Visalia Fire Department

SEPTEMBER 2011

VISALIA FIRE STATION LOCATIONS

Fire Station 51
309 S Johnson

Fire Station 52
2224 W Monte Vista

Fire Station 53
9500 W Airport Drive

Fire Station 54
440 W Ferguson

Fire Station 55
6921 W Ferguson

Fire Station 56
1968 S Lovers Lane

FIRE MANAGEMENT TEAM

Mark R. Nelson,
Fire Chief

Doyle Sewell,
Battalion Chief

Danny Wristen,
Battalion Chief

Charlie Norman,
Battalion Chief

Darrin Hughes,
Training Captain

Dustin Hall,
Administrative Captain

Angela Cantrell,
Safety Officer

Nancy Renovato,
Sr. Administrative Analyst

Fire Chief's Corner

September is always a somber month as we remember the victims of 9/11; both civilians and emergency responders. This year we commemorated the 10 year anniversary of the tragic event by participating in a countywide service hosted by local churches and held at the First Assembly of God Church. Fire and Law enforcement agencies from around the county attended along with various branches of the military. Mayor Link, Vice Mayor Shuklian, Councilmember Nelsen along with the members of Visalia Fire and Police Department contributed to the event as well.

There were several personnel changes happening this month as we brought on our new City Safety Officer Angela Cantrell, welcome Angela! In addition, Captain Dustin Hall has been assigned as our new Administrative Officer assisting the management team with various work projects and assignments. This newly created position was a result of the Measure T program. I want to thank the citizens of Visalia for approving Measure T as well as the City Council and City Manager for approving the new position. Captain Hall's move to administration opened up a Fire Captain position and I am proud to announce Chris Ortiz has been promoted to Fire Captain. Lastly, I interviewed 6 candidates for Fire Engineer vacancy and will announce the promotion in October.

In closing, my wife and I attended the Taste of Downtown on September 20th. What a fantastic event, highlighting our fabulous downtown restaurants. I would encourage all of you to participate next year.

Thank you,

- Mark R. Nelson, Fire Chief

ADMINISTRATION

Visalia Fire Department

September 2011 Monthly Overtime Report

(All $ Amounts in Thousands)

Month	# of Pay Periods	Monthly OT Budget Amount	Monthly Actual OT	Adjustments/Reimbursements to OT: Estimated Strike Team	Adjustments/Reimbursements to OT: Salary Savings	Adjustments/Reimbursements to OT: Other*	Adjustments/Reimbursements to OT: Total	Net OT	Budget Variance under(over)
July	2	53	62	0	0	(6)	(6)	56	(3)
August	2	53	56	0	0	0	0	56	(3)
September**	3	80	69		0	(6)	(6)	63	17
October**							0	0	0
November							0	0	0
December							0	0	0
January							0	0	0
February							0	0	0
March							0	0	0
April							0	0	0
May							0	0	0
June							0	0	0
YTD Totals	7	$186	$187	$0	$0	($12)	($12)	**$175**	**$11**

**Other* adjustments to OT include anticipated Haz-Mat recovery costs. (Four Incidents)

Year to date overtime is $11,000 under budget. In September, a Strike Team was deployed to the "Comanche" Fire for a total of 53 hours. The department anticipates a reimbursement from CalEMA in the amount of $14,000 over the next few months. The reimbursement is not yet icluded in the table.

PERSONNEL UPDATES

Effective September 26th, **Captain Dustin Hall** assumed the responsibilities of Administrative Captain for a one-year commitment. Captain Hall will oversee the EMS Program as well as other administrative projects.

Chris Oritz was promoted to Fire Captain in September. Chris has shown great leadership within the organization and has demonstrated the qualities and core values it takes to be a Company Officer in the Fire Department.

JOINING THE FIRE TEAM...

The department welcomes **Angela Cantrell (Angie)** as the City's Safety Officer. Angie, who grew up in the Central California Coast area, has more than 20 years' experience in occupational safety and health management in public entity settings, including various areas of responsibility such as safety program development and management, accident investigation, loss prevention and reduction, disaster preparedness, workplace violence prevention and employee training program development. Angie joins us directly from her post as the Safety Officer for Tulare County.

