



CONTRA COSTA COUNTY FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT

December 11, 2018

TO: Board of Directors

FROM: Jeff Carman, Fire Chief

RE: Fire Chief's Report

- Fire Station 16 (Lafayette): The walls are up and the roof trusses have been set. The plumbing and electrical work is in progress on the interior of the building. Given the wet weather and other pressures, there could be some delay in the final completion. We are currently targeting a completion date in early March 2019.
- Fire Station 70 (San Pablo): This project is currently out to bid with our established list of prequalified contractors. The required pre-bid meeting was held on November 28, and the project is generating much interest. It is highly likely we will extend the bid opening into January in order to receive as many qualified and competitive bids as possible. We are scheduled to bring the bid award to the Board in February 2019.
- The District has several pieces of structural firefighting apparatus on order. Beginning in January 2019, multiple pieces will begin to arrive. After being outfitted, these apparatus will be assigned to stations throughout the District. This will allow us to place aged apparatus with high mileage into reserve status.
- The District will take delivery of two new wildland vehicles in January 2019. Following another devastating year of fires, these new vehicles will enhance our capabilities for wildland firefighting before we enter the next fire season.
- Academy 52, the first accredited academy in the history of the Fire District, continues to move forward. Six recruits have departed the academy, and 25 recruits remain. It is not unusual to see a 20% attrition rate over the course of an academy. The recruits are scheduled to graduate in February 2019 and will fill existing vacancies and staff Engine 16 in Lafayette.
- For the past six months, Battalion Chief Chuck Stark has done a great job as our Interim Assistant Fire Chief of Emergency Operations. I am pleased to report that Chief Stark applied for the full time position and was chosen to be our permanent Operations Chief effective December 1.

- With the onset of winter pattern weather, the Fire District has officially declared that the 2018 wild land fire season has ended. As we welcome the winter storms, it should be noted that there is a significant threat of flooding and debris flows, especially over the massive burn scars that were created this year. The Board is aware that this last fire season has been the most devastating on record. There are many lessons to be learned, and the District has already begun to work on making improvements prior to the start of the next fire season. We have had success with pre-positioning apparatus, but the process is cumbersome and needs to be refined. Our personnel were spread very thin, and we will be examining our staffing practices to see if we can reduce the impacts on our personnel. The fire season began very early this year, and we intend to be prepared if it starts early again in 2019.
- The Fire District currently has a total of 8,013 mandated occupancy inspections to conduct on an annual basis in our Code Enforcement Unit, some of which take an hour and some that take several days (high rises, etc.). This does not include other mandated inspections in the unit for community care licensing, fire code complaints received, and business license/permits referred by cities, among other various types. There were 175 inspections remaining to be completed as of December 1, and we anticipate these will all be completed by the end of the calendar year bringing us to 100% compliance with the state mandated inspection program for 2018.
- I would like to give special thanks to our crews for their work both in the District and around the state and nation throughout 2018. Our personnel responded to major wildland fire incidents including the Carr Fire in Redding; Mendocino Fire Complex; Camp Fire in Paradise; Woolsey Fire in Ventura County; and several other state mutual aid assignments. Our personnel also participated in six pre-positioning task forces within the Operational Area; and, for a 24-hour period, our agency supplied a five-engine strike team to the Marsh Fire in Morgan Territory early this summer when Cal Fire was in maximum drawdown due to statewide fire activity. In addition, some of our personnel responded to hurricanes on the east coast as part of FEMA Urban Search & Rescue Task Force 4. Every year, the job of firefighting becomes more complex, and our call volume continues to rise more quickly than we can add additional resources. We also experienced a few “near misses” in 2018 and had several greater alarm fires that taxed our resources as never before.