soopers Rewards Program, contact them at 800/576-4377. **And thank you for telling your neighbors to sign up, too!**

Colorado Gives Day is
Tuesday, December 8th,
but you can donate through Colorado
Gives any time of the year! Please
Spread the WORD to family and friends!



It's easy—just post this link:
<http://coloradogives.org/RistCanyonVolunteerFireDepartment>
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View of the Cameron Peak Fire from a
high point. Unless noted, photos
throughout this issue courtesy of
Ruben Arrieta, RCVFD



Letter from the Vice President

Lions and Tigers and Bears! Oh My!

Dorothy, Scarecrow, Tinman, Lion, from “The Wizard of Oz”

Pandemic and Fires and Evacuations! Oh Crap!

HJ, from “The RCVFD Board of Directors”

Since our last Ristwatch newsletter, which was in July 2020—three months ago:

Pandemic: There were about 130,000 total deaths in USA on July 1, 2020 and now over 200,000—while millions in the USA experience negatively impacted health and finances. This includes some of our friends and neighbors in the Rist Canyon area.

Fires: There were six fires near our general Rist Canyon area—including the Cameron Peak Fire, which did not exist in July and is now over 125,000 acres! It is the fifth largest wildfire in the history of Colorado.

Evacuations: Two mandatory evacuations—one due to the Lewstone Fire and one due to the Cameron Peak Fire.

The RCVFD (Rist Canyon Volunteer Fire Department) has done so much for the community in so many ways, including responding safely to medical emergencies in these pandemic times, fighting and mitigating fires and assisting with evacuations.

To keep the community informed, the RCVFD leadership has reached out to the community with various methods, for example:

RCVFD Chief Jeff Elsner has sent out community alert messages with status reports about fires and RCVFD activities; and

RCVFD Assistant Chief Phil Benstein has led many community zoom meetings about the response to the fire and ways to mitigate fires close to your home.

On the RCVFD.org webpage, there is a wealth of information related to improving the *protection of your home from wildfires*. Please see <https://rcvfd.org/emergency-preparedness/wildfire-home>.

To help RCVFD help you, we need your support to provide the supplies and equipment we need. Please go to our webpage, RCVFD.org, then click on “RCVFD Fundraising”, then click on “Donate.” Please recall that due to the pandemic we had to cancel our annual fundraising Mountain Festival this year, and many RCVFD residents have had to deal with financial hardships. Please donate generously if you can! Thank you.

H.J. Siegel,

VP of RCVFD Board of Directors

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Daylight Saving Time
ends on Sunday,
November 1st. Don't
forget to set your clocks
back and change the batteries
in your smoke detectors!

How to Report a Fire

Greetings RCVFD Area Residents,

This fire season has been more active than any since 2012. Some fires are difficult to locate, and then find the best route to access it. This process can be quite time consuming, especially after dark.

Here's what you can do to help us get on a fire faster:

1. If you see a fire or column of smoke at some distance, first, note your location. If you are at an address in our response area that will do it. If you have a GPS or a cell phone with GPS and compass, note your GPS coordinates and write them down.
2. Then, with your compass, shoot a bearing from your location to the fire and write it down.
3. Make your best estimate of distance from you to the fire and write it down. (See Page 15.)
4. If you have a regular compass, shoot your bearing with it. Be careful about using any compass near metal objects such as setting it on your car hood. Even a large belt buckle can throw your compass off. (Try it with a nail—you can make the needle spin.)
5. Now call 911 and make sure you give dispatch all your information. With two or more people reporting from different locations we can plot your lines on our map, and where the lines cross, that's our fire.
6. Try it a few times so you are ready when you need it.

*Thanks for your help.
Larry Monesson, RC 401
RCVFD*

*RCVFD crew at the
Lewstone Fire in Pine
Acres. Saturday, August
22nd was spent doing
evacuations and
structure protection.
Sawyer work clearing
roads and flagging
remote routes was
performed on Sunday,
August 23rd. Photo
courtesy of Carol Dollard,
Captain, RCVFD*





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How To Estimate Distances

LEARN HOW TO ESTIMATE DISTANCE QUICKLY AND EASILY

Did you know that your arm is about ten times longer than the distance between your eyes? That fact, together with a bit of math, can be used to estimate distances between you and any object of approximately known size.

Imagine, for example, that you're standing on the side of a hill, trying to decide how far it is to the top of a low hill on the other side of the valley. Just below the hilltop is a barn, which you feel reasonably sure is about 100 feet wide on the side facing you.

