



Eureka Fire Department 2011 1st Quarter Report

Chief's Report

Interim Chief Bill Gillespie

The first quarter of 2011 continued busy as always for the Eureka Fire Department. Not only did we continue to experience the various emergency calls that we help the community with, we also saw changes, challenges, and opportunities throughout our department.

The quarter saw response totals down slightly from the previous year's first quarter, with fire responses down from 39 in the first quarter of 2010 to 22 in 2011. Though the numbers were reduced, the community experienced a terrible loss on February 4th with a fatality fire at 1320 Carson. Conditions present in the home led to the loss of life, as the lone occupant's escape was hindered by the same conditions that hindered our firefighters from being able to reach that trapped occupant; a considerable amount of personal "stuff" within the residence.

This is part of the same condition that led to the June, 2010 fatality fire in the 1800 block of Second Street. Both addresses were on the radar of the City of



Eureka Community Improvement Team, of which Fire Prevention personnel work with other City employees to address and improve property situations. Efforts for correction and compliance were underway at both locations, though unfortunately the efforts were derailed through the tragedy of fire. The Community Improvement Team has made great effort and success in our community at many other locations, and the fire department remains strongly committed to the team as we work to improve the appearance and safety of our community.

On March 10th and 11th, our community watched with the rest of the world as the tragedy of major earthquakes and subsequent tsunami struck the country of Japan. The impact of the earthquake was felt in our community as a tsunami watch, advisory, and warning was issued for the Pacific Coast. Various city staff converged in the early

morning hours at the fire station to begin planning for the arrival of the first predicted tsunami event shortly after 7:00 AM. Countywide warning sirens began sounding at 4:30 AM, and the community began to react. Fire personnel up-staffed additional engines and began driving in the inundation areas to help pass information. All fire and law enforcement units were removed from the inundation area prior to the predicted arrival. Our harbor and community was fortunate, though we did experience sudden water level rise and fall throughout the day, the surges came primarily during lower tide periods. Had the event coincided with a high tide, our experiences could have been very different. As with any event, areas of improvement were identified and efforts will be made to improve our capabilities for the next response. With this is the recommendation for increased and ongoing training to prepare our current and future pool of personnel in the emergency management functions of the EOC.

Eureka Fire embarked on two new training programs during the quarter; Target Safety and Grow Your Captains. In January we enrolled in an online training service provider known as Target Safety. We began the program in an effort to improve compliance with mandated training requirements, increase access to EMS continuing educational opportunities, improve training documentation, and provide access to a wide range of training resources. Although we are still getting used to the new program, it has great potential to improve training delivery for our firefighters. Response from our personnel has been positive so far. Although career departments in the area are leading the way, it is anticipated that the majority of volunteer fire departments in the county will also be using this resource in the near future. Grow Your Captains is a hybrid type leadership development training program provided both through webinar presentation and individual focus for fire department personnel from the ranks of Company Officer through Fire Chief. Within the fire service, we prepare our personnel as officers in emergency incident management, place strong focus on passing the promotional process, and

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provide varying training opportunities in management skills. The one area that we and the rest of the fire service lack training and experience is the realm of leadership. The training option that we have begun involves an immersion process where officers receive training sessions presented via web-based training on a weekly to monthly basis. The emphasis is that for training to be effective, it must be a process, not an event. Since most officers are promoted, but never trained as leaders, the ongoing immersion style process has the potential to develop personnel more thoroughly over time.

The quarter saw personnel changes within the department as well. Fire Captain Karl Churchwell retired from the organization after nearly 20 years of service. We congratulate him in achieving his retirement healthy and wish him the best in his future endeavors. The retirement did create a vacancy at the Captain level, leading to increased overtime coverage costs. A second Captain position became vacant April 1 as Fire Captain Sean Robertson was selected from a pool of candidates following



promotional testing for the Captain II position, and he began his assignment at the rank of Fire Captain II. Currently testing for the position of Fire Captain is scheduled for late spring. Also near the end of the first quarter we saw four new recruit Firefighters begin their training academy March 28. The four come to us through the support of the City Council and City Manager, as well as the community through the passage of Measure O last November. As said before, promotional testing is ongoing to address current and



anticipated vacancies within the department from establishment of a firefighter hiring list to selection of a permanent Fire Chief.

