



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

Summary: This month has gone by quickly with many projects in progress. We continue to work on grant management and refining our grant expense tracking. This month has been a reminder of how serious fire season can be. Each new year in the State seems to break new records for acreage and structures burned. The tremendous losses due to lightening activity in August also reminds us that the critical fire season months area still ahead.

The opening of the Mosquito Bridge on 8/27 was welcome news. Based on our evacuation procedures, we will maintain road control on Mosquito Road to the bridge to ensure that vehicles leaving are not oversized or pulling trailers. A fire might also be impacting Mosquito Road leading to the bridge; in that case we would maintain road closure until relieved by law enforcement personnel. Based on our procedures, the Airport remains the primary temporary safe refuge area for residents to go to in the event of evacuation. Keeping the roadways clear for emergency vehicles to get into our community will remain a priority.

We have recently received important donations from SCPOA, MVFA and the Pilots Association. The SCPOA Board generously donated \$2,500 towards the purchase of Automatic Defibrillators (AED). The Pilots Association generously added \$500 for a total of six AEDs and an additional training AED. These AEDs are compatible for both adults and children. The MVFA recently generously donated \$1,200 for the purchase of badges for our personnel. We appreciate how our Community supports us. An incredibly special thank you to the MVFA, Pilots Association and SCPOA.

On 8/2, Engine 275 deployed to the Stagecoach Fire in Kern County (assigned to Riverside incident before arriving there and being diverted) and returned on Friday evening 8/14. On Saturday 8/15 at 10:20pm, Engine 275 responded again with four other districts to the Loyaltan Fire (47,000 acres) in the Tahoe National Forest above Truckee. The engines responded initial attack to the fire and upon arrival worked all night and following day. Crews fought intense and dangerous fires over the next few days. After receiving lightning and rain the strike team was shifted to the Plumas (North) Complex (62,000 acres) on 8/19. After arriving at the Quincy Fairgrounds, the engines were assigned to protect structures at the Claremont Fire. The crews experienced intense fire during their assignments and as the incident subsided, they were released and returned home on Saturday 8/29. Engine 275 spent almost a month on the road assisting communities in need, protecting lives, and saving homes. We thank B/C Schwegler, Capt. Alyssa Sample, Engineer Jeff Schwegler, Firefighters Greyson Dillender and Devin Hern for their extraordinary and courageous work. Everywhere Engine 275 went they represented the Mosquito Community with distinction. I also thank our superb staff who stayed behind to make sure our District was well covered.

Engine 275 has received its major service (Oil, Lube, Filters) and inspection by a qualified mechanic. A special thank you to the on-duty crews who have performed major vehicle and equipment cleaning after the two deployments. Engineer Brian Morris happened to be on duty both times the engine underwent deep cleaning. Getting an engine back in service after serious off-road deployments cannot be overstated. It literally takes many hours to do the job correctly which involves tool servicing and sharpening, hose washing, equipment inventory, cleaning of every square inch of the vehicle, pulling out every piece of equipment (inspect and clean).

The Safety Support Division deployed six overhead personnel to six different incidents around the State. 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: August 6- September 3:

Fires: 3 (Strike Team to Sacramento, Loyalton and Claremont Fires)

Medical: 2

Public Assist: 1

Smoke Investigation: 1

SSD Deployments: 6 (Ranch 2, Lake, August Complex, Loyalton, Sheep, Trimmer)

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. There are several aspects of the grant including the remodel of the District's website, marketing volunteer opportunities in the community and outside the area, encouraging fire station staffing and response with stipend pay and stipend pay per call, funding for specialized training classes, purchase of safety gear/uniforms, and tuition for firefighter/EMT academies. We are preparing to launch a greater outreach to attract applicants. The stipend pay program will be extended to our current volunteers for station staffing and making themselves available in the District to respond to emergency calls. We are actively training our current younger volunteers for firefighting and other emergency operations. Over the next month we will strengthen our station internet capability and develop partnerships with other fire districts for more training opportunities. The grant will fund a replacement digital display sign at the fire station and possibly other community signage to attract volunteers from the community and display helpful community information. We are currently in discussion with the Rescue and El Dorado Hills Fire Districts for the development of a regional reserve program which we can share personnel for staffing and training. I will report more in October and November as we meet and develop a program which can be supported by the Board.

50/50 Grant (NEW): A partnership with Cal Fire to purchase wildland safety gear. This grant has been resubmitted for another annual round, which will allow the purchase of \$20,000 of wildland safety gear. The District will pay half as will Cal Fire. This is an important annual grant to maintain the purchase of important wildland firefighting protective equipment, especially as we add personnel.

FEMA Assistance to Firefighters Grant (Medical monitors-UPDATE): This is a regional grant which was just approved through the County's medical Joint Powers Authority (JPA). This grant has been submitted and is

expected to be funded. The District is slated to 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 are awaiting an upcoming meeting to confirm what level of funding was granted.

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. The grant not only pays for the training program but also for shift coverage expense to replace an employee while he is in training. Captain Purves just completed his hospital internship at Marshall Hospital and will now start his field internship with AMR Ambulance in Placer County. Captain Purves is one of the top students in his class and received excellent evaluations from his time at the Hospital. We are proud of Ryan's efforts. He will truly be an excellent paramedic.

FEMA Assistance to Firefighters Grant (**Radios- PENDING**): Similar to the regional grant for heart monitors, this is a regional grant in application and pending for mobile, portable radios and pagers. The grant is in coordination with the Georgetown and Pioneer Fire Districts. Our District has requested 11 mobile radios, 24 portable radios and an unspecified number of pagers with a matching fund amount of approximately \$6,900.

FEMA Assistance to Firefighters Grant (**Breathing Apparatus-PENDING**): Regional grant in application for 21 breathing apparatus and air masks. This grant is in coordination with the Garden Valley Fire District. The cost of the equipment for the district is \$60,000 with a matching fund amount of \$6,000.

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 Loyaltan 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

