



Eureka Fire Department 2010 3rd Quarter Report

Chief's Report

Chief Eric M. Smith



As I sit down to write my last quarterly report for Eureka Fire, I find myself reflecting upon the list of accomplishments your fire department achieved during the last quarter, but also upon the considerable challenges that it faces in the long-term.

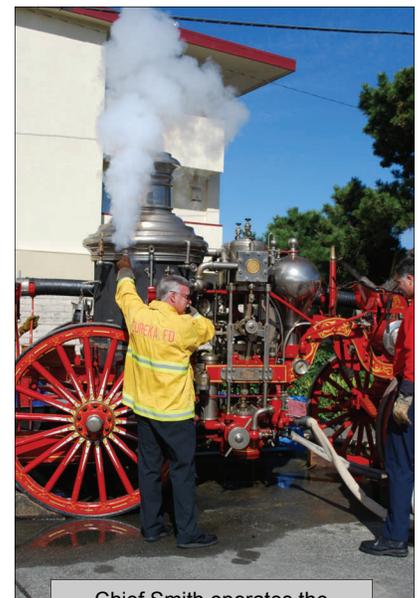
The City of Eureka has been withstanding some of the most challenging times in recent memory, and yet your fire department continues to make incremental strides in our ability to assist our community by providing the services that they have come to expect. During this quarter, EFD was able to focus what savings it was allowed to keep on an upgrade of its aging personal protective equipment, continued development of our personnel and their specialized rescue skills, and the diversification of the Hazardous Materials Team. We also focused on a number of planning- and preparation-related activities including the rebuilding of our disaster preparedness knowledge base, and consulting on a number of large building projects that included College of the Redwoods, Ridgewood Village, and St. Joseph Hospital. Last, but not least, we began to reconfigure our organization in an effort to prepare for the loss of key personnel.

As we look to the future, there is a tremendous amount of uncertainty due to the fiscal condition of the City, uncertainty that adds significant stress to all involved. Out of this stress and uncertainty, a glimmer of hope appears in the form of community members voicing their support of public safety and their desire to return our department to effective staffing and funding levels. It is my desire that regardless of how Measure "O" turns out, the citizens of Eureka will continue to play an active role in assisting the City in determining the level of Fire, Emergency Medical, and Community Risk Reduction services they want "their" fire department to provide. Without our citizen's input and assistance, the image of continuing at a level of "status quo" is not a pretty one.

As I reflect upon the past eight years as your fire chief, I believe that our fire department team has been dedicated to disclaiming our critical needs on a continual basis. On numerous occasions, we have described the challenges and costs associated with fixing our failing infrastructure and chronic understaffing to any and all that would listen. And as a department, we have expended countless hours of research into the various configurations or options put forth by the Council and Finance Advisory Board. All of this in an effort to provide all interested parties with the pertinent facts and figures and any other information needed to find an appropriate solution to this dilemma. Unfortunately, as of this report, success has eluded this collective effort.

Recently, I was named as the proponent of a consolidated regional fire agency that would encompass Humboldt Bay. I can honestly say that I have never advocated this configuration, nor suggested it was the solution to our problems. Rather, I have advocated for open dialog amongst a group of stakeholders invested in determining the appropriate configuration of fire protection and risk reduction services for the citizens of Eureka. Such a process would provide a "Strategic Analysis" of current and desired levels of service. The second step of the Strategic Analysis process would include the research and development of the "Action or Business Plan" required to achieve the Strategic goals identified. This "*Strategic Analysis and Plan*" would also help solve the question as to the appropriate form of government required to be successful in accomplishing the needed evolution of our Fire, EMS, and Community Risk Reduction system.

In August 1985, I came to work for Eureka Fire Department; an opportunity for which I will always be grateful. It is my hope that during the past 25 years, I have met or exceeded the expectations of my community and fire department fellows. As I depart, I am proud of what our employees have accomplished and knowing that this dedicated group of individuals will continue to provide the best service possible is very satisfying. I know I leave the City of Eureka in good hands. And, to our partners in emergency response, the citizens, and businesses of Eureka, thank you for your support and faith in us as we put forth our efforts to minimize the risks within our community. Without your partnership, confidence, and commitment, we could not have achieved the success that we have.



