



Humboldt Bay Fire

Fire Wire Quarterly Report

HBF represents the cooperative consolidation between Humboldt Fire District and the Eureka Fire Department

Our Mission:

Committed to community service through leadership, vision, and integrity.

Fire Chief's Message

Welcome to this Quarter's edition of our newsletter. As you read this I'm happy to report that the final step in the consolidation of City of Eureka Fire Department and Humboldt No. 1 Fire Protection District into Humboldt Bay Fire has been completed. It's been a long three year process, with a lot of hard work and effort put in by a number of individuals; but I'm proud to say we have completed the process and are seeing positive results every day. I can say with confidence that consolidation has proven to be a benefit to all of those we protect.

A good example of this benefit occurred recently when our units were dispatched to a structure fire. As the first engine arrived with their crew of three they found smoke showing from the rear of a two story house. The engine connected to the closest fire hydrant and entered the house with a hose line to attack the fire. As this was taking place our tiller truck arrived with a crew of four which was immediately split into two teams of two. The first team put a ladder to the roof and cut a hole in order to release smoke and gasses that were building up inside the house. The second team was assigned to search the residence and saw a female in a second story window. The only stairway located at the rear of the house was on fire and impassable so the truck crew immediately placed a ladder to the second story window and removed the female down the ladder. As all of this was taking place, two additional engines arrived on scene, shut off the gas and electric, helped the initial crew extinguish the fire and rescued two cats. Unfortunately one other cat

did not survive. This fire was a good example of how a coordinated effort by all of the firefighters on scene, utilizing the proper equipment and tactics, were able to quickly rescue the occupant, extinguish the fire, and limit the damage to the rest of the house.

As for our consolidation, the most difficult component of the entire process was dealing with the state retirement pension system. Consolidation was undertaken not just to improve the service we provide to the community but also to save money. In short, the State wanted us to consolidate all of our existing employees under a high pension level in spite of the pension reform act of 2013, and all of the publicity regarding public pensions and unfunded liabilities. Over the past two years we resisted this effort and were finally able to get permission to tier our retirement under less costly levels this past November. Effective 1/1/15 all of the former City and District employees became employees of Humboldt Bay Fire Joint Powers Authority.

With that accomplished I'd like to say thank you to all of our citizens who have supported us through this process. As I've discussed in previous newsletters, the consolidation means improved service with cost savings. It has enabled us to improve the level of medical care we provide, and we now operate paramedics from 3 of our 5 stations providing advanced life support care to the community. We also have



Fire Chief Ken Woods

employees in paramedic school and look to increase this to 4 stations towards the end of the year. We have consolidated our fleet putting the most useful type of apparatus at the location where it can be best used, and eliminating older less efficient apparatus. We've seen additional savings by consolidating positions and reducing duplication, especially in the areas of fire prevention and public education. We have a highly trained work force able to deal with a wide range of both emergency and non-emergency situations.

Additionally this past year we embarked on the development of a Five-year strategic plan where we outlined seven goals to continue to move the organization forward and enhance our services. These include further expanding our medical services and exploring how we can provide more care in the pre and post hospital setting. Expanding our disaster emergency planning and working with both the City and County to coordinate services in the event of a natural disaster. Developing permanent and secure funding and implementing savings programs for saving funds to replace aging stations and apparatus. Finally we will be working to improve our data management, thereby allowing us to respond more

Chief Ken Woods

efficiently to trends and changes in incidents.

Even with the improvements we've seen with our consolidation these new goals over the next five years will help to make us an even better fire department that is more responsive to the needs of the community. Our goal throughout the consolidation process has been to provide the highest level of customer service possible, and this mission continues as we start a new year. Again, everyone at Humboldt Bay Fire says thank you for your support. We appreciate your trust and believe it's a privilege to serve our community.

Toy Drive

This year's "Share the Magic of Christmas" Toy Drive was a great success. Our weekends at the Bayshore Mall and the Humboldt Artisans Crafts & Music Festival were a huge hit, as always. We were able to collect 2,747 toys. We also raised \$3,100 in cash donations of which we split between the Salvation Army and the Senior Resource Center. Humboldt Bay Firefighters would like to thank the Fire Dept, the City of Eureka staff, all of the businesses that had toy barrels, and the members of HBF Local, and HBF Ladies' Auxiliary who participated. We especially want to thank all of the citizens who donated toys and money. If it wasn't for the participation of

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Fourth Quarter 2014 Response Statistics

Structure Fire Response	10
Vehicle Fire Response	11
Rubbish/Outside Fire	21
Medical Aid Response	911
Extrication/Water Rescue	4
Animal Rescue	1
Hazardous Materials/Combustible Spills	14
Other Hazards Response	48
Other/Service Calls	149
False Alarms	274
4th Quarter Total	1,443
2014 Total	5,528

the whole community, the Toy Drive would not be the success that it is.

