



CONTRA COSTA COUNTY FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT

January 20, 2026

TO: Board of Directors

FROM: Lewis Broschard, Fire Chief

RE: Fire Chief's Report

Operations Section Update

- Electric Vehicle (EV) Fires. With the increase in EV fires occurring throughout the District, we evaluated specialized tools to assist us in enhancing our operational equipment to improve firefighter safety and emergency response capabilities. The consistent challenge our firefighters face with EV fires is the inability to penetrate the sealed battery enclosure to extinguish the fire.

Two Cold Cut Cobra systems are planned for purchase with a total cost of \$200,000 and will be used as a specialized EV and lithium-ion battery fire suppression tool. It penetrates sealed battery enclosures and delivers high-pressure water mist combined with an abrasive aggregate directly to overheated or burning battery cells, enabling firefighters to interrupt thermal runaway, reduce reignition risk, and limit hazardous vapor release. This capability is essential for safely managing EV fires, battery energy storage system incidents, and other high-energy lithium-ion hazards that conventional hose streams cannot effectively control.



Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Division

- Ambulance Transport System Performance in 2025. The emergency ambulance transport program performed at a 94.7% compliance rate for response time performance across all geographic zones and all call priority types for 2025. The total number of transports increased by a little more than 1% for a total of 85,680 transports in 2025.
- Nurse Navigation We expanded 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. We will continue to evaluate the effectiveness of the program with the expanded scope of calls.
- Ambulance Patient Offload Times (APOT) APOT appears to be trending down when looking at the previous 12 months. In early November, EMS Division staff participated in a weeklong improvement event, called a Kaizen, at John Muir Walnut Creek focused on reducing APOT in the Walnut Creek Emergency Department (ED). These efforts have resulted in significant reductions of ED offload times. The offload time improvement is illustrated in the APOT report that is attached. Overall, APOT in the county appears to be improving and we are thankful to each receiving facility for the effort they are taking to recognize and mitigate the impacts contributing to patient offload times. EMS Division staff have scheduled ongoing collaboration meetings with John Muir Health every two weeks moving forward.
- Emergency Ambulance Contract Extension The two year contract extension with Contra Costa County and all other ambulance transport-related contracts and agreements with vendors were extended in the November and December board actions. These agreements were extended through December 31, 2027.

Training & Safety

- Academy 62. Academy 62 with 15 lateral firefighters commenced on January 5th. The 15 firefighters are intended to provide replacements for current and anticipated vacancies due to retirements upcoming in March, 2026.
- Annual Training Hours. The District logged just under 110,000 hours of fire based training for the year. This is in addition to EMS training for our field personnel.
- NERIS (National Emergency Response Information System) Implementation. The Training & Safety Division has been focused on the NERIS roll out. Significant effort was made to ensure the system was workable and the division delivered 15 training sessions to personnel. The District is online and compliant with the new national reporting standard.

Community Risk Reduction Section

Fire Prevention Bureau

- **State Mandated Inspections.** The Code Enforcement Unit ended 2025 by completing 100% of the State Mandated Inspections just before the holidays. The statistics and required SB 1205 report will be submitted to the board next month for approval.
- **Code Adoptions.** January 1, 2026 was the start date for the 2025 California Fire Code and 2025 California Wildland Urban Interface Code. After the board approved the two ordinances with local amendments, the Fire Marshal and Deputy Fire Marshal attended local city council meetings to assist in the adoption process and answer any questions from the public, elected officials and city staff.
- **Wildfire Mitigation** Work continues in the off-season with Crew 12, Civicorps and our contractor, Powers Forestry. Phase II of the Windy Flats mitigation in San Pablo started on Monday January 11. In order to reduce the overgrown vegetation on this project, approximately 40 unhoused people were relocated. This project could not have occurred without the collaboration from County Health, CORE, H3, City of San Pablo, the Fire District, San Pablo Police Department, Cal Trans, and San Pablo Public Works. This work should dramatically reduce the fire hazard that has existed in this location for the last several years, with multiple wildland fires occurring each year.

Legislation & Grants

- **SB 828.** Deputy Fire Marshal Aubert provided testimony in support of SB 828 on January 13 before the Senate Governmental Organizations Committee and on January 14 before the Senate Local Government Committee, on behalf of the District and the California Fire Chiefs Association. SB 828 strengthens California's fireworks licensing and storage laws by closing regulatory gaps that have allowed unsafe operations to go undetected.
- **Zone 0 and Home Hardening Regulations.** (no significant update) The State Board of Forestry continues to hold committee meetings on this subject, with the next committee meeting scheduled for April, 2026.