OPERATIONS

On September 11th, the Fire Department's Strike Team, comprised of one Engine and four personnel, was deployed to assist with firefighting efforts at the Comanche Complex Fire in Kern County. Captain Adney, Engineer Cowell, Firefighter Paramedics' Randall, and Ruiz were among first responders to provide protection to homes in the foothills, just outside Bakersfield.

Firefighters suppress dryer fire at Visalia Supercuts

On Wednesday, September 7, 2011, the Visalia Fire Department was dispatched to a Commercial Structure Fire at 1431 E. Noble; Super Cuts in Mary's Vineyard. The fire was confined to a clothing dryer in the business and caused an estimated $2500 in damage. There were no injuries and the cause of the fire was an accumulation of lint in the dryer vent.

Picture Source: Visalia Times Delta 9/7/11

Fire, smoke causes $650,000 in damage at Visalia laser center

On Wednesday, September 14, 2011, the Visalia Fire Department was dispatched to a commercial fire at 115 N. Akers; Advanced Laser Clinic. Fire personnel made entry into the building and extinguished a small fire in one of the treatment rooms, but once the attic space was opened, an extensive amount of charring and damage was discovered. The fire caused an estimated $150,000 in damage to the property and approximately $500,0000 to the contents.

Picture Source: Visalia Times Delta 9/14/11

Visalia Haz-Mat Team Cleans Up Spill

Picture Source: Visalia Times Delta D 9/2/11

The Haz-Mat Team was dispatched to the corner of Goshen Avenue & Akers Street on September 2, 2011 after a caller reported a white powdery substance spill from a truck. The spillage caused the roads to be closed for approximately two hours while the team analyzed the substance and cleaned up the mess.

OPERATIONS CON'T

Incident Summary by Incident Type

Date Range: From 09/01/2011 To 09/30/2011

Incident Type(s) Selected: All

Incident Type	Incident Count	Used in Ave. Resp.	Average Response Time hh:mm:ss	Total Loss	Total Value
Fire	43	36	00:05:53	$593,310.00	$26,884,360.00
EMS/Rescue	540	376	00:05:14	$0.00	$0.00
Hazardous Condition	138	17	00:07:28	$1,000.00	$1,000.00
Service Call	38	16	00:05:30	$0.00	$0.00
Good Intent	164	14	00:05:15	$0.00	$0.00
False Call	20	17	00:05:57	$0.00	$0.00
Other	1	1	00:05:39	$0.00	$0.00
Totals	944	477		$594,310.00	$26,885,360.00

TOTAL CALLS YEAR-TO-DATE

Incident Summary by Incident

Date Range: From 01/01/2011 To 09/30/2011

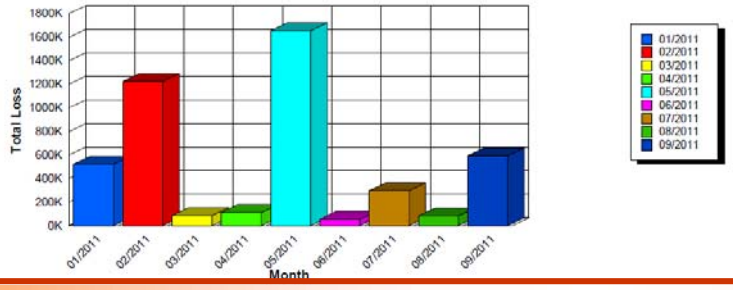
Incident Type(s) Selected: All

Incident Type	Incident Count
Fire	349
Rupture/Explosion	5
EMS/Rescue	5,075
Hazardous Condition	999
Service Call	333
Good Intent	1,363
False Call	226
Severe Weather	7
Other	4
Totals	8,361