**~Rick Lahargoue
Engineer**



To receive the Fire Wire Quarterly Newsletter via e-mail, please notify us at info@HBFire.org



Today's Forecast: Preparedness with a 100% Chance of Safety Batt. Chief Chris Emmons

As we move in to the heart of Winter the single most important item to consider is being prepared. This will help keep you safe, warm, and cozy as it's blowing and raining outside.

Winter Home Safety

With cold winter temperatures there is an increased use of fireplaces, wood stoves, space heaters, and other alternative heating methods. There are an increased number of fires and other emergencies caused by heating appliances due to more usage. The following tips can help you maintain a safe home this winter. Install a carbon monoxide detector.

Malfunctioning or improperly installed heating appliances can leak carbon monoxide gas, as can generators. Outdoor heating appliances should only be used outside. Carbon monoxide fumes are odorless and can quickly overwhelm you indoors. If you have to use a generator for power, only run it outdoors and away from windows and doors. Also, do not refuel generators while they are running.

Early in my career as an officer with Humboldt Bay Fire I had the unfortunate experience to respond to a multi-casualty incident at a single family residence involving an entire family who was suffering from carbon monoxide poisoning. The call originated as a routine medical call but as the firefighters were treating the patient with the worst signs and symptoms, the firefighters began to develop headaches and dizziness. We removed all people from the residence to fresh air. We then monitored the atmosphere with our monitors and found that the carbon monoxide levels were several times higher than safe limits. Eight people in this family were transported and treated for varying levels of exposure to the gas. Upon further investigation, it was found that a brand new furnace had been installed improperly causing the carbon monoxide levels to elevate. As the temperatures dropped, the furnace was being used more and more until the levels began to affect the health of the occupants. If they had only had a carbon monoxide alarm, they could have avoided a very close call. An alarm would have sounded and indicated the levels were unsafe, most likely triggering the occupants to contact the Fire Department or Pacific Gas and Electric. Fortunately for the family, because they called for the medical aid, we were able to identify and eliminate this silent killer from their home.

To help avoid carbon monoxide poisoning and to aid in lowering heating bills, have your furnace inspected annually to ensure that it is in good working condition. Maintain a 3 foot separation between things that can burn and heating equipment, including checking floor heaters to make sure they are not covered by floor coverings or other combustibles. If you are using portable space heaters as a source of heat, install and use them according to the



manufacturer's instructions. Extension cords shouldn't be used for an electric-powered space heater. Remember to keep young children away from heaters and stoves- especially when they are wearing pajamas or other loose clothing that can be easily ignited.

The Greater Eureka area has a higher rate of floor furnace fires than other areas of California as these types of heating appliances are more common here. The causes of floor furnace fires that we at Humboldt Bay Fire have responded to are due to combustibles being placed on or too close to the floor furnace. Many people believe that when the thermostat to the appliance is turned all the way down the appliance is off. This is incorrect. When the thermostat is all the way down, it is simply in the lowest temperature setting. Even if it's set low, colder temperatures at night can cause the furnace to come on. If there are area rugs or other materials over it or nearby, this can lead to a fire. Always keep combustibles at least three feet from the grate of the furnace.



While moving into this home, the occupant placed a laundry basket full of books on the floor furnace believing that it was safe because the furnace was turned all the way down. However, because the front door was left open during cold weather, the furnace automatically turned on and started this fire on California Street a few years back.

If you have a fuel burning appliance, such as Kerosene, be sure there is proper ventilation to prevent a buildup of carbon monoxide, and only use the fuel recommended by the heater manufacturer. Refueling should be done outside of the home. Kerosene heaters should never be filled while the heater is operating or hot. Follow manufacturer's instructions.