The Eureka Fire Department will continue to provide our many services to the community and the customers that we serve, and will strive to do so safely, efficiently, effectively, and with honor and pride.

Bill Gillespie

Prevention

Asst. Chief Rusty Goodlive

The first quarter of 2011 brought with it two significant changes and improvement in residential fire protection. With the adoption of the new California Building and Fire Codes, all new residential buildings, including one and two family dwellings, are required to be equipped with fire sprinklers. We do not anticipate a significant number of additional sprinkler system plan submittals; the building department estimates approximately 4-6 new one and two family building permits are submitted each year.

Another new requirement for residential construction is the installation of Carbon Monoxide alarms. Installation requirements are similar to smoke alarms. Of note is that these requirements will be retroactive for existing one and two family residences as of July 1st, 2011. The city intends to verify compliance with this requirement with remodel inspections.

I completed my participation in a State Fire Marshals Office prevention training course curriculum development committee in Sacramento. The committee has met monthly from September through February. The new class is "Fire Inspections for the Company Officer".

A Homeland Security prevention grant was submitted for a tablet based field inspection program. The goal of this program is to provide a paperless platform for field use by engine crews and inspectors for routine and enforcement inspections.

Enforcement / Abatement Issues

We continue to work with the Building Department, City Attorney's Office, PD, and other departments on the City's multi-property enforcement cases. This involved several warrant service inspections

Prevention

and follow ups as well as attending various meetings. Notable properties inspected this quarter included the Budget Inn and two residential properties in the 1400 block of West Street.

The Squires enforcement trial continued this quarter. To date, trial participation has been limited to the Building Department. I spent significant time researching supporting material from our files and preparing for my pending court appearance.

Property / Development Issues

Several significant projects are in progress or were completed this quarter, including:

- 109 4th St, Vets Center; Residential and services center tenant improvement
- Eureka Inn; ongoing improvements and upgrading of alarm system
- St Joseph's Hospital; new construction continues

Significant project proposals reviewed this quarter include:

- Schneider Marine Terminal development proposal
- Open Door Clinic; Tydd Street proposal
- Shamus T-Bones restaurant on Truesdale behind the Bayshore Inn
- Lost Coast Brewery on Sunset Avenue

Public Education and Events

A marine fire safety presentation was presented as part of a boating safety program at Woodley Island. Our presentation consisted of a brief group discussion of fire safety and protection systems on the various vessels used by those present and our fire extinguisher training presentation.

We participated in a Eureka High School "Youth Ready to Respond" program. This event, organized by Kayla Hulbert, brought City Schools 4th graders to the Marshal School campus for a morning of safety presentations by a variety of agencies. We put on a session of home safety including smoke alarms and EDITH drills. Humboldt Fire conducted fire extinguisher training.

Fire Investigations

Starting January 1 our investigation team was

reorganized and Jeff Nicklas assigned as the Investigation Team Leader. We have committed to quarterly team meetings and improved continuing education.

There were six investigation team level cases initiated this quarter. One was found to be incendiary or human caused and the rest are still pending. Of note was the fatality structure fire at 1320 Carson.

Haz Mat Response Team

Council member Melinda Ciarabellini was selected as the City's new representative to the Haz Mat Response Authority. We met with Melinda in February to brief her on the structure of the Authority and Response Team and its functions.

16 new portable radios were received from the County of Humboldt. These radios were funded by a Homeland Security grant administered by County OES.

The HMRT assisted with coordination and participated in the US Postal Service Biological Detection System training/drill at the main post office in Eureka. The drill tested evacuation of the facility, retrieval of cartridges and decontamination procedures for site employees and Postal Service Inspectors.

Emergency Management

The quarter started with the intent to use the March 23rd multi-county tsunami notification exercise as an opportunity to review and improve our tsunami plan. The actual March 11th tsunami event, however, resulted in the cancellation of the exercise. The event gave us the opportunity to test and evaluate some of our emergency management functions. During post incident reviews some specific areas for improvement were identified with follow up goals pending.

