# Tuolumne County Fire Department Monthly Activity Report



# March 2020

## **Tuolumne County Fire Department**

Phone: (209) 533-5100

18440 Striker Ct., Sonora, CA 95370

www.tuolumnecounty.ca.gov/717/Fire-Department



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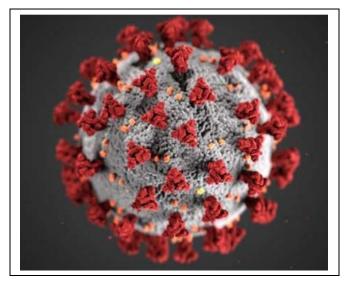


## **MONTH IN REVIEW**

### March 2020

The month of March was all about the COVID worldwide pandemic. Locally, a state of emergency was declared by the Board of Supervisors, a California State of Emergency was declared by Governor Newsom, and a National State of Emergency was declared by President Trump. This pandemic is having a dramatic effect on all resident's daily life. Your fire department is also affected by the numerous

declarations and orders by the County Health Officer and guidance from regulating agencies. A supply chain for personal protective equipment is in place through the Office of Emergency Services and the Tuolumne County Public Health as the Medical Health Operational Area Coordinator (MHOAC-called Mohawk). The Stay at Home orders are also having an affect on how trainings and meetings are delivered as most state, regional, and local classes and conferences were cancelled for the remainder of the spring. Along with the rest of the population, your fire department is working



through these challenges with many successes found through online training available through a subscription service at <a href="www.FireEngineeringVideos.com">www.FireEngineeringVideos.com</a> that we subscribed to in the fall, as well as through online meeting sites, Target Solutions, and various other mediums.

The Director of the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection Thom Porter announced the appointment of Nick Casci to the position of Tuolumne-Calaveras Unit Chief / Tuolumne County Fire Department Fire Chief / Groveland Community Services District Fire Chief, effective April 1, 2020. Chief Casci began his fire service career with the Nevada City Fire Department as a Volunteer Firefighter in 1998. In 2000, he started with CAL FIRE in the Nevada Yuba Placer Unit (NEU) as a Seasonal Firefighter I working in NEU's Smartsville Fire Station. In 2003, Chief Casci promoted to Limited Term Fire Apparatus Engineer (FAE) in NEU's Columbia Hill Fire Station, and in 2006, he promoted to permanent FAE in NEU's Station 95, Marysville Fire Department. In 2008, Chief Casci promoted to permanent Fire Captain in the Tuolumne-Calaveras Unit (TCU) at San Andreas Headquarters, and in 2012 Nick Promoted to Battalion Chief in TCU, where he worked overseeing the West Point and San Andreas Battalions. In 2017, Chief Casci promoted to Division Chief - Administration in the San Mateo-Santa Cruz Unit (CZU) and returned to TCU in 2018, as the Deputy Chief of Operations. During his career, Chief Casci has served as a Hazardous Materials Specialist, as well as participating on CAL

FIRE Incident Management Team II as an Operations Branch Director, Type 1 Operations Section Chief, and most recently as an Incident Commander Trainee. Chief Casci is a member of the CAL FIRE Leadership Curriculum Development Working Group and holds a Vocational Certificate in Fire Technology from Alan Hancock College. Chief Casci is a member of the CAL FIRE Leadership Level II Instructional Cadre and has participated on Serious Accident Review Teams (SART) as an Agency Administrator and as a SART Team Lead Trainee. Please welcome Chief Casci to his new assignment.

Also, during the month, the rains finally returned with over five inches rain and several feet of snow falling across the County bringing a brief respite to wildfire concerns. However, we all must remember that eventually we will dry out and the heat will return so we must all be doing our part to make our communities firesafe. Please log on to www.readyforwildfire.org and www.tuolumnecounty.ca.gov/1162/Wildfire-Preparedness to see how you and your neighbors can take action to protect your life and property.

TCFD applied for two Federal Emergency Management Agency Assistance to Firefighters Grant. One grant application was for the replacement of all mobile and handheld radios and one grant application was to replace the breathing support. A breathing support is a mobile self-contained breathing apparatus filling response vehicle that also carries rescue equipment. The breathing support is staffed seven days a week by student firefighters at TCFD Columbia College Station 79.

Staff coordinated the annual ladder testing and inspection to ensure firefighter safety and meet



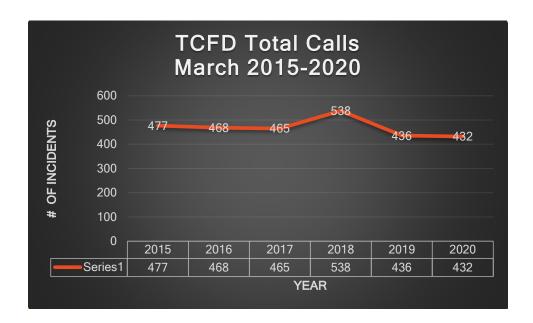
requirements of regulating agencies. In coordination with CAL FIRE, Groveland CSD and Columbia FPD, we arrange for an outside vendor to come to Sonora each year to do the testing. TCFD and the other agencies had 2,468 feet of ladders (35' extension ladders, 24' extension ladders, 20' extension ladders, 16' extension ladders, 14' roof ladders, and 10' attic ladders). Additionally, we were able to complete fire pump testing on all TCFD pumps including all 21 fire engines and 6 water tenders.