Total Fire Loss by Month

Date Range: From 01/01/2011 To 09/30/2011

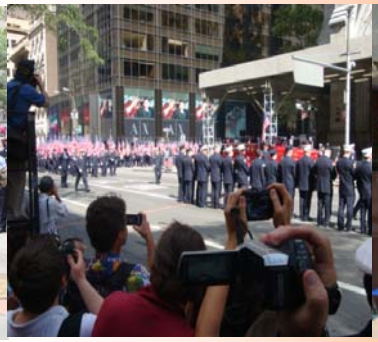
Month	Count of Fires With Loss	Total Loss	Total Value
01/2011	10	$522,620.00	$3,866,000.00
02/2011	25	$1,223,400.00	$4,212,700.00
03/2011	42	$85,750.00	$7,905,050.00
04/2011	58	$110,930.00	$1,071,610.00
05/2011	79	$1,655,950.00	$17,829,800.00
06/2011	107	$55,525.00	$1,638,175.00
07/2011	123	$296,465.00	$1,030,815.00
08/2011	141	$81,350.00	$5,202,450.00
09/2011	163	$593,310.00	$26,764,360.00



REACTION /TURNOUT TIMES			Sept	2011
	A-Shift	B-Shift	C-Shift	
E-51	1:06	1:01	1:00	
T-51	:56	:25	:42	
E-52	1:21	1:03	1:04	
E-54	1:17	1:18	1:23	
T-55	1:22	1:24	:51	
E-56	1:25	1:12	1:34	
	Average	1:08		

9-11 ANNIVERSARY REMEMBRANCE

Eight Fire Department personnel attended the 9-11 Anniversary Ceremony in New York (non-City sponsored)



Honor Guard

The Honor Guard participated in two local events commemorating the 10th Anniversary of September 11th. The events were held at Neighborhood Church and First Assembly of God. In October the honor guard will participate in two events; Sacramento Fallen Firefighter Memorial and Battle of the Badges blood drive.

Fire Investigations

During the month of September, members of the Fire Investigation Team investigated 13 fires of which 8 were considered accidental, 2 were incendiary, and 3 were undetermined. Engine company personnel also performed 16 preliminary origin and cause investigations.

Other fires were investigated as follows:

- 115 N Akers (Commercial Structure): Accidental, $500,000 loss. 9-14-11
- Modoc/Liberty (Vehicle): Undetermined, $5,500 loss.9-6-11
- 142 N Shenandoah (Vehicle) Accidental, $5,000 loss 9-8-11
- 930 W Walnut (Structure): Accidental, $3,200 loss 9-15-11
- Goddard/Houston (Grass/Fence): Undetermined, $1,200 loss 9-27-11

One juvenile offender was referred to the Juvenile Firesetter Program through Tulare County Probation. The counseling session will be scheduled in October.

Public Education

This month, Engine Company Personnel completed 29 tours, visitations, and presentations. The Department provided this service to approximately 3,600 people throughout the community. Four community residents participated in the department ride-a-long program. Three 3 smoke detectors were installed in various homes throughout the City.

Site Plan Review

In September the Prevention Division completed 15 site plan reviews to ensure that all new construction complies with California Fire Codes and City of Visalia standards for fire hydrants, fire department access, and fire sprinkler systems. This figure is the down from 18 for the month of August.

Monthly Tailboard/Safety Bulletin

Each month Station 52, C Shift will engage in a relevant and thought provoking safety/training/ operations topic. The topic for October will be "safety considerations regarding structure fires at fast food restaurants

Haz Mat

The Haz Mat Team was involved in three incidents this month. On 9-2-11, a full Haz mat Team response was initiated for an unknown substance in the roadway at Akers and Goshen. On 9-15-11, HM-55 responded to KDMC to assist VPD with identifying a suspicious material that had been brought into the Emergency Department. On 9-20-11, a full Haz Mat Team response was initiated for a vehicle accident involving a residential/commercial pesticide applicator truck, in-front of 6100 S. Mooney Blvd. All three incidents were mitigated safely.

On the 19th and 20th of September, the Haz Mat team attended WMD Tech. / Spec. training at station 55. The course was taught in-house by Captain Goforth, Captain Ramirez and Firefighter Kassner. The Tulare County Lab took part in a biological sampling drill that was part of the class.

Best Regards,
Battalion Chief Norman

PREVENTION CON'T

Inspectors

Inspectors worked a total **172** hours on property maintenance, weed abatement, and apartment complex inspections. During this reporting period **167** apartment complex (R-2) re-inspections were conducted and **64** property maintenance cases were opened.

Off Duty Suppression Staff

The suppression staff is used to conduct re-inspections that have been referred to the Prevention Division by the Engine Companies. Staff conducted **6** initial inspections and **28** re-inspections.