Other Issues

The Fire Prevention Bureau is challenged by the potential for the elimination of an Assistant Chief and the change to a two-Chief administrative system. The division of administrative responsibilities between the two Chief's and the resulting impacts on current programs and workload is unclear. Changes bring opportunities and we will continue to provide our best service to our community.

Prevention

Asst. Chief Rusty Goodlive

Fire Prevention Bureau Inspection Activities

Inspections	
Code Enforcement	7
City Facility	4
Other	5
Fire Inspector Activities	
R1/R2 Assigned	115
% Closed	54.78%
Open Enforcement	52
Licensed Facilities	10
% Closed	80%
Open Enforcement	2
Weed/Trash Abatement	4
Number of Plans Reviewed	22
Number of Plans Approved	20
Amount Billed @ \$98.60/hr	\$3,025.70

Fire Suppression Division Inspection Activities

Blocks Assigned	80
Total Businesses in Blocks	336
Inspections Completed	228
Follow Up Inspections	54
Referred to FPB	3

*Respectfully,
Rusty Goodlive*

Operations

Interim Chief Bill Gillespie

The First Quarter of 2011 remained busy at the fire department, with activities ranging from emergency response, to mid-year budget review, to equipment repair and replacement. Also being worked on were participation in contract negotiations for two employee groups, and research into the potential of a departmental redeployment and allocation of personnel positions. Work on this remains ongoing.

NARRATIVE:

Collaborative work continues with Humboldt Fire District in a number of operational areas. Both departments continue to share a training officer position. We also are working together to implement consistent joint operational and fire ground policies and procedures. This quarter, the departments also began to collaborate on potential purchasing areas, where collateral duty holders discuss needs, and purchases are coordinated with vendors to work for better price quotes while maintaining each jurisdiction's respective purchasing requirements. EFD, HFD, and Arcata worked together early in the quarter to come to agreement on providing Assistance by Hire for emergency response to Samoa Fire Protection District. The three departments had previously participated in a mutual aid agreement with Samoa, but due to staffing concerns at Samoa they were no longer a viable and reciprocal mutual aid partner. Samoa's Board agreed to enter into an assistance by hire contract until such time that their department maintains the ongoing and constant staffing to again contribute to the other communities.

Another area of joint work with both HFD and AFD is through our mapping and target hazard project. All three are working with the same mapping software company, Iron Compass, to provide consistent mapping and target hazard information. It has been identified by our participant in the process that a modern laptop is needed for him to be effective in his work, and discussion has followed with City of Eureka IT to make that purchase near the end of the fiscal year.

The Communications Committee, comprised of representatives from Dispatch, EFD, and HFD#1, worked during the quarter to evaluate how our change in dispatch notifications for the fire stations has been working. Input from the crews and the dispatchers are that all prefer the new method of dispatching. With the current silent station process being used at night, the pre-alert was not heard by

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the stations, and a delay of approximately 20 seconds per call occurred as dispatch followed procedure. It was decided that the pre-alert used would be the respective station radio tone for the station that was receiving the call. The station tone will open the radio immediately, with brief call type and address information given, followed by the standard station tone and information. The new procedure went into effect at the first of the year, and appears to have shortened response times by 10-15 seconds. Also changed through the Communications Committee is the daily radio check of all apparatus, where we discontinued the practice of radio checks via roll call of each apparatus. Apparatus are now checked by dispatch and crews once per week, with station checks and administrative message delivered daily.

The department continues to work to address Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) needs. Captain Robertson took over PPE with the retirement of Captain Churchwell. He has been working to replace our rubber departmental structure boots with a leather version that provides better traction, is lighter, and provides a better overall fit for personnel. He is also working to develop a replacement plan and schedule for aging turnouts should our AFG grant not be funded. All aerial and ground ladders went through annual testing during the quarter. Small lubrication issues were identified for the ladder trucks, which are being worked on with the Corp Yard. Two ground ladders failed testing due to wear, and were replaced during the quarter. Two intake ball valves required replacement on Truck 8181 due to age and wear. The valves have been in service for many years, as have been many in the fleet. The department will work to replace additional valves through the next fiscal budget, then fall into a plan to replace one valve each year. Other equipment needs are planned to be addressed in a similar fashion on an annual basis, a tool at a time, such as saw replacement and extrication equipment.

