



CONTRA COSTA COUNTY FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT

November 4, 2025

TO: Board of Directors

FROM: Lewis Broschard, Fire Chief

RE: Fire Chief's Report

Operations Section Update

- Peak Fire Season. With the arrival of decent rains in mid-October and reduced wildland fire activity, the District is planning on moving to a reduced response posture for vegetation fires. The contracted helicopter was released on November 1, per the timeframe stipulated in the contract. Our 24/7 dozer staffing was also reduced and the dozer will be available on a call-back, when needed basis. The hand crew staffing will be reduced to 4 days per week to handle project work through the winter months.
- Electric Vehicle Fire (Walnut Creek). The present dangers and hazards of combatting EV fires arrived in an incident where an EV, with batteries in thermal runaway during the charging process, caught fire in a fully enclosed parking garage three stories below grade. These fires generate especially toxic smoke and can be difficult to fully extinguish due to the internal battery chemistry, which can lead to a dangerous condition known as thermal runaway—a process where battery cells repeatedly ignite themselves, continuing to emit smoke and heat even under active firefighting efforts. Two alarms and our haz-mat response team were required to manage the incident, suppress the fire, support building fire/smoke management systems, provide decontamination, and incident command post support.

Due to the potential toxicity of the smoke, a shelter-in-place was issued through the CWS for a limited area immediately adjacent to the incident. The fire, not that significant in itself, was ultimately controlled with minimal damage to the building and no fire damage to the adjacent cars. The proliferation of the toxic smoke, likely containing heavy metals, prompted the District to remove all the personal protective equipment (PPE) that was subject to the smoke/fire in the enclosed space. Twenty sets of PPE are being sent to a special cleaning contractor in Minnesota where, hopefully, the heavy metals can be removed and

the PPE returned to service. If the PPE needs to be replaced it will cost the District approximately \$12,000 per set (\$240,000).

Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Division

- Nurse Navigation We are looking to expand the type and quantity of calls where this program will engage in an effort to continue our effort to decompress the emergency ambulance transport demand.
- Ambulance Patient Offload Times (APOT) Our quarterly calls with the hospital council and local hospital leadership will continue in 2026. (The APOT report for October is not available due to the timing of the agenda packet being submitted prior to the end of the month)

From November 3–7, John Muir Health will hold a weeklong Improvement Event focused on reducing Ambulance Patient Offload Time (APOT) in the Walnut Creek Emergency Department (ED). Although APOT has improved, it still falls short of the Contra Costa County EMS Agency standard, with only 69% of ambulance patients offloaded within 20 minutes during the last week of September. This event (also called a Kaizen) will involve a multidisciplinary team of frontline John Muir Health staff (Nurses, Techs, Registration, etc.) dedicating the week to:

- Observing ambulance patient flow to identify challenges
 - Brainstorming potential solutions
 - Testing and measuring these solutions to find the most effective improvements
- Emergency Ambulance Contract Extension The 2 year contract extension is on the Board of Supervisor's agenda for their November 4 meeting. If approved, this would extend the current contract, with some minor amendments, through December 31, 2027.

Special Operations

- **Hazardous Materials Response Team**
 - Amended Agreement with Cal OES. The agreement with Cal OES was amended to increase the payment limit by \$100,000 for the next 12 months. This will enable the District to recover costs associated with additional training related to the Super Bowl event and other HazMat team training throughout the next year.
 - New Drone Pilots. 15 members of the haz-mat team completed their FAA training and are certified to operate the drones, of which one is capable of remote aerial air monitoring. This greatly enhances the information gathering related to hazard assessment and plume modeling on any incident.

- Training at Facilities. We participated in a tabletop oil spill response drill at the Phillips 66 facility in Rodeo.
- **Marine Program**
 - New Boat Operators. 11 new boat operators were trained and are available to support daily operations and staffing.
- **Rescue**
 - MRC Training. Our rescue company participated in a confined space and high-angle rescue drill at the MRC refinery in Martinez.