Chief Smith operates the antique steam fire engine at the annual Open House, Oct 9th

Sincerely, Chief Smith

The Third Quarter of 2010 remained a busy time for the Suppression Division. Eureka Fire Department entered our Third Quarter with our front line 100' ladder truck out of service with a catastrophic engine failure. The breakdown began at the end of the Second Quarter, and mechanics from the Corporation Yard worked diligently to repair the unit prior to the July 4th holiday. It was found that the engine had suffered greater initial damage than originally believed. After some search, a company that could provide the appropriate replacement engine was located and began building a proper replacement engine. The engine was delivered, and personnel from the Corporation Yard completed installation of the engine. The engine was pump tested August 19 at Arcata Fire Protection District's Mad River Station, where it was put through a recognized acceptance test process, performing for approximately three (3) hours under load. The truck was returned to front line service later that day.

Near the end of the quarter during routine maintenance, Truck 8181 (3084) was found to have leaking waterway seals and a leaking hydraulic extension ram. The waterway seals slide on the waterway as it is extended or contracted, and seal the waterway to allow water to get to the basket nozzle. The seals are showing wear and scoring. The extension ram has a very minor leak in a shaft seal. Both issues do not affect the safety or use of the apparatus, but must be addressed. Both issues will be repaired at the Corporation Yard, but will require the truck to be out of service for a few days. This repair will more than likely be completed in the fourth quarter.

During the quarter Station 3 was outfitted with a new radio alerting system. This marks the final station at EFD to be upgraded, as both HQ and Station 4 were upgraded in the previous two years. As with the other stations, Station 3 will cycle from daytime monitoring to night time "silent" mode automatically, and only open the radio when the station is toned via dispatch. Captain II Hulbert and Captain Nicklas worked with staff from Engineering through the process of funding, installation, and product performance and acceptance.

Station 3 was found to have significant rot and leakage issues in the walls surrounding the bathroom shower. The shower was removed, as were portions of the walls. Station 3 crews assisted in repair work by cutting and removing the concrete floor under the shower, which allowed plumbers to re-route failing plumbing and drain piping. A new shower unit was installed, with Station 3 personnel working to finish the wall surface and floor time adjacent to the shower.

During August an order of Globe turnouts arrived from the manufacturer and L.N. Curtis & Sons. The order was placed at the end of May, and shipping time was longer than planned or provided by the vendor. As noted in the previous quarterly report, these turnouts mark a change on our turnout style and appearance, being essentially the same specification as the turnouts currently in use by Humboldt Fire District #1. HFD has been happy with the performance of the model and specification, and it is my hope that we will find the same level of performance. As a side note, after the turnouts were placed in service, the manufacturer realized that the wrong coat model had been produced and sent. The coats were actually one material and model style above our specification. The manufacturer offered to replace the coats at no charge to match our specified coat, or allow the coats to remain in service, with Globe absorbing the cost. The coats will remain in service, with very close inspection on future orders to confirm product specification prior to issuance.

A need to have our fleet of Thermal Imaging Cameras returned to Bullard for factory recalibration and repair was identified by FF Butler. By returning our TIC's one by one to Bullard, each unit will be factory recalibrated, have any damaged or worn parts replaced, and have all moisture seals replaced. The cost runs about \$895 per unit, subject to parts needs. The cameras will return as factory like new units. Without factory service, the units sensitivity can erode or fail, and the seals that protect the electronics from moisture deteriorate. Each unit will be gone approximately one month.