Administration Section Update

Support Services Division

- **Assistant Fire Chief Appointment.** Battalion Chief Sam Nichols was appointed to the Assistant Fire Chief position leading the Support Services Division. Chief Nichols has demonstrated his leadership in a variety of Operations and Training positions. He has jumped in with both feet and his sharp attention to detail, analytical mindset, and servant leadership perspective will serve him well in his new role.
- **New Fire Equipment Mechanic.** We are excited to welcome Timothy Tomas, who has joined the District as an Equipment Mechanic to support the Shop's work on our light fleet vehicles. His primary responsibilities include the "upfitting" installation of Code 3 lights and sirens on District vehicles.
- **Fire Station 86 Storm Drain Repair.** The storm drain system at Fire Station 86 in BayPoint sustained significant damage due to a fire in the underground pipe over the summer. The District replaced the damaged piping, ensuring the storm drain system will function properly this winter.
- **New Wildland Engines.** Two new Type 6 engines were placed into service in December. One was assigned to Station 73 (E-673) in Pinole, which allowed the District to strategically move a Type 3 engine to Station 74 (E-374) in Pinole. The second Type 6 engine was placed in service at Station 92 (E-692) in Brentwood. These additions have significantly increased the capacity and versatility of our wildland apparatus fleet, enhancing our response capabilities during fire season.
- **Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).** The District is currently concluding its 2025 annual PPE inspection program, a mandatory safety program for all personnel issued protective gear. Since beginning in July 2025, the District has successfully processed 793 sets of PPE, which include the systematic inspection and rotation of both primary and secondary sets for each firefighter. The PPE undergoes advanced cleaning and repairs as needed by a verified Independent Service Provider (ISP) compliant with NFPA 1851 standards to ensure safety. We are on track to complete the final rotations and will initiate the 2026 inspection cycle this coming July.
- **New Dual Use PPE.** In addition to our structural firefighting PPE maintenance, the District is finalizing the rollout of our new VersaPro Plus dual-certified PPE. These specialized garments are dual-certified to NFPA 1951 (Technical Rescue) and NFPA 1977 (Wildland Firefighting) standards. This lightweight, breathable gear is designed for technical rescues, motor vehicle accidents, and medical incidents, helping us reduce heat stress and limit personnel exposure to contaminants often found on structural turnout gear.

Communications Division

- **Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) Rebuild.** The CAD rebuild continues to progress and is tentatively set for implementation early April 2026 after completion of the new 911 communications center and data/server room projects.

- County HazMat Move. The District and our IT consultant continue to assist County Hazmat with their early move to 4005 Port Chicago Highway, Concord, and the pending July 1, 2026 transition into the Fire District.

New Fire Stations / Major Facilities Construction

- Fire Station 90 (Brentwood) The fire station's architectural team is working with the County's architectural team on the youth center. Together, the site plan is coming into alignment with how the two projects fit together. CEQA studies are underway for areas including noise, traffic, air quality, and cultural resources. District Staff will present the Fire Station project to the community and the City Council in an informational item on January 13th, 2025.
- Fire Station 9 (Pacheco) The District received seven responses to the Request for Qualifications for a Design-Build Entity for Fire Station 9 in Pacheco. The responses are currently under review and the top three teams will advance to the Request for Proposals phase. CEQA studies continue. Once the CEQA studies are complete, the project application will be completed and filed with County Planning. Design work on the temporary Fire Station 9 at Buchanan Field will begin this month.
- Contra Costa County Regional Fire Communication Center (CCR FCC) (Pleasant Hill) The communications center remodel continues to progress with some significant milestones over the last few weeks. All electrical switch gear has been installed and PG&E primary power is now present in the building. Finish work throughout the building continues and is approximately 95% complete. The data center/server room is almost complete. After final completion of the data center/server room, the District and our IT consultant will begin installation of all the equipment and servers in the IT racks. There are still numerous major milestones to accomplish prior to opening the new center. The latest projected date to occupy the center is mid to late March 2026.
- Fire Station 94 (Downtown Brentwood) Construction remains in progress. The building is "vertical" with the steel beams affixed to the footings. Much of the underground utility work is complete. With vertical construction bow in progress, the building will begin to take shape in the coming months.

Public Information Office

- This year the Fire District embarked on a new program to collect toys for families in need. Through the generosity of the community, more than 1,500 toys were donated at fire stations throughout the District. This year, Contra Costa Fire hosted toy drive events at Fire Station 10 in Concord, Fire Station 82 in Antioch, Fire Station 92 in Brentwood, and Fire Station 76 in Hercules. These events also welcomed community members to meet Santa and our firefighters.

The toy drives were organized by Firefighter Rene Arevalo, in partnership with Local 1230, and with support from Fire Prevention Specialist Julie Ormerod. The Fire District partnered with the Brentwood Regional Community Chest, Antioch Police Department, and with Contra Costa County Child Support Services to distribute the donated toys within the County.

- Fire Station 95, which included Captain Michael Dunham, Engineer Jared Gavard, and Firefighters Scott Barger and Caden Jones, also participated in two long-standing holiday events, the Bethel Island Children's Support Christmas Party, which saw more than 300 people and Bethel Island's Annual Santa's Stack Toy and Food Delivery, where firefighters personally delivered gifts and meals alongside other community volunteers.

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.

Contra Costa County Hazardous Materials Programs Transition

- Drafts of job descriptions were completed and submitted to County HR and Labor Relations for review for the positions that will be transferred and transitioned to new Fire District positions represented by IAFF Local 1230.
- Draft Cal EPA application information is being reviewed by County Counsel.
- Planning meetings with staff from the District and County HazMat were increased to weekly effective with the new year to keep pace with the upcoming transition date of July 1, 2026.
- District staff are working with County Health Haz-Mat to support their early move to 4005 Port Chicago Highway in Concord. The group will be located on the first floor of the Fire District Administration building in early February.