

Los Altos Hills County Fire District

# Community Report

Fiscal Year 2017-2018

10-4-18

S.P. Ad Hoc Committee

## To the Los Altos Hills County Fire District Community:

I am pleased to report that our District is in excellent financial condition and operational readiness and would like to present to you the FY 2017-2018 Community Report, which highlights the District's accomplishments in FY 2017-2018. The District's mission is to protect the lives, property and environment within the District from fires, disasters and to respond to medical emergencies or incidents - through education, community participation, prevention and emergency response services.

### Priority Core Programs:

- **Fire Contract Agreement:** Renewed for an additional ten years the Fire and Emergency Medical Services Agreement between the City of Los Altos and Los Altos Hills County Fire District and Santa Clara County Central Fire Protection District. The Los Altos City Council, LAHCFD and Santa Clara County's Board of Supervisors all unanimously approved the agreement. The agreement stipulates that County Fire will continue to provide fire suppression services, paramedic transport services and community education for emergency preparedness services to Los Altos and LAHCFD.
- **Fuel Management:** High priority of fuel management due to drought and wildland fire threats through monitoring & enforcement of weed & brush abatement, and the Dead Tree Removal Program. Our goal is to minimize the fuel load throughout the District by removing brush, dead and dying trees and Eucalyptus trees.
- **Fire Flow Infrastructure:** Eliminating areas with insufficient fire-fighting water flow is a top priority. In 2017-18 the District conducted a study to assess adequacy of fire flows and ways to improve, resist and prevent seismic outages. Based on the results, a joint public works project will be undertaken in 2018 with Purissima Hills Water District to upgrade and improve fire flows in the part of the District they serve. Additional efforts are underway to explore options with Cal Water.
- **Disaster Preparedness:** Support development for Community Emergency Response Teams (CERT) with transition of training oversight to Office of Emergency Services.
- **2015-2020 Strategic Plan Implementation of Goals:** The District continued its implementation of the strategic plan improving its personnel administrative management.

As always, the Commission appreciates receiving comments from our citizens on ways to improve our services and programs.

Respectfully submitted,

*George K. Tyson, President  
Los Altos Hills County Fire District*

## **Our Mission**

The Los Altos Hills County Fire District protects the lives, property and environment within the district from fires, disasters and responds to medical emergencies or incidents - through education, prevention and emergency response services

## **Administrative Background:**

- The Special District is administered by seven commissioners appointed by the Board of Supervisors - who receive \$100 compensation for each meeting attended (limited to 5 meetings per month).
- Three (3) new commissioners were appointed this year by the Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors, nominated by the District 5 Supervisor to vacancies due to term limits or resignation. Appointments insure that two commissioners come from Unincorporated Areas to represent their needs, two appointments Town of Los Altos Hills City Council members to maintain close ties and coordination with the Town of Los Altos Hills; and remainder are required to be residents of Los Altos Hills.
- Twelve monthly meetings held with the Commission in full attendance or excused absences.
- An Annual Financial Audit is performed, completed and approved by Vavrinek, Trine, Day & Co. , LLP (VTD)
- Recruitment for 2018 Board Vacancies - generated one LAH City Council applicant who was appointed.
- A Mid-year FY 17-18 Budget review - was performed with no changes determined to be needed.
- Revenue exceeded budget and overall expenses were below budget.
- A New Commissioner Orientation was developed by the Strategic Planning Ad Hoc Committee. Three new Commissioners received new commissioner orientation and brush jacket presentation by Fire Fighters.

## **Fiscal Performance**

**Fiscal Year 2017-2018**  
Total Revenues: \$11,289,864

Total Expenditures: \$8,255,469  
Net Change in Fund Balance: \$3,108,619

Total Liabilities: \$69,349  
Total Fund Balance: \$15,963,918

**Fiscal Year 2018-2019 Budgeted**  
Total Revenues: \$11,629,668

Total Expenditures: \$11,142,998  
Net Change in Fund Balance: \$486,670  
Total Liabilities: \$350,000  
Total Fund Balance: \$16,169,938

## **Emergency Response Services – Annual Report 2017 by the Numbers**

- SCCFD service performance is reviewed on a monthly basis re: timeliness of services and call volume; and issues of performance are assessed.
- Example: Average Response Time Analysis for June 2018: The arrival times for first-due units on code three calls was 8 minutes or less for:
  - Freeway: 40%
  - Metro/Urban: 87.5%
  - Suburban: 83.33 %
  - Rural: 88.89%
- The Fire Chief regularly reports on documented District fires/emergency calls and dollar losses.
- Total number of incidents in District 2017 - were 952 compared to 810 in prior year 2016.
- Calendar Year Monetary Loss total for 2017 was \$180,550 compared to \$419,145 in 2016.
- The Fire Chief provided input on new technology for resource management and efficiencies.

## **Water Mains and Hydrant Operations – The District performed a significant fire flow study to evaluate volume and pressure in various locations in our jurisdiction.[fix font size]**

- Fire Flow Infrastructure - Evaluate options to improve the provision of fire flow water to fight fires is a top priority of the District. To that end a study of water lines was undertaken in 2017-18 to assess adequacy of fire flows and to assess risk of seismic outages. Based on the results of that study, a joint public works project will be undertaken in 2018 with Purissima Hills Water District to upgrade and improve fire flows in Los Altos Hills County Fire District. Additional efforts are underway to explore options with Cal Water

## **Fuel Management -- FY 2017-2018**

Concerns due to drought and wildland fire situations throughout the state brought increased public awareness of, and demand for the District's Brush Chipping and Tree Removal programs.

