



MOSQUITO FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT
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Chief's Report
September-October 2020

Summary: This has turned out to be the most serious fire season in California history. The most critical time of any fire season is now upon us. The number and size of current fires have seriously depleted available resources; fire engines, hand crews and aircraft. It is important that we remain vigilant and for resident to continue to be fire safe, including being packed up prepared to quickly leave. Check the District's web site for further information on preparedness and evacuation planning.

On Tuesday 9/8 we experienced our first Public Safety Power Shutdown (PSPS). Fortunately the power was restored the following afternoon and the predicted winds did not materialize. We appreciate PG&E quickly conducting their aerial system safety check and restoring power. During the shutdown the Support Group staffed the fire station and assisted residents who called the station with questions. At 11:15am the Fork Fire originated and after growing for several hours, created concern in the Community. A portion of the Georgetown community was evacuated. There was already considerable smoke in our community and many residents called the Fire Station seeking information. It was difficult to obtain information about the fire and direction of travel. Very few fire suppression resources were available, including aircraft. Again, it was fortunate that the predicted winds did not materialize or the fire may have threatened our community. At the time of this report the Fork Fire was 1,700 acres and 70% contained.

Support personnel also responded to _____ requests for assistance with their generators. Many thanks to Trent Williams and the Support Group for their excellent efforts assisting the Fire District and our residents.

On the evening of September 15th we conducted a drill at the Catfish Lake to test our capability to draft water from the lake and supply water tenders. The Support Group responded with the drafting pump (Pump 75) and was able to obtain a continuous water supply to two three-inch hose lines. In the event of an actual fire, Pump 75 would be able to refill two water tenders in rotating fashion. This exercise was important because the Buckboard Road area has very limited water supply and efficient water tender operations are a critical component of our firefighting capability. The Support Group also tested and exercised their incident rehabilitation capability by deploying Squad 75 and their equipment.

A special thank you to Trent Williams, Chiefs Hern, Schwegler and Chaloux for organizing the drill. We appreciate the Support Group and their great participation. We will continue to train for water tender refill operations and increase our efficiency with this important function.

We have conducted vehicle service (oil change, filters, etc) and complete inspections on all of our light duty vehicles, including Squad 75. Engine 75 and Water Tender 75 are the last two District vehicles needing service and brake inspections (will occur within the next two weeks). We are rebuilding our preventative maintenance program and documentation. Currently the fleet is in very good condition despite it's age. Hopefully, the next addition to the fleet will be the OES Type 6.

The Safety Support Division deployed four overhead personnel to different incidents around the State this month. Because of the shortage of overhead personnel, SSD personnel are deploying for longer period of time and redeploying quicker, often with just a day or two rest. We appreciate the dedication and professionalism these experienced personnel bring to critical incidents, representing our District and Community.

There are many projects currently in progress. The following are the highlights of the major items we are working on:

Calls for Service: September 3-October 1:

Fires: 0

Medical: 2

Vehicle Accident: 1

Public Assist: 2

SSD Deployments: 4 (Creek, Dolan,)

Grant Update:

The FEMA SAFER (Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response-**REVIEW**) grant is in the first year of a four-year grant totaling \$700,000. The focus of this grant is to assist the District improve its level of service and staffing by recruiting and retaining volunteer firefighters.

The priority projects for this grant are the website creation and design, MS Office 365 platform access and the Fire Station sign upgrade. Chief Nugent will be updating the Board with progress on these important items, including a contract with the selected vendor and vendor/design options for the Station sign.

One component of the grant is the Stipend Program. We now have an incentive program in place (started in July) which volunteers firefighters are paid a stipend for fire station shift coverage and for response to incident (pay per call). The funds paid by the District to the volunteers are reimbursed through the Grant.

We are bringing in several new volunteers in which their entry costs (physical, personal protective gear, uniform, training) is reimbursed to the District through the grant.

FEMA Assistance to Firefighters Grant (**Medical monitors-UPDATE**): This is a regional grant which was recently approved through the County's medical Joint Powers Authority (JPA). The District will receive two advanced Zoll heart monitors and a Lucas compression device which does effective CPR beyond what responders can do alone. The value of the equipment is estimated at \$98,000. There is a matching fund requirement of approximately \$8,000 with the trade in of our existing monitors. We expect to receive the CPR device this November and the monitors by February 2021.

