



# CONTRA COSTA COUNTY FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT

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April 9, 2024

TO: Board of Directors

FROM: Lewis Broschard, Fire Chief

RE: Fire Chief's Report

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## **Operations Section Update**

### **Field Operations**

- Two new Assistant Fire Chiefs were promoted to fill vacancies created by recent retirements.
  - Chief Dominic Ciotola boasts an impressive 32 years with the District, beginning his journey as a 19-year-old reserve firefighter with our predecessor agency, Contra Costa Consolidated Fire Protection District, and then getting hired full-time by the former Riverview Fire Protection District in 1991. He has ascended through the ranks, demonstrating exceptional leadership and expertise. Chief Ciotola has served in the very first group of paramedics in our District; he has valuable experience as a truck officer and has contributed significantly during his 12-year tenure as a Chief Officer, notably in policy development as the lead of the truck committee.
  - Chief Whit MacDonald brings 17 years of dedicated service to our District, following his service in the United States Coast Guard. His contributions have been instrumental, particularly in expanding our District's marine program, and he currently serves as the chairperson for the Statewide FIREScope marine group.



- Two new Battalion Chiefs were promoted to fill the vacancies created by the aforementioned promotions. Chief Andy Bozzo has over 20 years of fire service experience with 17 of those years in our District. Chief Bozzo has been involved in the rescue program and is one of the co-founders of Tablet Command, an innovative tablet-based fireground accountability and tracking tool now used in many fire departments across the country. Chief Dennis Buchholtz, a veteran of the Marine Corps, recently celebrated 20 years of service with the District and was most recently a Fire Captain serving at Fire Station 10 in Concord and Fire Station 70 in San Pablo.



- Significant incidents in March included:
  - A commercial fire at the Food Max in San Pablo. The fire was started in an aisle of snack food, progressed quickly, but was ultimately held in check by the automatic sprinklers until firefighters could extinguish it. The store suffered smoke damage, but property loss was kept to a minimum.
  - A significant vehicle accident occurred March 15 on Vasco Road with numerous cars involved, two of which caught fire. There were a total of five patients and three air ambulances were dispatched to the incident.
  - A residence was gutted as a result of an illegal marijuana grow operation in Antioch. The illegal marijuana grow operations are just as prevalent now as they were before the legalization of marijuana. These incidents require separate strategy and tactics to extinguish the fire and ensure the safety of firefighters during operations due to the extensive illegal renovations inside these homes to support the grow operation. There were no injuries reported.
  - An out-of-season vegetation fire consumed almost 20 acres of marsh and tidal land in Antioch, just northwest of downtown. The stubborn three alarm fire took hours to bring under control, sending thick black smoke into the sky throughout the incident. Luckily there was very little wind and what wind there was took the smoke out and over the water away from homes and businesses. The cause is under investigation.

- Crews assisted in rescuing a small child from a tree. The 3 year old managed to climb almost 20 feet up a large tree before needing to be rescued. He was all smiles when firefighters got him to the ground.



#### Training and Safety Division

- The operations section staff Chief Officers attended a three day leadership symposium in Portland, Oregon.
- Organizational DEI training was completed in March.
- Academy 60 is in week 12 and progressing well with 13 firefighter recruits. We anticipate the academy to be completed by the end of May.
- Personnel assigned to stations with Utility Task Vehicles (UTV) completed off-road driver training. UTVs are used for remote area rescues and hand crew operations.

#### Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Division

- An additional registered nurse was hired to assist with quality improvement oversight and training. This is the second nurse hired this fiscal year to work toward improving overall EMS contract compliance and quality of care.
- Fitch and Associates was hired to audit our emergency ambulance deployment model to identify additional methods to measure response time compliance given the current state of hospital delays and EMS system wide constraints.

