



CONTRA COSTA COUNTY FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT

January 19, 2021

TO: Board of Directors

FROM: Lewis T. Broschard III, Fire Chief

RE: Fire Chief's Report

- COVID-19 Update. EMS calls are trending with normal seasonal levels through early January. Increases in the number of personnel out with flu-like symptoms, as well as personnel testing positive for COVID or having to be taken off duty for exposures, is causing staffing issues in District operations and ambulance transport operations. So far, we continue to manage the vacancies with voluntary and mandatory overtime. Rapid antigen testing is assisting us in making determinations on return to work protocols.
- COVID-19 Vaccination Update. We completed the fourth in a series of four first-round vaccination clinics for patient-contact employees on January 7. Our eligible employees were offered the Moderna vaccine in clinics conducted by Contra Costa Health Services and hosted alternatively by Con Fire and San Ramon Valley Fire. Second doses will be made available the last week of January into the first week of February – not less than 28 days since the first dose.
- Public Vaccination Clinics. We continue to work with Public Health on staffing and implementing a vaccine clinic to assist in increasing the total number of vaccines administered on a daily basis.
- Antigen Testing Kits Available. We are implementing a “tele-test” (telehealth) option for on duty personnel who develop symptoms after hours or on weekends. During regular business hours, antigen testing will continue to take place at Fire District Administration, as per the current routine. Rapid antigen tests are powerful tools – providing results in just 15 minutes – and allow us to quickly identify positive cases and potential exposures instead of waiting three or more days for a PCR result. They also play a role for cases where symptoms develop after a vaccination.
- 2021 Operational Planning. Conducted later than normal due to COVID related activities and the continued late fire season, District leadership conducted planning for fiscal year 2021, finalizing this year's plan in January. The plan will guide our normal operational goals and objectives for 2021.

- Fire District Annexation Study. Phase II of the Fire District Consolidation Study initiative, examining the two potential annexations in great detail, is ongoing. We expect results of Phase II to be available for decision making in mid-2021.
- Operations Updates. Our Live Find, Search, and Rescue Canine Program is progressing well with dog handler Firefighter Tony Vasta and partner “Bonus” having been matched on December 11, 2020, the day both graduated from the Search Dog Foundation Handlers Course. Bonus and Tony are training multiple days a week in preparation for their official federal and state certification tests that will be conducted in the next few months. This powerful new search and rescue team is expected to be available for responses after successfully completing their certification tests.



Extended maintenance for Con Air 1 has delayed planned hoist training which is now expected to begin in the second half of January with completion for pilots and crews sometime in spring. With Con Air 1's return from maintenance this month and the anticipated hoist-mission addition later this spring, we are opening a recruiting process for the REACH Air Ambulance Partnership next month to add to our bench of flight-qualified fire captains/engineers.

Based on the success of the first year of Crew 12 and our new Fire Control Worker program, the District is now in the recruitment process for 2021. Applications are now being accepted with interviews planned for next month. For the program's

second year, we plan to expand it by standing up two complete crews as we reenter peak fire season later this spring.

- Alliance Ambulance Staffing. In response to system impacts related to COVID (an increase in total call volume, increased numbers of staff off duty, and patient offload time issues), we will be adding Basic Life Support (BLS) capacity on an as needed basis. A BLS unit consists of two Emergency Medical Technicians, as opposed to one paramedic and one EMT in our normal deployment model. The result will ensure adequate capacity for less critical transport needs while maintaining availability of paramedic ambulances to respond to emergency calls.
- Fire Prevention Updates. As part of its ongoing effort to mitigate wildfire risks by better tracking causes of such fires, our Fire Prevention Bureau has implemented a data-tracking system to evaluate all exterior fires. A dashboard (pictured below) has also been created for a monthly overview of year-to-date accomplishments in the Bureau.

Review of our 2020 code enforcement inspection performance reveals 100% of all state-mandated occupancy inspections were conducted before the end of the year. This is a significant accomplishment due to inspectors being removed from field operations in the first few months of the pandemic.



- Communications Update. Late last year, our assistant chief recruitment effort resulted in a selection for this critical position. The candidate is undergoing a background investigation which is expected to be concluded this month.

- Training and Safety Updates.

Con Fire continues to focus on training and professional development while persevering through the pandemic. The Training and Safety Division has implemented a series of measures and adapted facilities to support in-person training while providing for safety of personnel to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

More than 30 fire service and law enforcement leaders from Con Fire and the County participated in a virtual Unified Command and Major Incident Management Training last month.

Academy 54's firefighters and firefighter paramedics completed their 10-month probationary testing and are on track to complete their probationary year next month.

Ten Con Fire personnel participated in Rescue Systems 1 Training last month. This specialized rescue training includes collapse and entrapment rescue techniques utilizing shoring, ladders, and rope systems. The class is pictured below.

