Visalia Fire Department

SEPTEMBER 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

I participated in the process for evaluating two management vendor presentations that provide a high tech software as well as support for the processing of staff reports for City Council agenda packets. Recommendations were made to city staff and are currently being evaluated by the City Clerk's Office.

This month Chief Sewell and I interviewed 15 Firefighter/ Paramedic applicants for current and upcoming vacancies. It was encouraging to have such a strong pool of well qualified candidates to consider. Selections for the positions will be made by December of this year.

Additionally, we interviewed 4 candidates for the current Fire Captain vacancy. Tom Van Grouw was selected for the promotion to Fire Captain. We are looking forward to great things from him. Congratulations Tom!

I attended the annual Fire Chief's Conference in San Diego with VFD Association President Chris Ortiz. There were excellent seminars and workshops on labor management relationships, budgets, planning and retirement benefit evaluations. This was a good opportunity for both sides to hear accurate information about the fiscal challenges the fire service will be facing in the future.

Thank you,
Chief Nelson

Emergency Preparedness

This month staff attended the new Alert TC - Reverse 911 training. The system has changed to a new vendor and the core group of city employees will be meeting to develop the work new program. We received several evaluations for the EOC Drill conducted in August. We have reviewed the evaluations and will be working to improve and refine our training plans based on several of the comments received. We continue to work on the LEAP Grant and will soon have the RFP complete and begin the process to bring on a consultant to assist with the energy assurance planning process. Fire staff are also working on the 2011 golden Guardian drill which is a state-wide drill that will test the emergency preparedness of many communities through out the state.

Operations

During the month of September, the Visalia Fire Department Operations Division responded to 842 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		**31**
Building, In a Building, or In a Mobile Home	9	
Vehicles / Equipment	8	
Grass, Vegetation, Brush	6	
Trash, Rubbish, Dumpster, Other	8	
RUPTURE / EXPLOSION		**1**
EMS / RESCUE		**527**
EMS Call, Medical Assist	493	
Vehicle Accident w/Injuries, Vehicle/Pedestrian	31	
Extrication or Rescue from Vehicle, Building, Other	3	
HAZARDOUS CONDITION		**97**
SERVICE CALL / PUBLIC ASSIST		**28**
GOOD INTENT		**139**
FALSE CALL / OTHER		**19**
SEVERE WEATHER		**0**
TOTAL		**842**

Incidents

On Monday, September 20, 2010, the Visalia Fire Department responded to a reported residential structure fire. Upon arrival, fire crews found the fire had been extinguished by neighbors. The fire started on the exterior of a garage door. Additionally, the following morning another fire occurred at 4:44am at the same address. The fire was an exterior fire involving a fence and a SUV Quad. Minor damage occurred to a structure to the north of 2134 S Dollner. The fire was extinguished by fire personnel and logged under control within five minutes of arrival. One minor injury was reported by a civilian. The civilian reported a minor burn to her foot but denied any medical treatment by fire personnel. The total dollar amount lost is estimated to be $2500. The cause of the fire is currently under investigation. Due to the fact that there have been 4 fires set at this home, an investigation is underway to put an end to the fires.

On Friday, September 24, 2010, the Visalia Fire Department responded to a reported gas leak at the intersection of Murray and McAuliff, in Northeast Visalia. Upon arrival, fire crews found a drilling rig setup at the location with personnel indicating there was a leak at the rear of the vehicle. A large amount of vapors were visible as well as an audible hissing sound. One additional fire engine and a Battalion Chief were requested for support. A safety perimeter was established and the area was isolated from vehicle and foot traffic. The California Gas Company was requested to respond to control the release. The incident was caused due to a drilling rig taking soil samples which resulted in the rupture of a 2" gas line. Workers immediately shut down operations once the leak started in order to eliminate any ignition sources. Fire personnel checked the neighborhood down wind of the incident for vapors and none were found. Once the California Gas Company arrived on scene, they determined that hand digging was needed on both sides of the effected gas line and would clamp the ruptured line. It took the California Gas Company crews approximately 45 minutes to stop the flow of gas. No injuries were reported. The incident lasted approximately 90 minutes.

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	23	20				534
Self Abatements	0	5	14	27	15	38	14	35	9				157
Department Abatements	1	1	25	19	24	46	59	14	12				201
No Action Taken	3	4	9	21	5	33	19	8	7				109
Pending									27				27
Property Maintenance													
Complaints Received	13	10	23	13	15	25	27	53	68				247
Self Abatements	1	2	1	12	2	2	6	11	26				63
Department Abatements	2	1	2	0	1	0	1	2	5				14
No Action Taken	5	6	4	18	2	22	16	16	29				118
Pending									47				47
Inspections													
Staff													
Life Safety Inspections	25	97	43	89	112	118	115	82	112				793
Follow up Inspections	56	65	66	83	59	59	32	26	56				502
Engine Companies													
Life Safety Inspections	236	263	330	321	191	191	106	170	118				2032
Follow up Inspections													

Public Education

The Visalia Fire Department completed a total of 11 Public Education sessions. This service was provided to approximately 302 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

Training

During the month of September, the Visalia Fire Department completed 1274 hours of training, of which 357 qualified for California Firefighter Joint Apprentice Committee reimbursement. The different focus areas were 547 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. All fire personnel were trained in 153 hours of emergency medical training in head and spine injuries and soft tissue injuries. Paramedics received advanced life support training in needle thoracostomy techniques. Fire Station 55 personnel and the Department Training Officer received 75 hours of live fire training in Aircraft Rescue Fire Fighting techniques at the San Bernardino Regional Emergency Training Facility. Five personnel received 142 hours of Terrorism Liaison Officer training in Fresno, CA. All fire personnel maintained 62 hours of monthly safety and post incident analysis training.

The Visalia Fire Department hosted a 2-hour workshop presented by the California Emergency Management Agency titled, "Crisis Communications and Disaster Preparedness for California Public Officials", at the Fire Station 55 Training Facility. Our City Council members, department head officials, and other local public officials from other cities and agencies were in attendance.

Honor Guard

Five members from the Visalia Fire Department Honor Guard attended a ceremony in Colorado Springs, Colorado as part of the International Association of Firefighters National Fallen Firefighters Memorial during the weekend of September 11, 2010. This was in recognition of former Firefighter Frank Reed whose name was added to the National Memorial Wall of firefighters who have perished in the line-of-duty.

September 11th Ceremony

On Saturday September 11, 2010, at 9:00 am, the Visalia Fire Department held a 9/11 Memorial Service at Fire Station 51, located at 309 S Johnson Street. The service was approximately 30 minutes in duration and many Visalia citizens were in attendance.

Safety Training

September's safety topic was Accident Investigation. Determining the cause of accidents is important to prevent future incidents and is an OSHA requirement. The Safety Committee began working on the Facility Self Inspection Forms. Our goal is to design the forms to be more specific for each facility, along with being user friendly. Additionally, Brian Winter, from the Visalia Police Department, was instrumental with conducting a hazard assessment on the security of the Parks and Recreation facilities.