

# Los Altos Hills County Fire District

## *2014 Calendar Year in Review*

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Dear Commissioners, Fire Chief, Consultants and Legal Counsel:

As we move into the new year of 2015, it is worthwhile to reflect on what the District accomplished in calendar year 2014. The public and elected officials require accountability of all persons entrusted with the use of public dollars.

Our mission is to protect the lives, property and environment within the District from fires, disasters and medical emergencies or incidents – through education, community participation, prevention and emergency response services.

The Year in Review summarizes the highlights of the District's efforts to fulfill our mission.

Two Programs merit greater analysis:

- Disaster Preparedness Program - achieved an outstanding total of CERT members
- Community Outreach via our website is analyzed in depth to affirm its value

Due to the drought, continued in depth-review of our tree fuel management program will be undertaken in 2015. Our goal is to minimize the fuel load in our wild land interface by removing dead pine trees and Eucalyptus trees.

As always, we appreciate receiving comments from our citizens on ways to improve our services and programs.

Respectfully submitted,

*Duffy Price, President  
Los Altos Hills County Fire District  
February 8, 2015*

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### Administrative:

- The Special District is administered by seven commissioners appointed by the Board of Supervisors – who receive \$100 compensation for each meeting attended.
- Twelve monthly meetings held with Commission in full attendance or excused absences.
- Two new commissioners appointed to vacancies due to term limits or resignation: Appointment of commissioner representative for the Unincorporated Area; and appointment of a second Town of Los Altos Hills City Council member to the Board resulting in closer ties and coordination with the Town of Los Altos Hills.
- Audit Request for Proposal; approval of Vavrinek, Trine, Day & Co. , LLP (VTD) new auditors
- Recruitment for Board Vacancies – generated 7 applicants (more than in the past)
- Performed Mid-year FY 14-15 Budget review – determined no changes needed
- Project FY 14-15 Budget to be under budget with possible exception of “tree program.”
- Agreement with Accounting Consultant – Cori Vargas to serve as District Consulting Accountant

### Fiscal Performance

Note that the fiscal information is presented for the prior and current “fiscal years.”

#### Fiscal Year 2013-14:

Total Revenue:	\$ 8,432,015
Total Expenditures:	\$10,837,841
Net Change in Fund Balance:	(\$ 2,405,826)
Total Liabilities and Fund Balance:	\$ 11,562,228

#### Fiscal Year 2014-15 Projected at Mid-Year

Total Revenue:	\$ 9,016,004
Total Expenditures:	\$ 9,814,008
Net Change in Fund Balance:	(\$ 798,004)
Total Liabilities and Fund Balance:	\$10,872,717

### Emergency Response Services

- Participated with the Santa Clara County Fire Department (SCCFD) in their Strategic Plan & Accreditation Program
- Review performance of SCCFD services on a monthly basis re: timeliness of services; call volume; and assess issues of performance
- Chief regularly reports on documented fires/emergency calls and dollar losses for the District.
- Total number of incidents in District 2014 – 611 compared to 584 in prior year 2013.
- Calendar Year Monetary Loss total for 2014 \$307,050 compared to \$4,943,500 in 2013.

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- Chief provided input on new technology for resource management and efficiencies.

### Water Mains and Hydrant Operations

- Hydrant Program – Phase VI replacement to update hydrants with new models
- Olive Tree Area Project; new pumps & generators – cost share w/CA Water
- Neary Tank – complete upgrade in cost-sharing agreement with PHWD
- Page Mill Tank – agreement with Purissima Hills Water District to cost-share for seismic upgrade

### Fuel Management

- Maintain Brush Chipping Program
- Since program started July 2011: Dead trees removed:=3104; Eucalyptus trees pruned = 1308; Eucalyptus trees removed = 1614
- Annual FY14-15 budget for tree fuel management = \$2,500,000
- Maintain dead tree removal program for pines and eucalyptus; assess impact of drought on dead trees; evaluate need for budgetary augmentation
- Approve Weeds, Brush & Rubbish Abatement Program for SCC Agriculture Dept.

### Disaster Preparedness – Program under the direction of SCCFD & Michael Sanders, Emergency Services Coordinator

#### Education/Community Outreach – Personal Emergency Preparation (PEP) & Senior PEP

- PEP classes taught - 4
- Sr. PEP classes taught - 4
- 1 PEP class taught to CERT class in September
- 1 PEP class taught to LAH Town Staff
- 1 PEP class taught to LAH Youth Commission
- **Total of 103 new students**
- **Total PEP& Sr. PEP Residents trained: ~1500**

#### Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) Program – training & drills

- 2 New CERT classes taught last year.
- Total of 48 new CERT members
- **Current total of LAHCFD CERT members - 251**

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### **Total number of CERT Supervisors**

- Current total of CERT Supervisors- 29, with another 12 or more scheduled to take the next class in January 2015, will bring the total to 40+ CERT Supervisors
- Taught 12 CERT Supervisor on-going training classes last year.
- Held 4 regular CERT ongoing training classes with 2 additional CERT Exercises for all of the CERT members

### **Development of a Wiki Website for the CERT Program**

- Ability to communicate directly with CERT program members
- Share training materials, equipment information
- Improve communications within CERT community
- Working group information repository, e.g., Large animal rescue, etc.

### **Strategic Planning Process**

- Develop consulting contract with Center for Public Safety Excellence to assist in the performance of the Community Driven Strategic Plan in 2015 – purpose to assess current mission, services, operational issues & develop 5 year horizon strategic plan
- Process to involve both external and internal stakeholders

### **Community Outreach via Website [www.lahcfd.org](http://www.lahcfd.org)**

- The LAHCFD website receives approximately 200 unique visitors per month who collectively produce about 900 page views each month. On average, these visitors to the site stay online for just over 2 minutes and view between 3 and 4 pages each session.
- One third of the people coming to the site are repeat visitors that come to the site by directly typing the URL into the browser, or use a bookmark. The other two thirds are new visitors, that primarily come from organic search on Google and other search engines, or through links to the LAHCFD site from referring websites.
- 80% of visitors come to the site via a desktop computer. 20% are visiting via a mobile phone or tablet device. The site is not currently 'mobile optimized' but could be redesigned to be 'responsive' - meaning to adjust the design automatically to fit different screen sizes.
- The top pages visited, accounting for 71% of all pages viewed on the site, are:
  1. Homepage (25%)

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2. Community Programs (16%)
3. About LAHCFD (13%)
4. Contact Us (6%)
5. Emergency Preparedness (7%)
6. FAQ (4%)

- During 2014, the Website generated 30 separate citizen contacts requesting information & assistance for a variety of programs offered by the District.

### **Public Attendance at District Meetings**

- 4-8 Public Members consistently attend monthly meetings.
- Public members are recognized at each meeting and their input is solicited and appreciated.

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