As noted in my previous report, effective July 1, 2010, the California Emergency Medical Services Authority (EMSA) will be implementing significant changes in EMT regulations within the State of California. These changes include establishing a Central Registry for EMT's, establishing State EMS Authority (EMSA) fees to support Registry, and requiring all EMT's to have a Department of Justice (DOJ) background check on file with the certifying entity. EMSA requires local EMS agencies to maintain the program and collect fees. Based on the requirement, all EMT's will have to complete LiveScan fingerprinting to be submitted to DOJ and FBI, with subsequent arrest notification. The cost of the LiveScan is \$76; \$32 to DOJ, \$19 to FBI, and a \$25 rolling fee. Certification with EMSA will cost \$75 initially, with a \$37 fee thereafter for recertification every two years. There is also the Northcoast EMS fee of \$40. Our department's EMT recertification runs on a two year basis, with most if not all certifications requiring renewal in 2011. Our costs per person would be \$191, with a total cost to the department of just over \$7,800. This increase was funded in the 2010-11 budget. The first round of fingerprinting will occur near the end of 2010, with the majority of members being fingerprinted prior to the end of March when EMT recertification must occur. Captain Lynch and Engineer Launius are work-

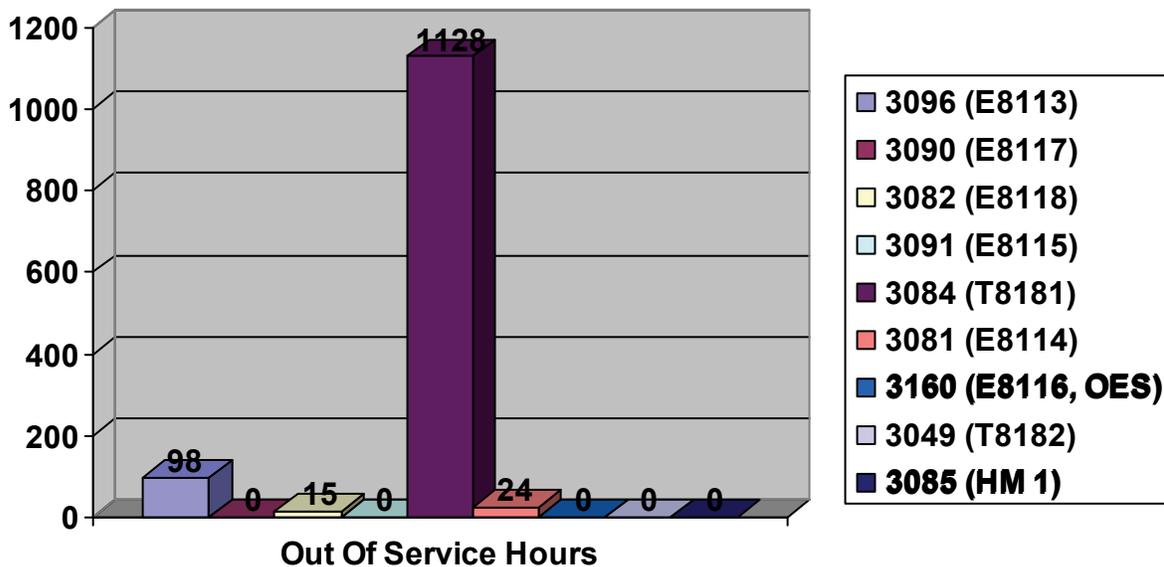
ing to identify which members must be printed first. It is anticipated that fingerprinting will either occur at EPD or HCSO.

Hose testing, apparatus pump testing, and apparatus cleaning were all completed during the quarter. Hydrant testing began as the quarter closed. This year a new process is being tried for our hydrant testing. Rather than sending out the hydrant zone list to the stations and hoping that all will participate, this year a set number of zones will be assigned to each engine company. Most companies are assigned four hydrant zones. The assignment will establish accountability for completion, and allow companies to complete their assignment and move on to other operational priorities. Public works significantly streamlined our process, as they have allowed hydrant zones to be tested with no requirement to follow a specific order. Public works advised that the amount of water we flow during testing does not provide enough flushing effect to require the zones to be taken in order as in the past. Public works also provided de-chlorination tablets again this year.

APPARATUS STATISTICS

The following charts show information relative to our apparatus and to incidents.

