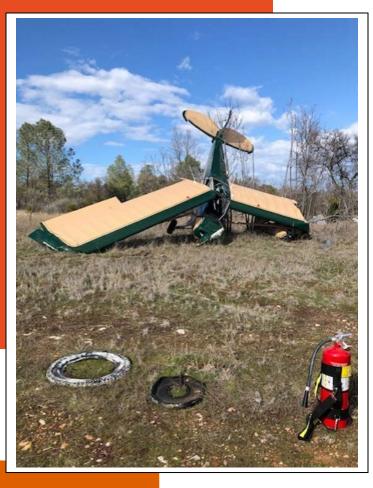
# Tuolumne County Fire Department Monthly Activity Report



# February 2020

# **Tuolumne County Fire Department**

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



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# **MONTH IN REVIEW**

# February 2020

What a difference a year makes! During February 2019 Sonora received 10.78" of precipitation according to usclimatedata.com. In stark contrast in February 2020 Sonora received zero inches of precipitation. We also had periods of strong winds that resulted in a spike of weather-related emergencies including power lines down, trees across roadways, and escaped debris burns.

February was a busy month for your fire department. There were many fires and medical calls and many other events happened throughout the month. Below is a recap of some events/news for TCFD:

In January 2019, there was a hazardous materials incident that TCFD responded to with the Tuolumne County Sheriff's Office and several other agencies. Fire personnel and equipment were committed for several days and as a result costs were increased above normal for this response. The law allows agencies to pass the cost of the response for industrial incidents on to the responsible party. TCFD did so and this month we were reimbursed the total cost of the response of over \$15,000.

TCFD was approved for a California Fire Foundation grant of \$10,000 for a Demonstration Garden. This project consists of the design and construction of a fire-resistant demonstration garden at the CAL FIRE Standard Fire Station (18464 Striker Court, Sonora, CA 95370) in the heart of Tuolumne County.

This 0.53-acre project area would be open to the public, will have various types of gardening/landscaping methods, sitting areas,



ADA accessibility, and incorporate interpretive panels. There is consideration for also including a Blue Star and Fallen Firefighter Memorial area in the design. This project will be a joint community project between CAL FIRE Tuolumne Calaveras Unit, Tuolumne County Fire Department, Tuolumne County Garden Club, UCCE Master Gardeners, Native Plant Society, FireWise Community members, Highway 108 Firesafe Council, local Scout and other service clubs. Approximately 20 crew days from Baseline Conservation Camp crews (\$4000 in kind) would also be utilized along with volunteers and staff (\$1000 in kind) from around the county.

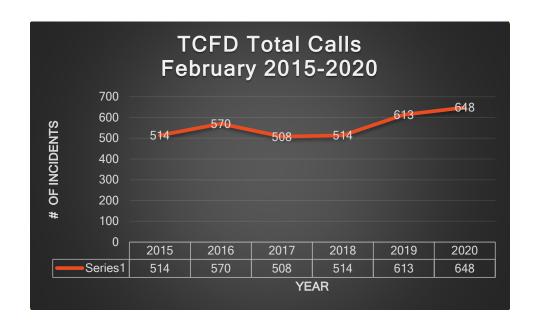
Team members from Tuolumne County Departments continued having community meetings to connect and educate the public about County services. Come out and meet us at one of the many locations that started in January and carrying on through April throughout the County. For more information visit www.tuolumnecounty.ca.gov/forums. #WeAreTuolumneCounty

There were 648 incidents within TCFD's jurisdiction in February, a 5.4% increase from 2019 and an 11.9% increase from the 5-year average of 571. Of the 648 calls in February 2020, there were 450 medical aids, 97 fires, 30 hazardous materials/fire menace standby, and 71 other incidents in TCFD jurisdiction.

#### **TCFD Station Responses**

Station 51 Mono Village Fire Station responded to 153 incidents in the month of February which included 118 medical calls (including 15 vehicle collisions), 14 public assists, 11 fires, and 10 other call types including alarm sounding, fire menace standbys, landing zone, and smoke checks. 130 incidents were within their primary response area and 23 were not. Volunteers responded to 49 of the 153 incidents and through the Tuolumne County Automatic Aid Agreement, aid was given to three agencies five times and received by two agencies five times.

Station 76 Jamestown Fire Station 76 responded to 153 incidents in January including 112 medical aids (including 18 vehicle accidents and 2 plane incidents), 17 public assists, 9 fires, and 15 other incidents. Of the 153 incidents 123 were within their primary response area and 30 were not. Volunteers responded to no incidents. Automatic aid was given to three agencies nine times and received from two agencies ten 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 February, Blanchard Station responded to 39 incidents; 16 incidents were in Mariposa County and 23 were in Tuolumne County. Of the 39 incidents there were 27 medical calls (including 10 vehicle collisions), 3 fires, 6 public assists, and 1 hazardous materials incident.