- Brush Chipping Program in FY 2017-2018 was maintained at the same cost level as prior year at ~ \$316,904. [was \$290,277 in 2016-2017]
- Tree Removal Program: The program was initiated in August 2008. Trees & Eucalyptus (Eucs) removed or pruned from August 2008 to June 2018
  - Dead Trees removed: 7,574
  - Eucs removed: 3,154
  - Eucs Pruned: 3,862
  - Total: 14,590
- Note: In FY 2017-2018, 909 Trees were removed or pruned compared to 907 in FY 2016-2017 for approximately the same cost of \$1,084,844.

## **Disaster Preparedness**

**SCCFD Programs provided for LAHCFD: 1) Office of Emergency Management (OEM) for CERT Training; 2) Santa Clara County Fire Community Education Services July 1, 2017.**

1. SCCFD OEM Program oversight and reporting transitioned CERT program to the SCCFD Office of Emergency Management in 2017. Impact: Emergency Services Coordinator position remains vacant; and a significant decrease in CERT participation resulted during this transition. Plan is to rectify this issue with the addition of the proposed General Manager, hired on October 1, 2018.

### **Statistics on involvement in the LAHCFD Community Emergency Preparedness Program, as of June 20, 2018:**

- 100 CERT Members
- 30 Supervisory CERT Members (12-15 most active)
- 31 Reconnaissance Members
- CERT Supervisors meet on a monthly basis for managing programs & activities
- CERT Academies are now offered at various sites under the aegis of the SCCFD - OEM.
- Two New 3-week CERT Academies taught in 2017; four CERT refresher courses offered in LAHCFD; 24 total CERT Refresher Courses offered by SCCFD available for LAH CERT members; One LAH SCCFD evaluated CERT Drill performed, Two

offered, (not inclusive of first time UASI Green Command exercise participation offering).

- Los Altos Hills Academy held on 3/5/2018-3/24/2018 had 19 graduates (3 of which were from LAH)
- Other academies were held in Saratoga, Los Gatos, Campbell, San Jose, Cupertino.
- In June 2018 - Refresher courses offered at various sites including Fire and Safety and Utility Hazard hosted at LAH Town Hall.

## 2. Santa Clara County Fire Community Education Services FY 17/18 Report for Los Altos Hills County Fire District.

- **Education/Community Outreach - Personal Emergency Preparation (PEP) & Senior PEP**
  - **Personal Emergency Preparation Program change:** The Senior PEP class was changed to a new program: “**Be Ready: Seniors Prepared!**” This new program was requested by residents preferring a shorter class that covers Emergency Preparedness through the LAH Parks and Recreation Committee, as part of a series of four classes: Fall Prevention, Emergency Preparedness, Crime Prevention and Preparing Caregivers for Medical Emergencies.
  - **Educational Programs:** 39 Total Programs Total Attendees: 3289 -- The 3,289 number reflects the total number of people who attended community education programs and events in Los Altos Hills County Fire District; 78 Total Program Hours.
  - **School Programs:** Five Programs at Pinewood School, St. Nicholas Catholic School, CERT Program LAH, Children’s House and Town of LAH. Total Program Hours: 6; Total Attendees: 481
  - **Additional Programs:** Thirty-four provided for LAHCFD at a variety of community events, Fire and Life Safety, Apparatus requests/display, Station Tours, Disaster Prep and Cert Training, Fire And Life Safety School Assembly, Station Tours, etc. Hours: 72; Total Attendees: 2808

## Strategic Planning Process

- The 2015-2020 Strategic Plan was initiated in 2015.
- The Center for Public Safety Excellence assisted in the performance of the Community Driven Strategic Plan in 2015 - with the purpose to assess the District’s current mission, services, and operational issues and to develop a 5-year horizon strategic plan.
- This process involved both external and internal stakeholders.

- In FY 2017-2018, progress was achieved in the following priority Goals: Goal 1 - Develop a comprehensive personnel management system; Goal 2 - Establish an effective district administration; Goal 3 - Provide sound financial and contract management plans and practices that are understandable by the community; Goal 4 - Develop a plan to identify hazards and risks in order to reduce, eliminate and mitigate them; Goal 5 - Maintain awareness of current and future knowledge of technologies that affect the district's mission.

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

- The LAHCFD website is used to provide outgoing information to our residents in terms of specific contact info, general emergency information, and necessary governance information.
- The website is the most direct route for distributing information to residents concerning all LAHCFD programs, including the fire prevention programs (dead tree removal, brush chipping, etc.) and emergency preparation & response programs (PEP classes, CERT academies, etc.)
- The website provides an up-to-date calendar to announce meetings and classes relevant to both LAHCFD-specific meetings (commission meetings, etc.) and County Fire-provided classes and programs (CERT academies, PEP classes, etc.) that occur both within and without the LAHCFD boundaries.
- The website is the primary technique for announcing LAHCFD meetings and distributing the agendas and public materials in advance of such meetings.
- The website is used as a repository for past LAHCFD Commission meeting agendas and reports, with over 1.2 Gigabytes of searchable documents already stored.
- For the previous 12 months up to April 2018, the LAHCFD website averaged around 300 unique visitors per month.
- Going forward, the strategic plan is to use the website to enable more functions for residents to provide data *inward* to LAHCFD, such as signing up for classes and more directly registering for programs like tree removal and brush chipping.

### **Publications**

The LAHCFD publishes informational articles in the quarterly TOWN newsletter publication, which is distributed online and mailed to every household in the District (both the Town of Los Altos Hills and the Unincorporated Areas).

## **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.

## **Testimonials – Letters received from the public**

- August 17, 2018 Letter from Christ Episcopal Church; The Rev. Claire Dietrich Ranna, Rector, Christ Episcopal Church. Los Altos, CA for removal of several dead and increasingly dangerous trees, and for the professionalism and care with which this service was administered.

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