



CONTRA COSTA COUNTY FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT

July 10, 2018

TO: Board of Directors

FROM: Jeff Carman, Fire Chief

RE: Fire Chief's Report

- Fire Station 16 (Lafayette): Site work continues on schedule. The retaining wall and fence are completed; and within 30 days, the foundation should be completed.
- Fire Station 70 (San Pablo): The architectural drawings are 99% complete. We are having difficulty getting the completed set of construction documents from the architect which is all we are waiting on to submit our application for a building permit.
- The ambulance transport program continues to operate at very high levels of performance. Our county contract requires ambulances to be on-scene within 11 minutes/45 seconds, 90% of the time, in all areas except the City of Richmond where our requirement is 10 minutes, 90% of the time. Countywide, we are arriving within our timeframes 96% of the time. Our average response time county wide is 4 minutes/30 seconds, except in Richmond where our average is 4 minutes/7 seconds.
- We have made several changes in our fire prevention bureau in order to reach current status on our fire inspections. We have four (4) new fire inspectors that were recently hired, and two new fire inspectors that are completing their probationary period. All of those inspectors have been assigned to catch up on past due inspections, and two inspectors from another program have been temporarily reassigned to join them. In the past, we have assisted East Contra Costa Fire Protection District with their fire inspections through a contractual agreement; however we have notified them that they will need to begin doing their own inspections as soon as possible which will allow our inspectors to concentrate on inspections within our District's jurisdiction. All schools that were past due are now up to date, and inspectors have started inspecting the residential occupancies beginning with the oldest past due dates first. Our goal is to have all of those inspections up-to-date by the end of the year. I will report back on our progress in September when we will also know whether or not additional personnel are needed in order to keep up with the workload.

- The Fire District has been extremely busy over the last several weeks, with several greater alarm fires in and around our District. I am extremely proud of our personnel for the great jobs they have done to keep major incidents from escalating. That being said, I want the Board to be aware that we have experienced many “near misses” over the last several months, many of which have occurred in the last few weeks. Our apparatus and personnel have been involved in several auto-accidents, one of our engine companies had gunshots come very close to them, our personnel have experienced burns and cuts, and two of our companies were burned over at a multi-alarm fire in Antioch. In all cases, our personnel could have experienced serious injury or death, but, fortunately, none of them did!
- The Fire District provides aid to the fire districts and departments throughout the county, and, in-turn, we receive aid from them. During the last couple of months, we have received much aid from our neighbors for which I am thankful. However, we are concerned because we provide East Contra Costa Fire Protection District (ECCFPD) with four times as much aid compared to what we receive. The issue is that the ECCFPD is severely under-resourced, and due to their geographical location, any aid they need in a timely manner must come from ConFire. While Chief Helmick and I did collaborate to keep the aid given/received as close as possible, the last couple of months have seen a significant increase in aid provided. Chief Helmick and I continue to meet to try and identify ways to reduce their dependence on ConFire. This last week, we had to deny aid to ECCFPD as we had several major incidents in our own district. We have a consultant studying our historical call volume to determine the minimum number of resources we need to safely protect our own fire district which will determine how much aid we can provide to others. This may result in the need for ConFire to deny aid more often than we have in the past.
- The District’s Operations Chief, Ed Gonzales, retired at the end of last month after almost 30 years with the Fire District. We have appointed an Interim Operations Chief, Battalion Chief Chuck Stark, who will remain in the position until the first quarter of 2019 when we will begin a formal recruitment for Assistant Fire Chief of our Emergency Operations Division. In addition, we promoted Captain Will Pigeon to the role of Assistant Fire Chief of our Communications Division.
- The Fire District continues to meet with PG&E regarding our concerns about them deploying private fire suppression crews as well as shutting off power during climate driven events. We also continue to work with legislators and the governor regarding making changes to our aging mutual-aid system to adapt to our changing climate.