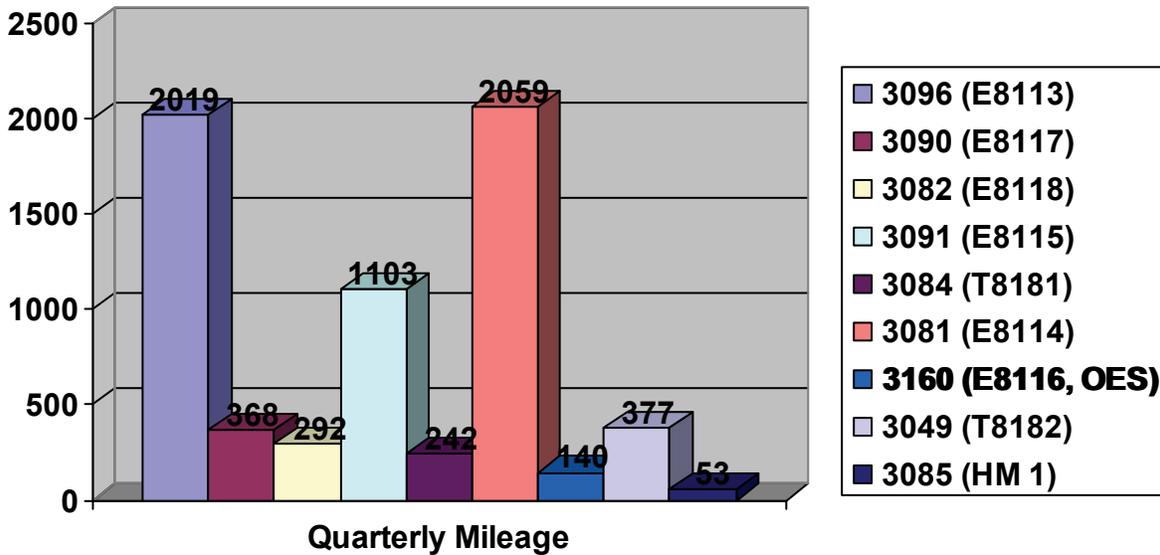
During the quarter, Captain Bakke reported on apparatus mileage and out of services hours. Truck 8181 (3084) spent the most time out of service, with roughly 1128 hours spent at the Corp Yard during the months of July and August for replacement of the engine. Engine 8114 (3081) had the highest number of miles driven through the 3rd Quarter at 2,059 miles. E8114 (3081) is currently the oldest apparatus in continued front line service.



3096	98		3090	0		3049	0
3081	24		3091	0		3084	1128*
3082	15		3160	0		3085	0
*Long-term Out-of-service period for engine replacement							

3096	2019		3090	368		3049	377
3081	2059		3091	1103		3084	242
3082	292		3160	140		3085	53
*Data missing or incomplete							

Quarterly apparatus mileage is included in the chart below for comparison of miles driven versus hours out of service.



INCIDENT ACTIVITY

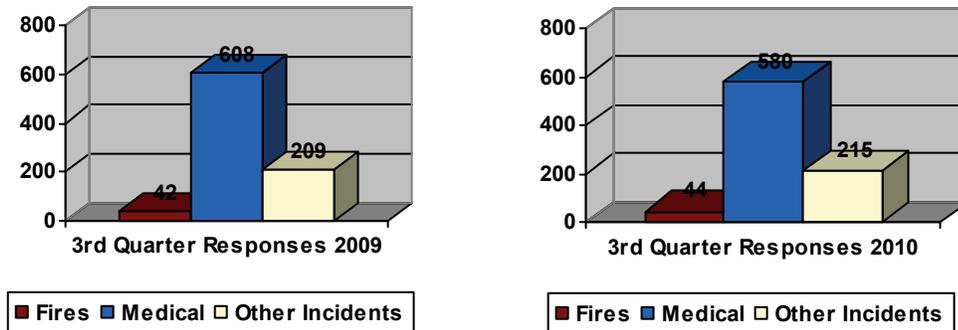
During the 3rd quarter, EFD responded to a total of 839 calls for service. Fire calls represented 44 calls, 15 of which were listed as structures. Overall estimated dollar loss from structural fires was \$254,000 for the quarter.

Emergency Medical Service (EMS) Incidents, including minor and major medical aids, traffic collisions, extrications and rescues, and lift assist calls accounted for 580 incidents.

All other calls for service accounted for 215 responses.

As you can see, our call volume for the third quarter 2010 is very similar to the same period from 2009. These figures come from Firehouse data provided for the quarter.

