

**FIRE DEPARTMENT
SANTA CLARA COUNTY**

MEMORANDUM

March 8, 2019

TO: Mark Warren, LAHCFD Commission President
FROM: Tony Bowden, Fire Chief
SUBJECT: 2019 Los Altos Hills Patrol Staffing

Commission President Warren,

Historically, the Santa Clara County Fire Department (SCCFD) has provided augmented fire patrol services, through contract, during declared fire season in Los Altos Hills. The existing contract (third MOA, attachment A), states that a wildland interface engine will be staffed seven days a week from 10:00 am to 7:00 pm during declared fire season. This model was developed to augment fire protection during wildland fire season in the Los Altos Hills County Fire District, which is mostly comprised of interface/intermix areas.

During 2018 declared fire season, the wildland interface engine (E374), responded to 32 calls for service in the Los Altos Hills area. Of these calls, 9 were EMS, 2 were for fire (brush, car, equipment), 3 were smoke investigations, and 18 were for service/other. In addition to being available to respond to calls, the crew of E374 completes brush inspections, hydrant inspections, and fire road/access inspections during their shift.

I do recognize the value of having this additional resource in the Los Altos Hills area, however, I see an opportunity to be more efficient with our resources. Throughout Santa Clara County Fire's non-contract service area, SCCFD utilizes "Mode" staffing (attachment B), to increase resources based upon predicted weather conditions, Operational Area drawdown in the County, and/or other factors on an as needed basis. It is my recommendation that the contract to provide additional staffing and a wildland interface engine be amended to reflect staffing practices observed in SCCFD's other service areas. This would include delegating authority to the Fire Chief and/or designee to provide additional staffing in Los Altos Hills when needed. (examples: inclement weather, red flag warnings, special events in LAH, etc.).

It is my belief that staffing in this manner would not only be more reflective of best operational practices, but that it would also result in a better utilization of LAHCFD financial resources.