Visalia Fire Department

JULY 2010

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 ADMINISTRATION TEAM

Mark R. Nelson
Fire Chief

Doyle Sewell
Battalion Chief

Danny Wristen
Battalion Chief

Charlie Norman
Battalion Chief

Fire Chief's Corner

On July 20, 2010, City staff and members of the community made a presentation to the Tulare County Board of Supervisors regarding the need for a local Haz Mat Response Team and the lack of funding to pay for the ongoing costs associated with the team. Further discussion was directed to the request for each agency to pay a proportional share of the costs and how the City of Visalia arrived at a recommended cost distribution. There was good dialog, however, several questions still remained. The Board of Supervisors understood the benefit of having a local Haz Mat Response Team, and as an interim measure, agreed to pay the recommended fee until December 31, 2010. The Board further directed the County CAO to work with the eight city managers in Tulare County to develop a funding model to pay for the Haz Mat Response Team, and to look into the possibility of funding other local programs in the County such as a Decontamination Team and a Rescue Team.

Also in July, we held our 2 Kids Fire Camps at Station 55. I wanted thank the personnel that participated in this very popular program and the leadership of Battalion Chief Norman that made it so successful. The camp is highlighted in the Prevention portion of this months newsletter.

Thank you,
Chief Nelson

Emergency Preparedness

This month, we continued to work on the LEAP Grant, which consisted of the completion of several required reports and work on the RFP and the Project Management Plan. Karl Kassner attended the Golden Guardian Disaster Drill planning meeting and discussed the drill planned for 2011. Both Karl Kassner and Danny Wristen will be members of the Planning Committee for this drill. I attended a portion of the Emergency Council meeting and we discussed Alert TC, the Hazard Mitigation Plan and the Evacuation Plan.

Operations

During the month of July, the Visalia Fire Department Operations Division responded to 951 calls for service, with a current average of 792 calls per month. For press release information, please go to www.ci.visalia.ca.us and click on Fire Department.

FIRES		**59**
Building, In a Building, or In a Mobile Home	14	
Vehicles / Equipment	8	
Grass, Vegetation, Brush	20	
Trash, Rubbish, Dumpster, Other	17	
RUPTURE / EXPLOSION		**0**
EMS / RESCUE		**599**
EMS Call, Medical Assist	574	
Vehicle Accident w/Injuries, Vehicle/Pedestrian	24	
Extrication or Rescue from Vehicle, Building, Other	1	
HAZARDOUS CONDITION		**98**
SERVICE CALL / PUBLIC ASSIST		**43**
GOOD INTENT		**129**
FALSE CALL / OTHER		**23**
SEVERE WEATHER		**0**
TOTAL		**951**

Significant Incidents

On Thursday, July 8, 2010, the Visalia Fire Department responded to a vacant residential structure fire at 1012 N Rinaldi. Upon arrival, the first fire unit had one detached garage fully engulfed with flames. The fire was spreading to the house and threatening a structure directly south. Fire units arrived and began fire attack from all directions minimizing the spread of fire to the adjacent structures. Fire crews made entry in the structure to ensure an all clear of any possible occupants, none were located.

Edison and Gas companies were requested to the scene to secure the utilities. One power line was down and threatening fire operations. Edison arrived on scene and secured the power to the residence. The fire was extinguished to both structures. Fire crews remained on scene for approximately three hours for overhaul and investigation. Damage estimate loss was $70,000 with $2,000 content loss. The structure to the south sustained minor damage from fire spread. The area of origin was located in the garage with an unknown cause. No injuries to fire personnel and civilians were sustained during this incident.

On Tuesday, July 27, 2010, the Visalia fire Department responded to a residential structure fire at 535 N Court St. Upon arrival of the first unit, they found a two story multi family residence, with smoke showing from an upstairs apartment unit.