The Twain Harte CAL FIRE Station is also part of TCFD/CAL FIRE Amador Agreement. The Twain Harte Station responded to 64 incidents, including 38 medical calls (including 6 vehicle collisions), 11 public assists, 7 structure fires, and 8 other incidents. Automatic Aid was given to 3 agencies 7 times and received by 2 agencies a total of 3 times. 53 incidents were within their primary response area and 11 were not. Volunteers responded to 35 of the 64 incidents.



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

Mono Village Station 51 (6 career / 6 volunteers) 188 incidents
Ponderosa Hills Station 53 (1 volunteer) 29 incidents
Pinecrest Station 55 (6 volunteers) 9 incidents
Mono Vista Station 56 (6 volunteers) 89 incidents
Cedar Ridge Station 58 (12 volunteers) 19 incidents
Chinese Camp Station 61 (1 volunteer) 18 incidents
Don Pedro Station 64 (2 volunteers) 20 incidents
Jamestown Station 76 (5 career / 3 volunteers) 156 incidents
Columbia College Station 79 (6 student firefighters) 68 incidents
Blanchard CAL FIRE "Amador" Station (7 career) 39 incidents
Twain Harte CAL FIRE "Amador" Station (7 career) 64 incidents

#### **Groveland CSD Fire Department**

GCSD funds a career engine at Station 78 and the Groveland CAL FIRE Amador station. There was a total of 70 responses out of the two GCSD engine companies including 40 medical aids (including 3 vehicle collisions), 13 fires, 6 public assists/fire menace standby, and 1 false alarm. 64 responses were within the GCSD jurisdiction and 6 calls were in the TCFD area.



In addition to their regular and annual station skills training, Groveland CSD Fire staff attended several specialized training classes including: Resource Unit Leader, Demobilization Unit Leader, State Fire Marshal Fire Instructor 1, Field Observer, Display Processor, and CAL FIRE Purchasing. One of the staff also attended a well-regarded First Responder Resiliency Training in Sonoma County.

# Significant Incidents

#### February 4, 2020 - Vehicle Accident, J59

In the very early morning, crews responded to J59 and Leyenda Way for a possible vehicle collision with extrication required. Assisted by E4456 from Blanchard Amador CAL FIRE, the patient and his dog were found uninjured in their overturned vehicle blocking one lane of traffic. A simple removal of the windshield allowed the dog and his owner to climb out.

February 5, 2020 - Aircraft Incident, Springfield Road Firefighters and Tuolumne County Sheriff responded to a report of an aircraft down in a pasture behind the Columbia airport along Springfield Road. First units at scene discovered a single prop aircraft that had struck an oak tree that sadly resulted in two fatalities.

### <u>February 9, 2020 - Fire Menace Standby, Phoenix</u> <u>Lake Road</u>

Due to high winds in the area, firefighters were dispatched to powerlines down on Phoenix Lake Road near the Phoenix Lake Estates Subdivision. They



arrived on scene to find a large tree suspended in the air across the roadway by utility lines. The tree brought energized power lines down across the roadway as it fell. The arcing lines in the street posed a significant threat to the public and emergency personnel. The energized hanging tree posed a risk for

falling on the roadway and was capable of transferring an electrical shock. Crews secured the area to prevent public access until the powerlines were de-energized and all obstacles were removed from the roadway.

#### February 9, 2020 - Vehicle Fire, Longeway Road

Firefighters were dispatched to multiple reports of a passenger vehicle fire in the area of Longeway Road & North Sunshine Road in Soulsbyville. Firefighters arrived to find a vehicle with extensive fire damage to the engine compartment that had been extinguished and remained at scene until all threat of fire was mitigated.

#### February 11, 2020 - Structure Fire, Cavalieri Road

Firefighters were dispatched to a residential structure fire on Cavalieri Road. Crews arrived on scene to find one room fully involved with fire extending into a second room in the center of a house. A quick extinguishment prevented the fire's spread, saving approximately 75% of the residence and belongings, as well as multiple nearby structures and travel trailers being utilized as primary residences. One minor injury was sustained by a firefighter.

#### February 14, 2020 - Vehicle Collision, J59

Firefighters responded to a solo commercial vehicle rollover on J59 just past Green Springs CAL FIRE station. A semi-truck hauling fence boards was unable to manage a turn and rolled his vehicle and

trailer losing the entire load which resulted in the closing down of the road for six hours. With the assistance of a Baseline Conservation Camp crew the roadway was cleared and reopened to commuter traffic.