3rd Quarter 2009 vs. 2010



Chief Smith:

This will be my final Quarterly Suppression report submitted to you as we approach your pending retirement. I have enjoyed the opportunity to work closely with you and learn from you both in the field of Operations and in the administrative realm. I know there is so much more to learn, and the future challenges will be great, but I feel fortunate to have had the opportunity to experience some of these challenges with you. Thank you for your support, knowledge, and guidance.

Bill Gillespie

Recently, I had the opportunity to be talking with a member of the public in a local business. The person knows that I am a member of EFD, and was asking some questions about a structure fire that we responded to. While he asked a few broad questions about the building and the fire, he asked one very specific question that we hear often; what was the purpose of the engine crew that was standing outside the building next to the street? He said that the crew had tools, but did not go into the fire. This is a fairly common question. I explained that the crew in question was what we in the fire service call a “Rapid Intervention Team”, or RIT. It may also be called a RIC for “Rapid Intervention Crew”. Since this is a common question, I thought that I would expand on why this is a necessary component of fire ground activities.

The concept and requirement of the RIT or RIC comes from OSHA standard 29 CFR 1910.134(g)(4), which is a very small portion of the overall Respiratory Protection Standard that regulates many other industries using respiratory protection. This portion of the Respiratory Protection Standard, often referred to as “Two In/Two Out” went into effect October 5, 1998. The standard requires firefighters to wear self contained breathing apparatus (the air packs called SCBA) anytime they go into a burning building, maintain and have communications between persons inside and outside of a burning building, and always go into a hazardous environment as a team of at least two persons. The standard also requires that any time a crew goes into a hazardous environment, referred to as “IDLH” (Immediately Dangerous to Life and Health) there be a crew located on the exterior of the building to rescue those operating inside. This portion of the standard came to exist because historically too many firefighters died while fighting fires due to insufficient personnel accountability, and poor or ineffective communications. It also stems from the practice of putting “all hands” into the building.

The standard requires a team or crew (RIT) with a minimum of two “properly equipped and trained” firefighters to be assigned as the exterior “two out” rescue team. This crew must be on scene and ready prior to entry into the structure by other crews. It will normally be seen near an entrance to the structure, and will assemble tools and other equipment they deem necessary in the event of an interior crew rescue situation. Such a situation could involve a partial collapse of the fire building where a crew or firefighter is trapped, or it could involve a firefighter who has suffered a medical emergency while inside. It could involve a firefighter who has experienced a malfunction of their SCBA, or a firefighter who has become separated from his/her crew. A rescue situation could also arise from a firefighter who has become entangled in wires within a structure; this is a very real situation in our current climate of indoor marijuana grow houses that utilize wiring that is not up to code standards. The

RIT maintains radio contact with the incident commander and listens to the activities and progress of interior crews. The RIT will often “soften” the structure by forcing open side or rear doors, knock out windows to allow smoke to escape, and place ladders to upper floors or the roof area. Each of these activities works to give the interior crews multiple ways out of a building, and also gives the RIT multiple ways into the building for rescue.

With all the benefit of the RIT for firefighter safety, ap-

This picture illustrates the RIT crew as they cut an opening in the roll-up door in case interior crews need an emergency exit.



plication of the requirement has not come without challenges. One of the toughest challenges when working to comply with the mandate is resource availability. To meet the requirement, you will remember that a minimum of two properly equipped and trained firefighters must be on the exterior of the building when crews work inside. This effectively takes one engine crew on the fire ground away from interior firefighting to staff this mandated role. One exception to the mandate of “Two In/Two Out” occurs in an emergency situation where immediate action is necessary to save a life. An example of this could involve a residential structure fire with confirmed occupants trapped within. Entry would be made without the mandated RIT in place. In the case of Eureka Fire and Humboldt Fire, a broadcast would be made that crews were entering without RIT to attempt a rescue. The entry without RIT is documented to illustrate why the crew was not in place as mandated.