- Hold one arm straight out in front of you, elbow straight, thumb pointing up.
- Close one eye, and align one edge of your thumb with one edge of the barn.
- Without moving your head or arm, switch eyes, now sighting with the eye that was closed and closing the other.
- Your thumb will appear to jump sideways as a result of the change in perspective.
- How far did it move? (Be sure to sight the same edge of your thumb when you switch eyes.)
- Let's say it jumped about five times the width of the barn, or about 500 feet. Now multiply that figure by the handy constant 10.
- Now you get the distance between you and the barn—5,000 feet, or about one mile.

Thank You RCVFD



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With a little practice, you'll find that you can perform a quick thumb-jump estimate in just a few seconds, and the result will usually be more accurate than an out-and-out guess. At a minimum, it will provide some assurance that the figure is in the ballpark—which, in many cases, is as close as you need to get. This is a very handy trick if you're hiking or out in nature, or even a photographer. (Or reporting a fire!-Ed.)

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June 19, 2020*



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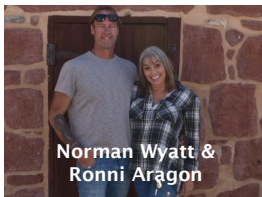
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3.64 acres tucked in the aspens overlooking the creek is where this cabin is located in Poudre Springs. Behind locked gates, this 3 bed/1 bath cabin could be the getaway you're looking for! Needs some TLC, but lots of history here & offered at \$289,000.



*RCVFD sawyers
building fire line on the
Cameron Peak fire.*

Notes from Your RCVFD Area Representatives

Welcome to Fall: The Cameron Peak Fire has brought back many memories to those of us who were here during the 2012 High Park Fire. If you have not been following the fire on Facebook through Cameron Peak Fire go to our web site at www.RCVFD.org for updates and information on getting your property better protected in case the fire should come to our area. There are a couple of videos with excellent information. Also, be sure to sign up to receive up-to-date notifications regarding evacuation notices. Larimer County will deliver Reverse 911 calls to your land line but not your cell phone unless you sign up. This is a FREE service so don't delay. Why not take the time now to sign up with all your family cell phones, in addition to verifying they have the correct land line number. Stay Well and Be Safe.

*Louise Creager
Stratton Park Area Rep*



A smoky day in Rist Canyon.

September 17, from the camp trailer on the edge of the hay field west of Loveland. Not much smoke today, nice breeze, warm and dry. Staying busy to keep the fire out of mind. The on-line community meetings inspired me to clean up the tall grass and brush around my Buckhorn home and move the wood pile away from the door. The place never looked so good. It was a shame to leave it behind on Labor Day Monday. The dog's still out of sorts, the cat's lost and it gets hot down here. But, with luck, when this is published the threat will have passed and we all will have returned to the Buckhorn.

The volunteer fire fighters are probably working today using the equipment you have supplied with your donations to protect as much property as is possible. Remember this . . . fast, good and cheap . . . pick two. If it's fast and good, it isn't cheap. The RCFVD needs the best equipment in order to respond fast. Please donate what you can as soon as you can. Come home Mrs. Kitty.

*Don and Briggs
Upper Buckhorn Area Rep*

Hello, One and All. Obviously, things have been hectic as of late. This is my first experience with wildland fires. It is an education that I never expected. However, when you move to Colorado, it becomes part of your life. With that, let me express my heartfelt sympathy to anyone who has been impacted by this fire. I encourage everyone to sign up for all alert systems; links are on the RCVFD website. Your safety is paramount in these situations. Take heed of evacuations. First responders care about everyone's personal safety and homes. Stay safe and take care!

*Tim Stratman
Stove Prairie Area Rep*



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Notes from Your RCVFD Area Representatives, cont'd.

This year has produced five yak calves so far; we are expecting two more, but at this point it's likely that those two mamas are taking a year off. The yak calves hang out together and run and play in between feedings, often joining the yak adults down by the creek in the early afternoons, which sometimes causes a bit of a roadblock as recreators pull over to take photos.



Although our barn cats have kept the rodent population in check since we moved here six years ago, this year has proven to be a bit much for them. Mice seem to be especially abundant, and they just can't keep up. Not to worry—enter the first snake we have encountered on our property to date! This was a good-sized bullsnake who dropped by to assist in the rodent control endeavors. One of our barn cats (Luna) discovered him in the barn and wasn't quite sure what to think. She certainly didn't appreciate the hissing and striking!