There were 432 incidents within TCFD's jurisdiction in March, a 1% decrease from 2019 and a 7.7% decrease from the 5-year average of 468. Of the 432 calls in March 2020, there were 323 medical aids, 40 fires, 20 hazardous materials/fire menace standby, and 39 other incidents in TCFD jurisdiction.

### **TCFD Station Responses**

Station 51 Mono Village Fire Station responded to 140 incidents in the month of March which included 96 medical calls (including 11 vehicle collisions), 15 public assists, 10 fires, 13 false alarms, and 6 other call types including fire menace standbys, landing zones, and smoke checks. 124 incidents were within their primary response area and 16 were not. Volunteers responded to 28 of the 140 incidents and through the Tuolumne County Automatic Aid Agreement, aid was given to three agencies ten times and received by four agencies eight times.

Station 76 Jamestown Fire Station responded to 110 incidents in March including 83 medical aids (including 10 vehicle collisions), 12 public assists, 7 fires, and 8 other incidents. Of the 110 incidents 99 were within their primary response area and 11 were not. Volunteers responded to no incidents. Automatic aid was given to one agency five times and received from two agencies seven times.



CAL FIRE Amador Stations are staffed through a cooperative fire protection agreement allowed in the California Public Resources Code known as an Amador Agreement.

The Blanchard CAL FIRE Station is an Amador Station. TCFD and Mariposa County Fire share the cost of the Amador Agreement each year. During the month of March, Blanchard Station responded to 38 incidents; 17 incidents were in Mariposa County and 21 were in Tuolumne County. Of the 38 incidents there were 25 medical calls (including 7 vehicle collisions), 6 fires, and 6 other incidents.

The Twain Harte CAL FIRE Station is also part of TCFD/CAL FIRE Amador Agreement. The Twain Harte Station responded to 71 incidents, including 46 medical calls (including 7 vehicle collisions), 7 public assists, 7 structure fires, 4 other fires, and 7 other incidents. Automatic Aid was given to 3

agencies 11 times and received by 4 agencies a total of 10 times. 57 incidents were within their primary response area and 14 were not. Volunteers responded to 32 of the 71 incidents.

Tuolumne County fire stations are located in the following communities\*:

Mono Village Station 51 (6 career / 6 volunteers) 156 incidents
Ponderosa Hills Station 53 (1 volunteer) 29 incidents
Pinecrest Station 55 (6 volunteers) 14 incidents
Mono Vista Station 56 (6 volunteers) 70 incidents
Cedar Ridge Station 58 (12 volunteers) 26 incidents
Chinese Camp Station 61 (1 volunteer) 17 incidents
Don Pedro Station 64 (2 volunteers) 10 incidents
Jamestown Station 76 (5 career / 3 volunteers) 112 incidents
Columbia College Station 79 (6 student firefighters) 58 incidents
Blanchard CAL FIRE "Amador" Station (7 career) 38 incidents
Twain Harte CAL FIRE "Amador" Station (7 career) 71 incidents

\*Incident numbers above may not match actual engine responses. These numbers above indicate calls that the station was dispatched to, but another resource responded or were in other jurisdictions.

### **Groveland CSD Fire Department**

GCSD funds a career engine at Station 78 and the Groveland CAL FIRE Amador station. There was a total of 60 responses out of the two GCSD engine companies including 34 medical aids (including 5 vehicle collisions), 15 public assists/fire menace standby, and 5 fire alarm calls. 57 responses were within the GCSD jurisdiction and 3 calls were in the TCFD area.

In addition to their regular and annual station skills training, Groveland CSD Fire staff trained on COVID-19 Response,



technical rescue, low angle rope rescue, new fuel break orientation, and performed hose testing. One staff member instructed the State Fire Marshal Incident Command and Control class in Merced.

### **Significant Incidents**

March 7, 2020 - Vehicle Collision, North Sunshine Rd.

Firefighters responded to a traffic collision that occurred after one vehicle struck a deer on the highway causing the hood of the vehicle to unlatch and block the driver's visibility. While attempting to

stop, the driver was struck by a following vehicle resulting in a loss of traction sending the vehicle off the roadway stopping suspended by brush and in a ditch. Both victims were able to self-extricate from their vehicles and were assessed by personnel at scene.