FEMA Assistance to Firefighters Grant (**Paramedic Training-UPDATE**): This grant provides \$172,000 for paramedic training and associated expenses. Captain Ryan Purves and Volunteer Firefighter Evan Alexander

are currently receiving training. Captain Purves is doing well with his field internship with AMR Ambulance in Placer County. Firefighter Alexander is going through his field internship with an ambulance company in the Stockton area. We are currently in planning and discussion with an AFG grant representative to provide funding for our Firefighter Brian Morris to also attend paramedic school beginning in 2021. The staff we have sponsored for this training are excellent and talented individuals who will save lives and represent the District well. We are proud of each of them.

Personnel Update:

I am pleased and proud to report that retired Fire Chief Leo Chaloux, will be rejoining our ranks to assist us on several important projects, including the development of our volunteer program, recruitment from the community. Chief Chaloux will also be assisting as a volunteer Battalion Chief on emergency incidents at various times. His knowledge and expertise of emergency response to the community is well known and respected.

Community based volunteers are essential to the Fire District's emergency response. We have already interviewed four community members who are interested in joining the District. One is a new community member, two are volunteers who were with the District previously and one with radio expertise willing to assist us with alternative communications during critical events.

Volunteer Firefighters: Our four active volunteers continue with their training and experience. Two of the four participated in the strike team response. Firefighter Greyson Dillender staffed Engine 275 on both strike team deployments with B/C Schwegler. Firefighter Devin Hern was with the engine on the second deployment to the Loyalton and Claremont Fires. The experience and training provided during these deployments cannot be understated relative to the skills and confidence these young men bring back to the District. A third volunteer assisted us with night staffing at the Station. A special thanks to Assistant Chief Todd Hern for his many hours of coverage and leadership while engine and crew were out of the District. Todd's value to the District and our emergency response to the community cannot be overstated.

We expect to participate in a joint volunteer fire academy in early January 2021 hosted by the Georgetown Fire District. The academy would train one weeknight and each Saturday for twelve weeks. We have one interested community-based volunteer so far and will recruit for more soon. Our current volunteers will also be encouraged to attend. We will also provide training support for the academy.

Support Group: The Support Group is always excellent, strongly assisting us with responses and other projects. The Group will have their monthly training on Saturday September 1. They will cover the new firefighter rehabilitation function, radio training and helicopter landing zone management. On September 15, the Group will perform a drafting/water tender refill operation at Catfish Lake. This area (Buckboard) lacks adequate water supply for firefighting. The joint training with Support Group and firefighting staff will be an opportunity for personnel to review firefighting procedures and effective water tender refill operations.

We would like to cultivate more interest in the Support Group program from interested members of the community with specialized training and capabilities (medical, IT, web site design, heavy equipment, mechanic, tree removal, etc). With our SAFER Grant marketing for volunteer firefighters we will also incorporate Support Group recruitment into our outreach.

We are still in the process of scheduling forceable entry training with Georgetown FD this month (delays due to out of county responses). The Board reviewed and approved the new joint response agreement with the Georgetown and Garden Valley Districts. The fire chiefs of each district will meet monthly to discuss operations and progress of the agreement. I will soon be meeting with our staff regarding the agreement to discuss operations and the opportunity for our volunteers to train and respond to emergency incidents with the other two districts.

We improved our internet capability greatly with the installation of an ATT wireless internet system. This involved an antenna installation and new modem. Testing confirmed much better signal strength than what we had with the DSL system. We have struggled with connectivity at the Station for years and it had reached a high level of frustration over the past few months. Thank you to Assistant Chief Dion Nugent and Board President Mikel for resolving this issue.

I have had the opportunity over the past few weeks to meet with three of the Strategic Plan Committees (Community Engagement, Finance Committee, Community Risk Reduction). I have been impressed with the level of dedication and commitment from each of the committee participants. We were able to discuss important topics present and future. Director Pico leads the Community Risk Reduction Committee. I am confident that we will move forward soon with water tank placement (1 tank location in the Buckboard area currently under discussion) and the alternate escape route through the USFS area. At the SCPOA Board meeting I received confirmation that they would support and maintain tank placements on appropriate SCPOA owned areas. Tank elevation for gravity flow is an important consideration in the placement of these tanks. I will be scheduling meetings with the Emergency Service Provision and Good Governance Committees within the next week.

This concludes my report. I will continue to update our projects and report progress. There are some exciting months ahead as we develop these programs and attract new people to the District. The worst of fire season is ahead, and we remain vigilant. There will be upcoming periods of Red Flag fire conditions and possible PG&E planned power outages. I appreciate the great support we receive from the Community and its commitment to being prepared. If you have any questions or suggestions, please call me at the fire station or email jrosevear@mfpd.us.

Jack Rosevear, Chief