My husband gently moved him via rake to the grassy hill nearby, where he continued his dramatic performance for a while, but finally slithered off and hopefully is still eating his fill of rodents. I was especially impressed by his fierceness—if I hadn't already determined for sure that he was a bullsnake, I would have been convinced that he was a rattler.



In addition to rodents, we have encountered quite a few bears this year as well. Although we've never had a bear problem since our livestock guardian dogs keep all predators at bay, several neighbors are waging an ongoing battle to keep them out of garages, houses, cars and dumpsters. Our male Colorado Mountain Dog (Zeus) somehow managed to get his ear torn in half one day, and we suspect he may have been swiped at by a



bear. At least that's his story. One morning we woke up to find a bear trapped high up in a tree bordering our pasture, with the Colorado Mountain Dogs barking like crazy on one side of the fence, and the herd of yaks hemming him in on the other side of the fence. When the bear finally decided to make a run for it, the yaks were in hot pursuit, but he managed to slip away unharmed.

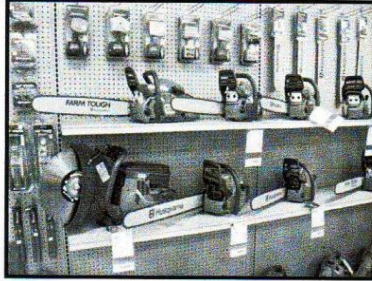
As I write this, our area has just been taken off mandatory evacuation status and gone back to voluntary evacuation status. The Cameron Peak fire is far from extinguished, and the skies are still smoky, but we're out of the danger zone for now. My heart goes out to those who weren't so lucky, and I hope for an early, heavy snow that will put a complete end to this fire.

*Raina Clingan
Lower Buckhorn Area Rep.*

Poudre Valley



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Please submit business ads
and images in pdf format.

**The deadline for the
January Ristwatch is
December 21st.**

Evacuation Checklist

This handy evacuation checklist came from the U. S. Forest Service, modified slightly:

Before the emergency:

1. Take photos or video the interior and exterior of your home and property to document valuables and assets for a possible insurance claim.
2. Have at least 1/2 tank of fuel in your vehicle at all times, outfitted with a flashlight and portable radio.
3. Make a prior arrangement with a friend or transport service to help you with loading or driving a second or third vehicle, or to help evacuate large animals such as horses and other livestock.
4. Keep a suitcase packed for each family member, filled with season-appropriate clothing, jackets, sweatshirts, extra shoes and toiletries.
5. Maintain a phone list and address book of family, friends and neighbors.
6. Make a list of special or valuable items that you want to take. Doing this before the emergency allows you time to think clearly.

Immediately before or during evacuation:

1. Gather medications, extra eyeglasses or contacts, hearing aids and other medical devices.
2. Round up your pets: get them secured and ready to go into the car with no way of escape before they are loaded into the car. This is especially important with cats. Have pet carriers, leashes, food bowls, food, litter boxes, litter, medications and other pet needs ready to go and ready for car.
3. Gather important paper files, back up disks and plug-in USB drives and pack in a box, ready to go. Include such things as homeowner's, auto, life insurance and medical insurance policies, bank records, legal documents, passports, licenses and the phone and address lists you prepared. Some of these items can also be stored in a fireproof safe or fireproof bunker.
4. Pack up computers, laptops, notepads and cell phones. (Note: Don't disconnect your internet until the last minute so you will continue to receive alerts about the emergency.)
5. Gather photograph albums, photo CDs, framed photos and valuable artwork. Have these ready, packed and stored in a secure place to go immediately into car, or store in a fireproof safe or offsite location.
6. Gather cameras, expensive jewelry and other valuables.
7. If you have enough room, consider a few items from your camping or picnic supplies, such as pillows and light blankets, in case you have to sleep outside or in your car while evacuated.
8. If you have time, send an email to friends and family about your intentions.
9. Gather all household and car keys, wallet, purse and any credit cards you keep in a drawer that you might need.
10. Pack other special or valuable items. Refer to your prepared list.
11. Close all windows, close all interior doors, remove curtains or other flammables from windows.
12. Turn off propane gas at tank, remove BBQ propane tank, take it with you or store in a secure place such as a bunker or away from your house.

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If we missed you, please call 970/419-0397.**

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