Our fleet of SCBA's has fallen off warranty, and repairs are becoming more costly. Such has been the case over the past quarter. Also identified within our SCBA and Breathing Air program is the need to train another departmental member in repair of the MAKO air compressor. The department currently has only one trained repair person that is routinely able to complete minor repairs to the unit. Without personnel trained, we must bring a repair person from Oakland each time a hose or other wear item is replaced. The addition of this training will be added to the budget request for the 2011/12 fiscal budget.

Numerous facility repair issues remain to be fixed during the quarter. Some sheetrock at Station 3 still requires repair following plumbing repair. Issues with the large garage doors at all three stations indicate replacement will be necessary in the not too distant future. It was also noted as the rainy season began, that there were numerous leaks in the Headquarters roof, primarily over the apparatus floor. Some leaks resulted in ceiling tiles falling to the floor. Sheetrock in the HQ shop also remains damaged and gone in places following significant leaks in the roof last year. Our department continues to work with Building Maintenance to address these issues, though work has been slow due to numerous personnel within their division being off for various issues. The Council approved monies earmarked for the HQ roof repair in late December following the passage of Measure O; it is my understanding that this repair is slated for later in 2011.

The Headquarters 2010 earthquake damage estimate was received at an estimated \$172,000. An estimate to replace the Headquarters building in its current configuration was also received at a cost estimate of \$5.93 million dollars. This number is far below the amount as listed in the CIP list due to differences in cost per square foot, and in the total square footage used for the calculations. The CIP contains estimates for the increased area needed to store apparatus, and to adequately house the many additional services that the department currently provides.

The department is preparing for a federally mandated switch to narrow band radio frequencies. Communication frequency licenses have returned from the FCC. EFD and HFD are working together for a coordinated reprogramming with this potentially occurring late in the Second Quarter.

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During the First Quarter, EFD CPR instructors conducted 15 CPR classes that taught 224 citizens the life saving training.

Since the beginning of the fiscal year, all EMT renewals at EFD have had an increased fee of \$115 per EMT as mandated by the California Emergency Medical Services Authority. Also mandated has been updated Livescan finger printing, with additional fees. After this initial fee increase, renewals will cost approximately \$75 per EMT every two years. This amount will need to be included every other year in the annual budget request documents so as to maintain certifications of our employees. Obtaining Livescan prints has been hindered due to issues with the livescan machine at EPD. Some time critical scans have occurred at Humboldt County Sheriffs Office. This process is ongoing.

Hilfiker Training site work continues. Regular maintenance mowing continued during the quarter. Captain II Hulbert continued to work with Engineering on an electrical plan to bring interior and exterior lighting to the drill tower. Both Whitchurch Engineering and the local Electrical Trades Union have been assisting. PG&E donated \$5,000 last fall which will be put toward the electrical improvement project. The project is ready for bid. Rescue Systems 2 level site accreditation continues to be a priority project. This is being assisted by grant monies from the Department of Homeland Security through the County Office of Emergency Services. Level 2 site accreditation allows level 2 rescue classes to be taught at the training site. Currently there are a limited number of RS2 accredited sites in California, and local personnel must travel at great cost to attend training out of the area. Also being pursued at the training site is the addition of a concrete pad along the training tower to allow crews to pull and deploy fire hose without dragging it through the mud. EFD is working in conjunction with Engineering to complete plans and specifications for a surface that will support our ladder truck. The departmental safety officers of both Eureka Fire and Humboldt Fire have identified areas of safety concern at the training site, and a plan is in development that will address these areas to help prevent accidents and reduce liability.