Many times when mandates or laws are passed, those affected will wonder “why”; likewise the public often expresses “why” as well, as in “why isn’t that crew going in?!” The mandate and requirement of RIT or “Two In/Two Out”, while sometimes challenging, is essential for the safety of firefighters across this country, and within our own community. The mandate helps keep us, the firefighters, safe while we work to keep our community safe.

Collateral Duties

Apparatus

Emergency Medical Services (EMS)

Equipment
-Hand Tools

Facilities
-Buildings & Grounds

Hose/Nozzles

Hydrants
-Testing & Data

Infectious Disease Control

Maps/GIS

Monitoring Equipment

Personal Protective Equipment

Power Equipment

Radios/Pagers

Respiratory Protection Program
- Air Compressor
- SCBA

Safety
- Fire Department

Target Hazard
- Sprinklered Buildings
- Knox Boxes & Keys

Technical Rescue

Training

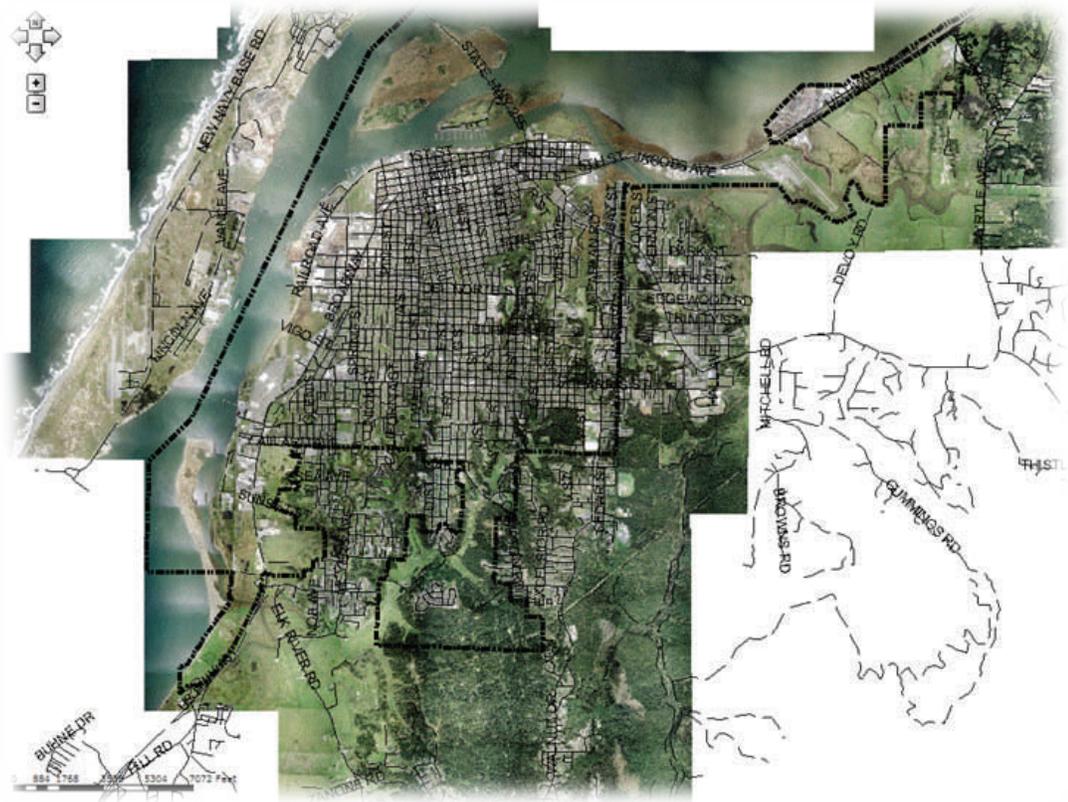
Volunteers

Wildland

Maps/GIS
Firefighter Tony Freeman

Firefighter Freeman oversees the collateral duty of Maps/GIS. His duty not only involves updating our existing maps and map books, but also that of learning and incorporating a new mapping program, OnScene Xplorer. This program is computer based, and intended to run on in-vehicle computers, such as mobile data terminals, or MDT's. The program incorporates area maps showing streets and hydrants like our map books in the past, but also incorporates building outlines, and allows property specific information, such as special hazards. Significant information about a facility can be incorporated into the software, giving fire crews and incident commanders immediate information availability. The program looks for specific information for these large, hazardous, or challenging facilities, often called "Target Hazard" buildings in the fire service.