Training & Safety

- Safety Committee. The District completed the on-boarding process for 25 new members. This committee represents all facets of the District and all the various divisions, including non-operational divisions. The committee helps to review and craft safety protocols, procedures, and practices related to the work conducted across all the divisions and work groups of the District. The work of the committee, and the input from our members, is an important part of creating and maintaining a culture of safety within our organization.
- Annual Training Plan. The annual training plan for 2026 was developed with input from almost 20 members of the organization. It is no surprise that the training needs and demands of the modern fire service almost outstrip our ability to keep pace. With the required training on traditional firefighting methods and practices, there is a steady increase in new issues, such as EV fires, that require additional dedicated training time. Like most fire service agencies, the challenge of scheduling and completing ALL the necessary training is complicated. The Training & Safety Division does a very good job of soliciting input and managing the training calendar to help us meet the growing needs of keeping our members competent, proficient, and safe in fireground operations.
- NERIS Program Implementation. The Training & Safety Division took the lead on a major project to meet the federal requirements for the National Emergency Response Information System (NERIS) implementation. Staff worked over several weeks to match the agency needs with the software vendor and to develop a training program for our members ahead of the January 1, 2026 implementation date. NERIS will become the national standard for incident reporting that all agencies must comply with.

Advanced Planning Section Update

New Deputy Fire Chief & Reorganization

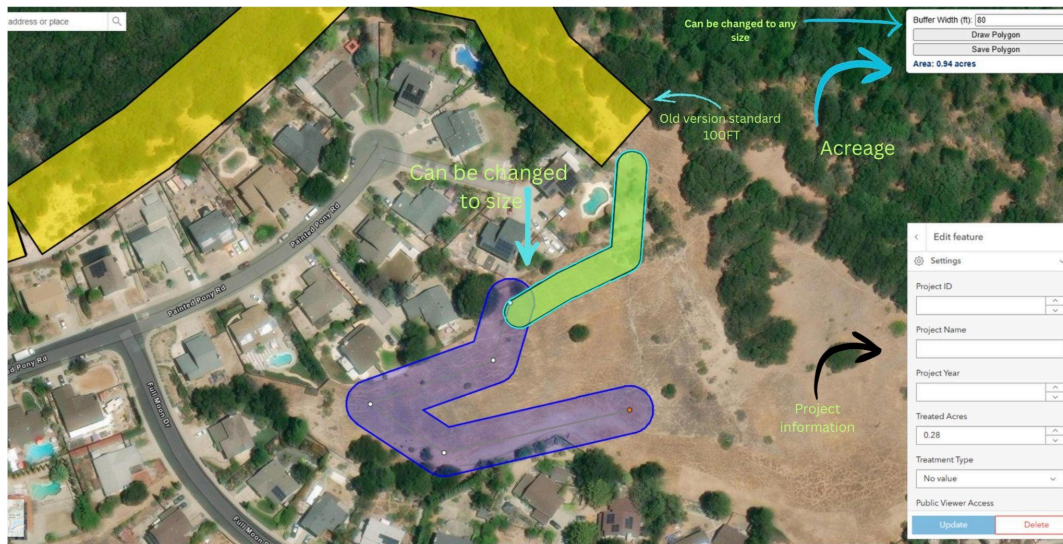
- Assistant Fire Chief Tracie Dutter was promoted to Deputy Fire Chief effective November 1, following an open recruitment process with internal and external candidates. Chief Dutter replaces Brian Helmick as our third Deputy Fire Chief following Chief Helmick's retirement. Chief Dutter was most recently our Support Services Chief, responsible for facilities, fleet, logistics, and our apparatus shop. Her prior experience includes extensive fire prevention roles and responsibilities at Con Fire and prior agencies. Her new role will be reorganized under the Community Risk Reduction Section (formerly the Advanced Planning Section) of the District which will include the Fire Prevention Bureau and the new Hazardous Materials Division effective July 1, 2026. Each of those will be lead by an Assistant Fire Chief reporting directly to Chief Dutter.

Fire Prevention Bureau

- Fire Code and WUI Code Adoptions. The board will be holding a public hearing on November 4, 2025 to consider adopting the California Fire Code and the new Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) Code to be effective on January 1, 2026. The additional steps of obtaining city approvals and ratifications will take place in the weeks leading up to the start of the new year. Significant staff time was invested to work on the adoption process, as well as collaborating with the other Fire Marshals to provide consistency in each agency's fire code for uniformity across the county.
- Annual Open House Event. We hosted our annual open house on October 11 to kick off Fire Prevention Week. This year we had a record attendance of 1,560 people, the event showcased our specialized equipment and provided information to attendees about fire safety and wildfire preparedness. This was a huge success through the effort of many of our on-duty and off-duty members.