- A tentative agreement was reached with American Medical Response to be our Alliance subcontractor in anticipation of the District submitting a bid on the County's Emergency Ambulance RFP later this year.
- Stryker Power Load gurney systems were installed in 60 ambulances to assist crews with loading gurneys into the ambulances. This represents a significant capital investment to reduce back injuries and other issues related to lifting gurneys into the back of ambulances.
- Twelve firefighters continue to progress through their paramedic training at Contra Costa College in San Pablo. The need to increase paramedics without improved external recruitment is assisted by this new program at the college and represents a valuable addition in our effort to maintain paramedic service at the District.

### Special Operations

- The purchase order was finally secured for the additional fire/rescue boat that will eventually service the area of Discovery Bay. Estimated two year delivery time.

## **Advanced Planning Section Update**

### Fire Prevention Bureau

- The Bureau recently hired two new Fire Inspector I's which have been training under the supervision of the Training Captain. We anticipate these personnel to be in the field in mid-April.
- Wildfire mitigation and fuel reduction work continues with Crew 12 and Powers Forestry working on projects submitted in the public web-based portal for the CCC Wildfire Mitigation Program.
- The Lafayette/Walnut Creek Shaded Fuel Break has completed almost 70 acres in the first 60 days. The contractor is chipping onsite where they have access to the chipper. In limited access areas based on terrain, pile burning will start in April with the assistance of Crew 12. We are currently working on all the permits required for pile burning.



## **Administration Section Update**

### **Support Services Division**

- The Fire Station 14 apparatus bay and front driveway replacement project began last week. The District anticipates this project will take three months to complete. Fire Station 14 in Martinez is temporarily closed while this work occurs. The truck and engine from Fire Station 14 have been temporarily relocated to Station 12 in Martinez. Station 12 was previously occupied by the District's handcrew. In preparation for this project, the handcrew moved to the Byron Wildland Fire Center (formerly known as the Byron Boys Ranch) a few weeks ago.
- The emergency generator replacement projects at Fire Station 2 (Pleasant Hill) and Fire Station 81 (Antioch) have begun. The District anticipates the project to be completed by the beginning of June.
- The District is in the process of replacing the roofs at Fire Stations 10 (Concord) and Fire Station 5 (Pleasant Hill). The contractor started the installation of the roof at Fire Station 10 a few weeks ago. Once complete, the contractor will move to Fire Station 5.
- The first of the two tillered ladder trucks involved in accidents has been repaired and was delivered to the District last week. The second truck involved in an accident in Arizona has been repaired and was inspected at the Pierce Manufacturing facility by District shop personnel last week.

### **Fire Stations / Facilities Construction**

- Fire Station 94, Brentwood: The design concept drawings (bridging documents) are complete. The request for proposals (RFP) for the design-build teams was released, and three teams have been identified who will be providing proposals for construction. Staff worked with the City of Brentwood to allow temporary parking on First Street until we are under construction.
- Fire Station 90, Brentwood: The CEQA process has revealed significant contamination levels on the site that will prevent construction unless mitigated and the site cleaned up. Testing indicates toxic products consistent with historic agricultural use. The early estimates are \$6-\$10 million for complete mitigation and site cleanup. Additionally, long lead times are required to obtain multiple permits from State and Regional authorities. This project has now been separated from the Fire Station 94 project so the downtown station can continue as planned. It is now necessary to evaluate alternative sites. In the long term, state grants are available to clean up the current Fire Station 90 site. Staff is working with County Real Estate to identify alternative sites.
- CCRFCC—Contra Costa Regional Fire Communication Center—Pleasant Hill: The project is out for bid. Staff will work with public works capital projects to develop construction contracts with the successful bidder and return to the Board for award. Construction will commence with a public ground-breaking ceremony.

Public Information Office

- Our PIO Team is expanding its reach and becoming more of a presence on social media and in the county. Lauren Ono and Capt. Toler has standardized the fire district messaging during emergency incidents. They have also helped expand and craft the fire district's external non-emergency messaging.
  
- The PIO office has teamed up with other county agencies to produce social media content. The team looks forward to starting The Contra Costa Fire video blog (vlog) very soon. The vlog content created will serve as content for the Fire District's social media accounts as well as content for the county's very own CCTV.