In this area many people still utilize wood to heat their homes. If you have a wood stove, have the stove and flue inspected and cleaned annually. Be sure the fireplace or stove is installed properly with proper clearances. Always keep a screen in front of the fireplace opening and keep combustible materials away from the fireplace or stove. When starting a fire only use paper or kindling to start the fire and never use flammable liquids in the fireplace or stove. To avoid a buildup of creosote, use only dry, seasoned wood in a fireplace or wood stove. Artificial logs should not be used in wood stoves. When you clean your fireplace or woodstove, allow the ashes to cool before disposing of them in a metal container.

Every year we encounter fires caused by ashes being disposed of in paper bags or plastic containers which will melt.

Additionally, here are a few more general safety tips. First, if you can avoid going out in inclement weather, do so. However, if you must go out, plan for additional time to get there as the roads may be slick. If you encounter flooded roads, don't try to drive through the water. Vehicles can be swept away with just a few inches of flowing water. Higher water can also cause a vehicle to stall. Always remember to drive with your headlights on in poor weather to make your vehicle more visible.



Flooding across Howard Heights Road in the Freshwater area during the December storm.

On those windy days, limbs and debris may blow around and the wind can also make high profile vehicles more unstable or difficult to drive. Power lines, cable and phone lines may also come down in higher winds. Never approach a down line as it may be energized. Energized lines can look the same as de-energized lines.

If you have any questions about these safety tips, please give us a call at Humboldt Bay Fire at 441-4000 and we will be happy to help you prepare.

Anniversaries & Retirement

Anniversaries:

Captain Michael Bakke, 31 yrs (October)
 Captain Chris Kemp, 24 yrs (October)
 Captain P.J. Lynch, 14 yrs (October)
 Engineer Michael Landry, 11 yrs (October)
 Chief Kenneth Woods, 6 yrs (October)
 Firefighter/Paramedic Don Penn, 6 yrs (November)
 Firefighter Kyle Brown, 1 yr (October)
 Firefighter Chris Alexander, 1 yr (October)

Retirement

Assistant Chief Rusty Goodlive, (December)

CPR Classes (707) 441-4000

CPR and AED for Adults, Children, and Infants \$30

January 13, 2015, 6:00 p.m. - 10:00 p.m.
 January 27, 2015, 6:00 p.m. - 10:00 p.m.
 February 10, 2015, 6:00 p.m. - 10:00 p.m.
 February 24, 2015, 6:00 p.m. - 10:00 p.m.
 March 10, 2015, 6:00 p.m. - 10:00 p.m.
 March 24, 2015, 6:00 p.m. - 10:00 p.m.

CPR, AED, and First Aid for Adults \$60

January 10, 2015, 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
 February 14, 2015, 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
 March 14, 2015, 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.



Firefighter In Focus

On Tuesday December 30, I made a big transition in my life and emergency services career when I retired from Humboldt Bay Fire. I think that firefighting is the best job in the whole world and it has been my honor and pleasure to have this as a career.

I grew up in Sunnyvale in the south SF Bay Area. After graduating from high school (class of 1979) I attended De Anza College and earned a liberal arts AA. At the same time I was working in a machine shop operating and programming numerical control equipment. Wanting some basic training in what to do when people get hurt or sick, I took a first aid class at the college. After the class I wanted to learn more about the material which later led me to take an Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) class.

I moved up to Arcata in 1983 to attend HSU where I graduated with a BA in Psychology. I quickly fell in love with living in Humboldt County. There is something about our region that fits me. Our varied natural environment, the people I meet, the weather, and our lifestyle makes Eureka and Humboldt County home for me.

One of the first classes I took at HSU was an evening EMT class. The class included a ride along on the ambulance. That experience led me to seek a full time job with City Ambulance as an EMT and later an EMT-2. I applied for the ambulance with the intent that it would be a good job to have while I was going to school. It didn't take me long, however, to change my life and career plans. At City I worked with several full time and volunteer firefighters. At their encouragement I became a Volunteer Firefighter

with Humboldt Fire District #1.

As a Volunteer Firefighter at HFD I was exposed to all aspects of the fire service. It took very little time for me to realize that firefighting was the career for me. I spent two years as an HFD volunteer while going to school, working the ambulance, and working a part-time job as an ER Technician at St Joseph's hospital.