# March 8, 2020 - Residential Structure Fire, Serene Acres Drive

Firefighters arrived at scene to find smoke coming from the

attic. Quick recognition by the reporting party and action by fire personnel resulted in the fire being kept small with minimal extension and damage within the residence.



### March 10, 2020 - Vehicle Fire, Soulsbyville Road

Firefighters responded to reports of a vehicle fully involved in a driveway threatening a residence. Although the homeowner attempted to extinguish the flames, firefighters quickly deployed hose lines to contain and control the fire and protected the residence from becoming engulfed.

#### March 11, 2020 - Commercial Vehicle Collision, Obyrne's Ferry Road

Firefighters responded to O'byrnes Ferry Rd. near Old Green Springs Rd. for a tractor trailer that lost control in a curve and rolled over losing its load of lumber. Aid was received from Sierra Center Engine, Baseline Crews, and CAL FIRE. Units were committed at scene for 5 hours until the roadway was reopened.

# March 14, 2020 - Residential Structure Fire, Rawhide Road

Initial fire units arriving at scene reported heavy smoke and fire coming from the structure. Firefighters were



Photo by Darin McKinney

notified that one resident was missing and presumed in the home. Despite several valiant rescue attempts, one resident sadly did not survive. One firefighter suffered minor burn injuries while attempting the rescues and was transported to the UC Davis Burn Center for evaluation and was treated and released. The cause of this fatal fire is under investigation.

Firefighters arrived to find a well-involved structure with many exposures. Firefighters were able to contain the fire to the building and floor of origin, protecting the exterior exposures and the floor below.

#### March 20, 2020 - Commercial Structure Fire, Columbia

Firefighters were dispatched to a commercial structure fire near Columbia State Park. First units at scene found the Soap and Candle Company building to have a flu fire that had spread to the wooden shingles on the roof. The fire was quickly extinguished with minimal damage to the structure.

#### March 21, 2020 - Debris Fire, 4th Avenue

Crews were dispatched to a residential structure fire on 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue in Jamestown. First unit at scene reported a debris fire with one structure threatened. The fire was extinguished with no additional resources needed.

### March 24, 2020 - Residential Structure Fire Cedar Springs Road

At about 2:30 am firefighters were dispatched and arrived to a well involved residential structure fire. Fortunately, the residents were out of town. Quick action prevented the fire from involving nearby homes and exposures.



### March 27, 2020 - Vehicle Collision, Highway 108 x Tulloch

#### Road

Firefighters were dispatched to a vehicle roll over with possible ejection. When arriving at scene crews found a vehicle on its top blocking both lanes of west bound traffic, just east of the county line. After a thorough search of the area no occupants of the vehicle were found.

### **Fleet**

In addition to the annual pump testing for all fire engines and water tenders, Engine 562 (Mono Vista) had tank and plumbing leaks repaired and it's annual preventive maintenance service completed; Engine 552 (Pinecrest) also had water leaks repaired in the water tank; Engine 772 (Mi Wuk) is in the shop for annual maintenance; and Engine 511 (Mono Village) is getting repairs reported on last month to cracks in the



body repaired and should be back in service by mid-April.

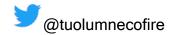
### **Prevention/Education**

<u>March 1, 2020</u> - Fire crews from TCFD, CAL FIRE, and the City of Sonora, along with the Tuolumne County Sheriff's Office had the opportunity to attend the Tuolumne County 4-H pancake breakfast at the Sonora Elks Lodge. The event was a great success and the hosts did an amazing job.

Social media continues to provide a great opportunity to spread the fire prevention/education message and keep the community informed on events occurring within County Fire's jurisdiction. If you haven't already, follow us:



Instagram tuolumnecountyfire



Fire Investigators/Inspectors conducted 20 site inspections during the month of March including this one pictured at Summerville High School, 99 individual plan reviews and conducted several fire cause investigations.



### **Training**

After months of planning by Mi Wuk Sugar Pine FPD, we were able to participate in a valuable training

burn with them. Our training and safety staff, TCFD Station 79 Columbia College Firefighters, new recruits from our Volunteer Firefighter Academy, TCFD Fire Explorers and several other TCFD Volunteer Firefighters were able to participate in this exercise and learn about fire behavior, hoseline and fire stream applications, building construction, command and control at fire scenes, and many other valuable topics. We'd like to thank MWSPFPD for inviting us to this great learning opportunity.



### **Tuolumne County Fire Department Muster Association**

The TCFD Muster Association is a benevolent non-profit organization that receives donations to support the firefighters of the TCFD in need and supports firefighters in obtaining additional training as well. The TCFD Muster Association is proud to offer "We Support TCFD" t-shirts in children's and adult sizes and Tuolumne Co. FD Richardson snapback hats for a donation. Children's shirts are \$15 and adult sizes are \$20. Hats are \$25 and both items are pictured below and can be ordered from <a href="mailto:TCFDMuster@gmail.com">TCFDMuster@gmail.com</a> or by calling 209-533-5118.