Part of Firefighter Freeman's challenge with the new software involves entry of our existing data, as well as collection of the new and necessary data that we do not currently catalogue. This is another place where our annual commercial business inspections conducted by the engine companies will be not only helpful, but vital to the program. FF Freeman plans to work with the Prevention Captain II to identify when certain "Target Hazard" facilities are due for inspection, and provide those crews with a list of necessary information that they can collect at the time of the inspection. Currently FF Freeman is also working to incorporate facility information received from Humboldt Fire District #1 into the program.



Focus on Fire Safety Education

This year one of the Eureka Fire Department's goals is to increase our community's fire and life safety education. We've kicked off these efforts this quarter with more public events and improvements to our educational display materials. In the United States, home fires account for 85 percent of all civilian fire deaths. Our education efforts are primarily targeted at residential safety, providing and maintaining smoke alarms, and escape planning.

Our first step was purchasing table presentation materials including a display board, sign frames, and brochure holders. We debuted the display at a College of the Redwoods safety fair, and followed up at our Open House on October 9th.



New FPB display board

Out at College of the Redwoods we trained the resident advisors on how to use fire extinguishers, and general fire safety. That was followed up with a residence hall fire safety presentation to incoming dorm

residents at their orientation night. We were back out at C/R along with the Red Cross and Coast Guard for a safety fair.

We delivered fire and life safety education at the Humboldt County Fair along with our partner agencies in the Humboldt County Fire Prevention Officer's Association. The Prevention Officer's fire education trailer focuses on residential fire safety and includes a simulated smoke filled bedroom, smoke alarm activation, and escape out the window to the family meeting place.

Even more educational activities are planned. Additional targeted groups include seniors, graduating high school seniors, and elementary schools. In October, events are scheduled at the California State Auto Association, K-Mart, and Sears.

Rusty Goodlive

3rd Quarter Statistics

- 270 Engine Company Inspections
- 25 Development Plan check reviews
- 89 Fire Inspector conducted State-mandated Inspections
- 121 Weed/Trash Abatement cases
- 11 Investigations
- 40 Training Hours

Prevention - Highlighted Reports

Fire Investigators

Captain P.J. Lynch

What is a *Fire Investigator*? For the City of Eureka, a Fire Investigator is an individual within Eureka Fire Department that has undergone significant specialized training on how to determine what exactly happened in a fire. These individuals have a minimum of 140 hours of training in origin and cause (what started the fire and where did it start?), laws and regulations, report writing, evidence collection, and interviewing before they start looking at incidents in the field. The investigators, as part of their training will go into a controlled burn building and learn how to "read the burn". By looking at a wall, pattern, or the over all damage to a room they can determine where the fire started, if doors were opened or closed, or if windows were intact before or after the fire.

Many of the investigators for Eureka Fire Department work "on shift". When units respond to a structure fire, the "shift investigator" most likely will be on an Engine and will be part of the suppression effort. Once the fire has been knocked down he will begin the laborious job of determining the origin and cause of the fire.

If something is found that indicates a crime has been committed, the investigator will work with law enforcement to begin the Arson investigation, by collecting evidence in an effort to identify the individuals responsible.

Eureka Fire Department Investigators also work with the Humboldt County Fire/Arson Investigation Unit. This is a group of fire, law enforcement, and members of the Humboldt County District Attorney's office that will work anywhere in the county if a significant fire has occurred that exceeds the capabilities of the local fire department.