Fire personnel gained access through the front door of the apartment fire and extinguished the fire. Fire personnel were able to salvage personal belongings in a lower apartment unit affected by water from the extinguishment of the fire. There were no injuries to residents or fire personnel. The fire caused an estimated $10,500 in damage to the structure and contents of the affected units. Two residents in the lower unit were relocated by the Red Cross.

Visalia Fire Investigators conducted an investigation into the cause of the fire and determined the fire was accidentally caused.

Prevention

	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	Total
Weed Abatement													
Complaints Received	2	45	95	90	101	72	86						491
Self Abatements	0	5	14	27	15	38	14						113
Department Abatements	1	1	25	19	24	46	59						175
No Action Taken	3	4	9	21	5	33	19						94
Pending							67						67
Property Maintenance													
Complaints Received	13	10	23	13	15	25	27						126
Self Abatements	1	2	1	12	2	2	6						26
Department Abatements	2	1	2	0	1	0	1						7
No Action Taken	5	6	4	18	2	22	16						73
Pending							40						40
Inspections													
Staff													
Life Safety Inspections	25	97	43	89	112	118	115						599
Follow up Inspections	56	65	66	83	59	59	32						420
Engine Companies													
Life Safety Inspections	236	263	330	321	191	191	106						1638
Follow up Inspections													

Public Education

The Visalia Fire Department completed a total of 20 Public Education sessions. This service was provided to approximately 441 Visalia citizens.

The Public Education Program's focus is to educate our community on fire safety. Our firefighters visit elementary schools and after school programs weekly. Scheduled tours of the fire stations are also an important aspect of Public Education.

To schedule a visit to your school or tour please call 559-713-4266

Prevention Fire Camp July 2010

The Junior Rescuers Fire Camp was a huge success. The Visalia Fire Department held two fire camps during the month of July. Each camp had approximately 40 junior firefighters in attendance. The camp allowed the youths to spend a week in the Visalia Fire Department performing age appropriate tasks. The activities included hose, ladders, a physical agility test, fire engine rides and search and rescue drills. The last day of each week long camp featured a water ball and bucket brigade competition and a certificate presentation. The two camps this year had the largest number of attendees since the program began in 2008. All of the attendees went home wet and happy. The camps have had several returning attendees from the previous years.

A very special "Thank You" to the Visalia Parks and Recreation Department, for their involvement in the fire camps.

Training

During the month of July, the Visalia Fire Department completed 1003 hours of training, of which 355 qualified for California Firefighter Joint Apprentice Committee reimbursement. The different focus areas were 196 hours of Wildland Realities and Myths presented to all personnel by guest speaker Division Chief Rich Rubin, Los Aptos/Selva Fire Department. All personnel were trained in 108 hours of terrorism techniques and informational procedures by guest speaker Tom Knowles from the Fresno Terrorism Division. All personnel maintained their medical skills by participating in 154 hours of training in bleeding, shock and musculoskeletal injuries. Additionally, crews utilized the "Inforcer", simulating the forcing of entry into both inward and outward swinging doors. Our personnel participated to 190 hours of Large Area Search techniques utilizing 3 new rope rescue bags that were purchased to assist in searching large buildings or areas. This skill was practiced in order to prevent an "Emergency Traffic" situation for a lost or trapped firefighter.

Strike Team

During the month of July, the Visalia Fire Department participated in the California Fire Assistance Agreement Program and sent one fire engine with four personnel and one Battalion Chief to the Wildland Urban Interface Fires. All of our personnel were assigned to the Bull Fire on the Sequoia National Forest in the Kernville area of Kern County. One fire engine with four personnel was sent to the fire on July 26th and returned to Visalia on July 29th. The other was an overhead assignment as a Strike Team leader Trainee for our Battalion Chief. This request was sent to the fire on July 27th and returned to Visalia on July 28th. All of our personnel were assigned to structure protection during their assignment on the fire. The Bull Fire started on July 26th and burned over 16,000 acres. The fire destroyed eight residential structures and six outbuildings.