Engine Company Inspections

During September a total of **176** inspections were assigned and **170** have been completed.

Occupancy	# Inspected
Assembly (A-1, A-2, A-3)	3
Businesses (B)	62
Education (E)	2
Fabrication (F-1, F-2)	5
High Hazard (H-2)	0
Institution (I)	13
Mercantile (M)	9
Apartment complexes (R-2)	0
Adult Care Facilities (R-3.1)	2
Shops (S-1, S-2)	5
Vacant properties	26

Fee Type	Generated Fees
Declaration of Public	$3,172.00
Work Orders	$504.00
Fire & Life Safety	$1,776
Operational business	$1,362
R-2 Inspections	0
Administration	$700
Total Generated fees	$7,514

Strike Team

On September 11th, the Fire Department's Strike Team, comprised of one Engine and four personnel, was deployed to assist with firefighting efforts at the Comanche Complex Fire in Kern County. Captain Adney, Engineer Cowell, Firefighter Paramedics' Randall, and Ruiz were among first responders to provide protection to homes in the foothills, just outside Bakersfield.

Emergency Preparedness Program

In September, I attend a planning meeting with Tulare County Office of Emergency Services to discuss training needs & requirements on Emergency Preparedness for all agencies. The focus was on NIMS (National Incident Management Systems and SEMS; Standardized Emergency Management Systems and the need for EOC specific training and developing a larger scale disaster drill.

Assistance to Firefighter Grant (AFG)

In September, staff submitted an application for the AFG through the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) totaling $170,000. If approved, the funding will be utilized for the purchase of a Haz-Mat Response Vehicle and for replacement of three vehicle exhaust systems at Fire Stations 52, 53, and 54.

Best Regards,
Battalion Chief Wristen

EMS Program— As the department continues to improve our EMS Program, I had the opportunity to meet with Fire Chief Ted Peterson and Battalion Chief Clough of Sacramento Metro Fire Department to discuss best practices in the area of job sharing, sources of revenue, and other brainstorming ideas to continue building the foundation of our EMS Program.

I was afforded the opportunity to meet many people in the EMS field from local area agencies.

Overall the experience was very helpful and the information will be useful as we continue to expand our program and increase our abilities.
Certifications—All employees are current with certifications. The department is also moving forward with establishing a cadre of instructors for Basic Life Support, CPR, and Pediatric Advanced Life Support.

Equipment—LinCare, who has supplied the Fire Department's oxygen over the past several years announced in August that they would be ceasing all commercial accounts. The department has since contracted with Air Gas for oxygen needs.

Best Regards,
Battalion Chief Sewell

Training
In September, the Visalia Fire Department completed 1,848.5 hours of training, of which 618 hours qualified for California Firefighter Joint Apprentice Committee reimbursement. The focus areas were 311 hours of ground ladders, ropes and knots, Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus, pump theory and hydraulics, Incident Command System review, and fire simulations as part of the core competency testing for all Firefighters, Fire Engineers, and Fire Captains. Visalia Fire personnel completed 305 hours of Low Angle Rope Rescue Operations taught by Captain Derek Fricke and Engineer John Greenwood. Captain Goforth, Captain Ramirez, and Firefighter Kassner conducted 186 hours of Weapons of Mass Destruction training over two days for the Haz-Mat team. All fire personnel completed 260 hours of Emergency Medical Services training; concentrating on respiratory emergencies. Last, but not least, all fire personnel completed 57 hours of OSHA safety and post incident analysis training.

Reserve Corbin Reed completed 25 hours of ride-a-long time and responded to a pin-in vehicle accident at Mineral King and McAuliff.
Reserve Mike Parks completed 7 hours of on-scene time at 4 different incidents and 4.5 hours painting 9 fire hydrants.
Reserve Isaac Mendoza completed 24 hours of ride-a-long time.

Best Regards,
Training Captain Hughes

From the Community

September 16, 2011

Mark R. Nelson
Fire Chief
Visalia Fire Depargtment
707 W. Acequia Avenue
Visalia, California 93291

Dear Chief Nelson:

I want to express my appreciation for the outstanding support provided by your Department when our company conducted the EVOC Train the Trainer (T3) Course at the Visalia Fire Department training facilities August 24 – 26, 2011. We first became acquainted with your Department when Captain Darrin Hughes attended the T3 Course in Fresno in 2009. We try to return to the area every two years to offer a T3 course and a Refresher course.