Humboldt County Fire Chiefs Association Incident Report Form for 2010

Eureka Fire Department	First Quarter		Second Quarter		Third Quarter		Fourth Quarter		Total For Year	
Type	#	\$ Loss	#	\$ Loss	#	\$ Loss	#	\$ Loss	#	\$ Loss
# Fires									107	\$778,850
Structures(Resid, Comm, Mobile, Chimney)	16	\$252,700	11	\$240,800	15	\$254,000	0	\$0	42	\$747,500
Vehicle Fires (Auto, Truck, R.V., Trailer)	7	\$12,500	5	\$9,100	4	\$7,400	0	\$0	16	\$29,000
Grass/Brush/Trees (Crops, Orchards)	3	\$0	1	\$50	9	\$0	0	\$0	13	\$50
Refuse/Not Classified(Undetermined, Other)	13	\$150	7	\$50	16	\$2,100	0	\$0	36	\$2,300
# Explosions/ Overpressure									3	\$0
Rupture (Steam, Gas, Air, Etc.)	0	\$0	1	\$0	1	\$0	0	\$0	2	\$0
Explosion (Vessel, Munitions, Heat/Burn)	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0
Not Classified (Unable to classified)	0	\$0	1	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0	1	\$0
# Rescue/Emergency Medical									1559	\$0
Medical (Assist, Call, Treatment)	568	\$0	481	\$0	507	\$0	0	\$0	1556	\$0
Rescue/Extrication	2	\$0	1	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0	3	\$0
Unable to Classify/Not Classified	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0
# Hazardous Condition/Standby									141	200020
Hazardous Condition (Flammable/Toxic)	23	\$0	9	\$0	14	\$0	0	\$0	46	\$0
Faulty Equipment (Electrical, Gas, Oil)	34	\$20	18	\$0	10	\$0	0	\$0	62	\$20
Vehicle Accident (Spill, Leak)	12	\$200,000	2	\$0	2	\$0	0	\$0	16	\$200,000
Explosives (Found Explosives, Bomb)	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0
Illegal Burning (Hazardous, Noxious, Illegal)	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0
Unable to Classify/Not Classified	9	\$0	1	\$0	7	\$0	0	\$0	17	\$0
# Service Calls									280	9510
Person/Public (Person in Distress)	72	\$0	70	\$0	73	\$0	0	\$0	215	\$0
Person/Public(Water, Smoke, Animal, Other)	14	\$4,500	5	\$5,010	8	\$0	0	\$0	27	\$9,510
Unauthorized/Improper Burning (complaint)	3	\$0	2	\$0	8	\$0	0	\$0	13	\$0
Cover/Move-up(Relocation of Company)	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0
Unable to Classify/Not Classified	6	\$0	6	\$0	13	\$0	0	\$0	25	\$0
# Good Intent Call									413	0
Incident Cleared Prior to Arrival	107	\$0	86	\$0	74	\$0	0	\$0	267	\$0
Wrong Location	30	\$0	18	\$0	20	\$0	0	\$0	68	\$0
Control Burn	4	\$0	3	\$0	7	\$0	0	\$0	14	\$0
Vicinity Alarm	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0
Steam, ETC., Mistaken for Smoke	3	\$0	0	\$0	2	\$0	0	\$0	5	\$0
Hazmat Investigation, Not Founded	4	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0	4	\$0
Unable to Classify/Not Classified	23	\$0	15	\$0	17	\$0	0	\$0	55	\$0
# False Alarm									97	0
Mischievous False Alarm, Bomb Scare	2	\$0	4	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0	6	\$0
System Malfunction (PFAS)	13	\$0	3	\$0	5	\$0	0	\$0	21	\$0
Unintentional	13	\$0	15	\$0	10	\$0	0	\$0	38	\$0
Unable to Classify/Not Classified	10	\$0	6	\$0	16	\$0	0	\$0	32	\$0
# Natural Disaster									8	15000
Earthquake, Flood, Windstorm	7	\$15,000	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0	7	\$15,000
Lightning Strike	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0
Unable to Classify/Not Classified	1	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0	1	\$0
# Other									3	0
Citizen Compliant	1	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0	1	\$0
Not Classified (Unable to classified)	1	\$0	0	\$0	1	\$0	0	\$0	2	\$0
Mutual Aid (Given)	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0
Mutual Aid (Received)	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0
Totals	1001	\$484,870	771	\$255,010	839	\$263,500	0	\$0	2611	\$1,003,380
# Miscellaneous										
Training Hours		1900.47		1073.64		1024.54		0		3998.65
Civilian Injuries or Deaths		1		1		0		0		2
Firefighter Injuries or Deaths		0		0		0		0		0