I left Eureka in August of 1987 to take a job as a Firefighter/EMT-2 with the Tahoe City Fire District (now North Tahoe Fire). During my time there I was promoted to Lieutenant, was the Emergency Medical Services Coordinator, and was responsible for maintaining and improving the district maps. I really enjoyed the four years I lived and worked in Tahoe. I enjoyed the mountain environment, including four distinct seasons. I spent a lot of the summer and fall mountain biking with my two Golden Retrievers, and cross country skiing in the winter and spring. While I liked the department and my co-workers in Tahoe I planned on returning to Humboldt someday.

In August of 1991 I was fortunate to be able to return to Eureka when I was hired by the City of Eureka as a Firefighter. Over the years here I've had a wide variety of positions and jobs. Some of my favorite jobs included Training Officer, EMS Coordinator, and Haz Mat Team Training Coordinator.

For the last seven years I've been in the Fire Prevention Bureau; an assignment I've really

Assistant Chief Rusty Goodlive



enjoyed. What I've enjoyed most was working with a wide variety of people including property owners and developers, City and County staff, folks from allied agencies, etc. It's also interesting to be involved in project development and construction and working on code enforcement with the City Improvement Team.

These last three years have been among the best of my career. The transition from the City and District departments to Humboldt Bay Fire has been an exciting process to be involved with. There are high levels of energy, commitment, and morale throughout the organization. We have made big improvements to our service to the community. When I was first hired, an experienced employee told me that "they" had been talking about consolidation when he was first hired. I'm so lucky that I got to be a part of it when it really happened.

When not at work I enjoy hanging out at home with my wife Kathy and spending time with my family. I'm very proud of my grandchildren and enjoy spending time with them and attending school and sports functions.

I do not have any big plans for my retirement. I'll be able to spend more time with the family. I have some folks I'd like to visit that I haven't seen in a while including a sister in Vancouver BC. There are things around the house that need to be done. I'd like to get back outdoors more and enjoy our region again.

Volunteer Fire Program

Humboldt Bay Fire's Volunteer Program truly began when both of the parent agencies that make up Humboldt Bay Fire were established. Eureka Fire Department was formed in 1864 and began as an all Volunteer Department. Humboldt #1 Fire Protection District was established in 1929 to support the outlying areas of Eureka and also began as a Volunteer Department. With the consolidation of our two Departments in 2011 also came the consolidation of our Volunteers. Over the years Career positions have been added and the Volunteers still remain.

Humboldt Bay Fire currently has 7 Volunteer Firefighters and 3 Volunteer Fire Support Members. Our Volunteer Firefighters are expected to perform all the same tasks that a Career Firefighter would. They work 24 hour shifts on the engine and also respond from home for structure fires. Volunteer Firefighters are required to maintain a minimum training level of CPR Pro and First Aid (although many of them have an Emergency Medical Technician certification). They are put through a local agency



fire academy to be taught all of the basics of firefighting and continue to receive training on a bi-weekly basis.

Becoming a Volunteer Firefighter with Humboldt Bay Fire starts with submitting an application. Applications are reviewed once a year due to the amount of work that goes into the process of bringing on Volunteers. Candidates are put through an interview panel, background check, criminal record check, medical physical and must pass the California Fire Fighter CPAT Course (Candidate Physical Ability Test). At that point, Volunteer Recruits will be outfitted with gear and

participate in a 3-6 month academy on weekends and one night a week. After completing the academy they are put through in-house training specific to our department and begin pulling 24 hour shifts on the engine. We require a minimum of one 24 hour shift per month.

Firefighter Arly Allen

As you can see it takes a lot to become a Volunteer Firefighter, but it produces high quality Volunteers. Humboldt Bay Fire Volunteers benefit the department by providing additional staffing, turning our 3 person engine companies into 4 person Engine companies and provide additional firefighters that respond from home for structure fires. Many of our Volunteers test for and receive Career positions within our department.

Within our Volunteer Program are our Fire Support members. The 3 Fire Support members have prior experience as Volunteer Firefighters. They respond from home and provide traffic control for structure fires and traffic accidents, maintain an exclusion zone when there are down power lines, and many other tasks that help to free up engine companies. The service they provide is invaluable at the scene of an emergency.

While today's Volunteer Firefighters make up a smaller percentage of the department than they did 100 years ago, they are just as beneficial to the community as they were back then. Humboldt Bay Fire looks forward to maintaining a strong Volunteer force into the future.



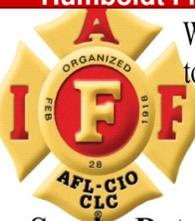
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