American Ambulance offered to be the ambulance cohost and I contacted Captain Hughes to ask if your Department could be the Fire cohost. It soon became evident that your facilities would better meet our training requirements for the 27 Fire and EMS personnel who would be attending the course. Your training facilities are outstanding and provide all of the audiovisual support necessary to conduct advanced training. Captain Hughes had located a driving area to set up the cone course exercises and everything went great. Captain Hughes made sure that all of our training requirements were met.

Visalia Fire Department sent 6 firefighters to the course. When one of our instructors was called back to his organization to respond to the hurricane occurring on the East Coast, I asked Captain Hughes who could replace him and help conduct the practice presentations that each participant must make. This presentation is also recorded on a mini DVD and presented to the participant. Captains Eric Bush and Dustin Hall got a short briefing on the classroom and video recording procedures and *Took Charge* of this event. Problem Solved.

Our company works with many Fire and EMS organizations across the nation. We were very impressed with the professionalism of the firefighters from your organization who attended the course.
I have included a Certificate of Appreciation for your Department and Captain Hughes. I have also included a Course Roster that clearly shows the wide participation of emergency responders for this course and the value of your regional training facilities. Again, we sincerely appreciate the great support provided by Captain Hughes and the Visalia Fire Department.

Sincerely,

Billy .{ Rutherford
President

Dear Mayor Robert Link:

My name is Taurie Thayer and I am a proud citizen of Visalia. My goal in life is to make the world a better place and I do my best to reach my goal every day by working for the Golden State YMCA. However, that is not why I am writing you.

On Friday, August 26th at 8:30pm, I was disrupted from my "TV and Couch Time" by an unidentifiable smell similar to burnt rubber. My two sons and my partner ran around the house trying to find the "Hot" smell. It was not sulphuric (as in not the gas line) but still it smelled dangerous and was very scary. The four of us contemplated calling 9-1-1 but felt it would waste tax payer dollars. My youngest son said, "But mom, isn't 9-1-1 here to help us?" The wisdom of children….. so I called.

The dispatcher asked us to evacuate our home and a few minutes later, a BIG yellow fire truck pulled up in front of my house. I didn't know what to expect because I've never had a fireman come to my home before. I was expecting them to have the same machismo attitude as quite a few policeman I have come across (NOT Scott Harris though, he's the bomb!!) and I was a little anxious because of it. I was also feeling quite "girl-ish" in the fact that I couldn't identify the smell and I didn't want to waste their time. As the great big and tall firefighter jumped out of the truck, he spoke to me with a calm nurturing that felt like my big brother ran over to make sure I'm OK. And when the other BIG guys started to pile out, they were the same…… sweet, tender, nurturing, calm and respectful, so very respectful. I also have a female partner, and I am used to snickers and jokingly rude comments about my lifestyle from people who don't know us… and none of that happened either. They didn't seem to notice or care that we were lesbians, it was the very LAST thing on their minds (or at least they acted as though J). My safety and the safety of my family and pets were what they were concerned with.

They were thorough and when I apologized, they said, "But, that's what we are here for." Just like my son had said. For an hour an a half they searched my home, checking all my electrical outlets, florescent light ballasts, stove hood, air conditioner, crawl spaces and even my roof. The culprit was a "hot spot" in my ceiling fan in which we believe a belt was burning. They stayed until the ceiling fan cooled down and we were no longer in danger.

I ask you, Mr. Mayor to please acknowledge these fine men of our fine town! They deserve the utmost respect and praise. I will no longer take them for granted and will probably wave profusely every time a fire truck passes my car. And while I'm waving to my new big brothers and they look at me like, "Who is that crazy lady waving hello to us?" I will think, "You may not know who I am, but I SURELY know who YOU are!!!! MY Community Heroes!!!"

Thank you for taking the time to read this Sir, and thank you for being part of the governing body of such an amazing community. God bless you, God bless Visalia and God bless the world!
Sincerely,

Taurie Thayer J