



CONTRA COSTA COUNTY FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT

June 22, 2021

TO: Board of Directors

FROM: Lewis T. Broschard III, Fire Chief

RE: Fire Chief's Report

- Operations/Fire Weather Update. As part of ongoing efforts to increase seasonal fire staffing, we began staffing an additional Type 3 wildland engine with three personnel daily from June 1 through October 31. The engine will be housed at Fire Station 81 in Antioch as a second crew and identified as "Engine 300."
- Fireworks continue to present a significant challenge to the protection of life and property. Following the Board of Supervisors' approval of the new, strengthened fireworks ordinance on June 8, Con Fire hosted a joint law and fire media event designed to reinforce fireworks dangers and highlight enforcement efforts. District Attorney Diana Becton and several police agencies participated. The event was covered by every Bay Area television station, KCBS Radio, and several print outlets including the East Bay Times. Our public education efforts will continue through the Independence Day holiday weekend.
- On Memorial Day, a fireworks-caused fire in Antioch resulted in the destruction of eight apartments in two buildings and the displacement of some 40 residents. A swift and overwhelming response prevented the fire's spread to remaining complex buildings. Investigation revealed the fire was caused by a single pyrotechnic device thrown into grass behind the complex by a paroled felon who was also in possession of additional fireworks and a firearm. The suspect was arrested by Con Fire investigators and transported to Martinez Detention Facility by Antioch Police.
- Plans to deploy the new ladder truck at Fire Station 70 in San Pablo are moving ahead with an expected go-live date sometime in early July. This will replace the two-person EMS squad. Funding for two positions on the ladder truck will continue to be supported directly by the City of San Pablo through their sales tax measure.
- AB 389 Update. This bill passed the State Assembly earlier this month and now goes to a Senate subcommittee for a hearing. The bill would authorize a county to contract for emergency ambulance services with a fire protection district that is governed by the county's Board of Supervisors and provides those services, in whole or in part, through a written subcontract with a private ambulance service.

- Fire District Annexation Feasibility Study Update. After today's presentation outlining preliminary study findings, we expect to be able to schedule a presentation by contractor AP Triton of the final report at the July 13 Board meeting.
- COVID-19 Update. After a relatively quiet period, we experienced two exposures earlier this month. Fortunately, one of the three employees involved was fully vaccinated and was able to remain on duty. Two had not been vaccinated and exhibited symptoms. As a result, they were taken off duty and placed on leave. These exposures served as a reminder of the need for continued vigilance even as we move to greater normalcy.

As of this writing, we are monitoring the situation regarding changes to masking and other protective measures relative to COVID-19 and preparing to make changes, as necessary.

- Ambulance Transport Update. Emergency ambulance transports have almost returned to pre-pandemic levels and are currently at 95% of historical averages.
- Zonehaven Evacuation System Update. This important project, which will significantly improve fire and law agencies' ability to plan, organize and conduct evacuations across the County, continues to progress. Initial planning meetings are being scheduled with our city law partners and the software provider to establish particular evacuation zones and egress routes for neighborhoods.
- Fire Investigation Unit Update. Our fire investigators have made multiple arson arrests within the past four weeks which all involved exterior fires or grass fires being intentionally set. In addition, our investigators conducted a buy/bust of fireworks in the city of Pittsburg in early June. The original "buy" led them to two additional residences in the city of Pittsburg. Several thousand dollars' worth of fireworks were confiscated at each residence.
- The NuStar fire investigation report was made public and discussed at the May 25 Industrial Safety Committee of the Board of Supervisors. Other presentations have been requested for the CAER Safety Summit and the County Hazardous Materials Commission. I would like to thank the fire investigation unit, our fire prevention bureau, and the other agencies involved in this lengthy and complex investigation. The 500 plus page report is available on the District's website: <https://www.cccfpd.org/NuStar-Incident-Investigative-Report>.
- What fire season might look like in 2021 – see photo below.

This photo is from a recent fire on the former Delta View Golf Course in Pittsburg. Note the explosive nature of the tree/brush behind our dozer. This is what years of drought does to trees and brush – extremely low fuel moisture!