- Mapping of Wildfire Mitigation Projects. The mapping of fuel breaks is progressing, with the objective of providing insurance companies with the requisite information to incorporate fuel breaks into their catastrophic models. We are following the lead of CalMAPPER data sets and mapping tools, as they have received this request from insurance companies that conduct catastrophic model simulations to identify risk. The updated maps will now encompass the type of mitigation measures implemented, the disposal methods employed for vegetation, and the frequency of treatment maintenance occurrences.



Legislation & Grants

- Zone 0 and Home Hardening Regulations. (no significant update) The State Board of Forestry continues to hold committee meetings on this subject, but is not expected to publish any new regulations until after the new year.

Administration Section Update

Support Services Division

- New Training Tiller Ladder Truck. The District operates a fleet of tractor-drawn aerial apparatus, known as tillers, which have both front and rear drivers. Training new drivers to operate these vehicles safely and effectively is essential. The tiller currently used for driver training has reached the end of its service life. To support ongoing training needs, the District identified and acquired a used tiller through a trade of two surplus fire engines.
- Underground Storage Tank Removal. The District partnered with the County Public Works Facilities Services Division to remove an underground fuel tank at the Byron Wildland Fire Center. The tank had been damaged and was no longer in service. Its removal mitigates potential environmental risks and prepares the site for future improvements.

Communications Division

- Recruitments. The Fire District will be onboarding a new Telecommunications Specialist to fill an existing vacancy on November 10, 2025. Three new Dispatchers started in early October to fill vacancies. They are completing their classroom based training and will transition to the dispatch floor training in the next couple of weeks.
- Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) Rebuild The CAD rebuild continues to progress and is tentatively set for implementation early February of 2026 after completion of the new 911 communications center and data/server room projects. This rebuild will provide improved efficiency and accuracy for dispatching, incident location information, mapping, and routing of resources.

New Fire Stations / Major Facilities Construction

- Fire Station 90 (Brentwood) The District is currently coordinating with County Environmental to complete the required CEQA studies. Fire District staff met with Cornerstone Fellowship Church, our new neighbor. Their leadership group seemed pleased with our plans. The Fire District will hold a community meeting at Cornerstone Fellowship on Thursday, November 6th, at 6 pm. This will be a chance for the neighborhood and community to provide input to the project before our formal submission to the City of Brentwood Planning Department.



CONTRA COSTA COUNTY FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT

FIRE STATION 90 BRENTWOOD

Join us at Cornerstone Fellowship in Brentwood for a community meeting about the new Fire Station 90, coming soon to Lone Tree Way and Windy Springs Lane!

View the station renderings, meet the fire officials leading the project, and ask questions about the new station and how it will serve your neighborhood.

 Thursday
November 6, 2025

 Starting at
6:00 PM

 Cornerstone Fellowship
6641 Lone Tree Way, Brentwood

- Fire Station 9 (Pacheco) The preliminary design for Fire Station 9 has been completed and will be used as the basis for the upcoming bid process. The CEQA studies remain in progress. An architectural firm has been selected for the temporary station 9. Buchanan Field is the most likely location for a temporary fire station during construction.
- Contra Costa County Regional Fire Communication Center (CCRFCC) (Pleasant Hill) The communications center remodel continues to progress with some significant milestones over the last few weeks. These significant accomplishments include installation of the new dispatch consoles, arrival and installation of electrical switch gear and pending primary PG&E power by late November. Finish cabinetry, flooring and other finish work is near complete. There is still significant work and outfitting that needs to occur in the server room. The new projected move in date for the new communications center is now mid-February 2026.

Phase 2 of the construction which is the remodeling of the old communications center into offices is slated to begin late February 2026. This project is anticipated to take six months to complete.

- Fire Station 94 (Downtown Brentwood) Construction is well underway. Underground work such as water and other utility lines is nearing completion. A small, unmapped, water line serving the veterans building was located during the construction. This line is being rerouted to continue serving the building on the veterans site.

Rodeo-Hercules FPD (RHFPD) Annexation

- The District continues to work with the City of Hercules on transfer of ownership of Fire Station 76, including potential lot line adjustments.
- The benefit assessment appeals process was published in the East Bay Times. The deadline for a property owner to submit an appeal is November 15, 2025.

Contra Costa County Hazardous Materials Programs Transition

- Drafts of job descriptions are nearing completion for the positions that will be transferred and transitioned to new Fire District positions represented by IAFF Local 1230.
- A meeting was held with all interested and impacted County department heads to ensure processes, timelines, and areas of interest or concern are being addressed.
- Bi-Weekly planning meetings with staff from the District and County HazMat commenced are continuing.