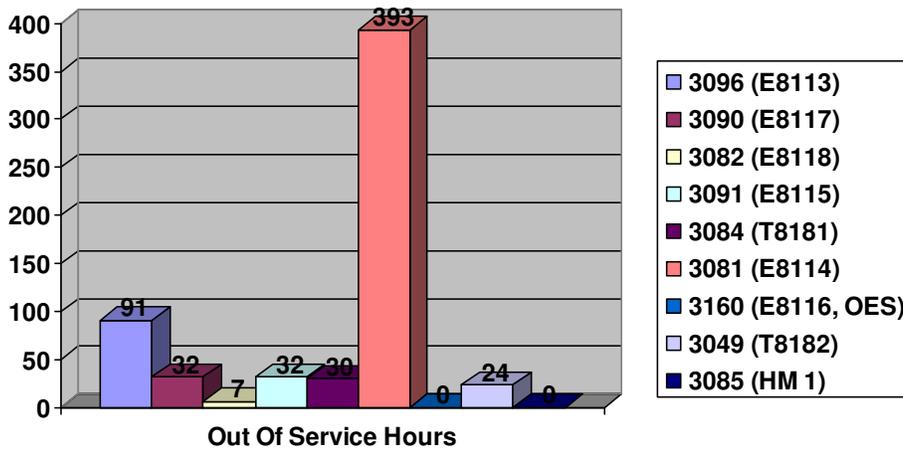
As mentioned in the prior Fourth Quarter report, duty coverage began with the two remaining Duty Chiefs and the Captain II's filling on every third weekend. This pattern has continued through the First Quarter. The demands of duty coverage, coverage for retirements, workers comp injury coverage, sick leave usage, and regular vacation coverage took a serious toll on the Suppression overtime budget, which was depleted in early February, as detailed via memo. Personnel were shifted to help cover some vacancies as possible, and ongoing promotions will help to address vacancies within ranks. Four firefighters began their training academy on March 28th. These firefighters fill three previously frozen positions extending back to the 2009/2010 fiscal year, with an over-hire to help address the vacancy that will be created by filling the Captain II position and subsequent vacancies. A promotional process occurred for Captain II, with Sean Robertson being promoted to fill the vacancy. Captain, Engineer, and Firefighter processes are set to follow in the second and third quarters to address the positions vacated as personnel promote. This process will extend to the end of the 2010/2011 fiscal year, and possibly beyond July 1.

APPARATUS STATISTICS

The following charts show information relative to our apparatus.

During the quarter, Captain Bakke reported on apparatus mileage and out of service hours. Engines 8114 had the highest number of out of service hours during the quarter, and aside from Truck 8182 (3049) is one of the oldest engines in the fleet. Engine 8113 travelled the highest number of miles for the quarter at 1,898. Engine 8118 travelled the second highest number of miles during the quarter with 1,586, as it was placed in service while E8114 was out of service with brake issues. E8114 (3081) is currently the oldest apparatus in continued front line service, having been purchased new in 1991.

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Apparatus Out-of-Service Hours Reported							
3096	91		3090	32		3049	24
3081	393		3091	32		3084	30
3082	7		3160	0		3085	0

Apparatus Miles Reported							
3096	1898		3090	326		3049	141
3081	969		3091	1240		3084	720
3082	1586		3160	126		3085	15

INCIDENT ACTIVITY

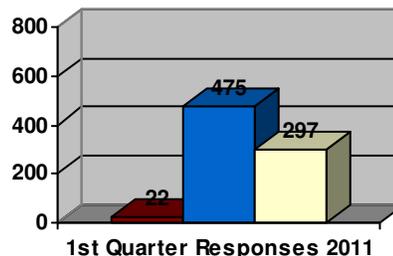
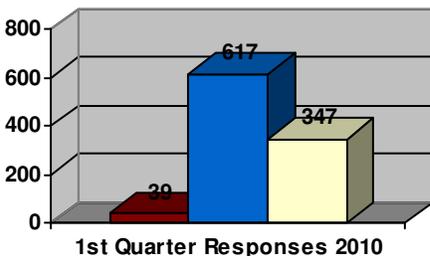
During the first quarter, EFD responded to a total of 794 calls for service. Fire calls represented 22 calls, 9 of which were listed as structures. Overall estimated dollar loss from structural fires was \$187,300 for the quarter.

Emergency Medical Service (EMS) Incidents, including minor and major medical aids, traffic collisions, extrications and rescues, and lift assist calls accounted for 475 incidents.

All other calls for service accounted for 297 responses.

As you can see, our call volume for the first quarter of 2011 was lower than the same period in 2010. These figures come from Firehouse data provided for the quarter.

First Quarter 2010 vs. 2011



■ Fires ■ Medical □ Other Incidents

■ Fires ■ Medical □ Other Incidents

*Respectfully,
Bill Gillespie*