# February 14, 2020 - Structure Fire, Willow Avenue

TCFD Firefighters were dispatched to a working residential structure fire with reports of three victims inside the structure on Willow Avenue in



Tuolumne City. Upon arrival the three victims were accounted for outside the structure and transported by air ambulance for smoke inhalation. Partial building collapse required adaptive tactics to access the fire for extinguishment. Damage was limited to the rear of the structure and the majority of the residence and contents were saved.

Firefighters responded to a residential structure fire on Big Hill Road. First arriving crews found one structure and multiple vehicles and multiple trees fully involved with fire, one adjacent residential structure partially involved with fire, and one additional residential structure as an immediate threat. Quick thinking along with highly trained firefighters quickly contained the fire, saving both adjacent homes and contents on either side despite the limited water supply available for extinguishment.



#### February 22, 2020 - Aircraft Incident, Columbia Airport

Firefighters along with Tuolumne County Sheriff responded to a report of an aircraft off the runway next to decommissioned CAL FIRE Air Tanker 76 inside the Columbia Airport grounds. Fire units at scene reported a single engine aircraft down. It appears that strong winds overcame the plane on takeoff and pushed it off course. The pilot was transported with minor injuries.

#### February 26, 2020 - Remote Area Rescue, Lyons Bald Mountain Road

An elderly male was rescued and treated after being located in a remote area of Bald Mountain at night. The disoriented victim was evaluated before being carried down an embankment to the nearest road for medical treatment and transport. It appeared he traveled several miles on foot without trails or roads. The victim was not equipped with proper supplies or attire for the significant distance or terrain traveled and exposure to the nighttime elements.

#### February 27, 2020 - Wood Chip Fire, J59

Firefighters responded to a large debris pile fire at SPI Keystone Mill on J59 Road. Fire crews at scene included 5 Engines, 4 Water Tenders, 1 Dozer, and over 25 fire personnel. Crews spent over 14 hours at scene before the fire was extinguished and turned over to SPI.



February 28, 2020 - Medical Aid, Mono Way

Firefighters responded to a report of a person down at a service station in East Sonora. Upon their arrival they located a patient with a fractured femur sustained while pushing their disabled vehicle uphill rolled backwards. Firefighters stabilized the patient and the patient was transported to Adventist Health

Sonora for treatment.

### **Fleet**

The aging fleet continues to have an effect on response times and our budget. This month, Pinecrest Engine 552 went to Hi-Tech in Oakdale to repair a leak in its water tank. Engine 772 is in the Baseline Shop for coolant loss and oil consumption; we moved Engine



553 up the hill to cover behind E772; we moved Don Pedro Engine 644 permanently up to Pinecrest to fill the void while the other apparatus is getting repaired and due to its smaller size will enable the volunteers at Pinecrest to respond more quickly in the narrow and often unpaved roads in their area. It has been renumbered Engine 554. Mono Vista Squad 565, the busiest volunteer apparatus, had a problem with the emergency brake and while in the shop is getting its annual preventive maintenance performed on it. Mono Vista Engine 562 is in the shop for plumbing repairs for water leaks. We're noticing more and more plumbing issues and holes in water tanks as the average age of the fleet is over 23 years. Safety compliance inspections were completed on all apparatus.

It's not just the older fleet that's causing repair impacts. The pride of the fleet, Mono Village Engine 511 (over 1900 responses annually) is a 2016 Rosenbauer with nearly 60,000 miles, is out of service due to a needed head gasket repair. Once done, E511 will remain out of service for cracks to the buildup from structural fatigue and be en route to Burton's for repair. Reserve Engine 901 is at station 51 until E511 is back in service.

## **Prevention/Education**

<u>February 20<sup>th</sup></u> - ATCAA (Amador Tuolumne Community Action Agency) head start visited Jamestown Fire Station 76 for fire prevention and awareness. The class participated with 25+ children aging from ages 2-4.



<u>February 26<sup>th</sup></u> - Twice each year your TCFD participates in the Columbia College Career Day at Sonora City Fire. This year firefighters and staff assisted with the physical agility testing of the Columbia College

Fire Academy students which involved an agility course, ropes and knots testing, ambulance operations, truck operations and oral interviews. Staff also provided the very engaged Columbia College Spring Academy students with information on careers in the fire service and Volunteer Resident Firefighter and Volunteer Firefighter opportunities with the TCFD.

Staff also participated with CAL FIRE and the US Forest Service in presenting several Smokey Bear school safety assemblies throughout the County teaching children in K-3 classes about fire safety, 911, and Smokey's #1 Rule: Smokey's Friends Never Play With Matches! Admin staff also participated in the local Smokey Bear Poster Contest with CAL FIRE and others. Sneak peek for the March report...Tuolumne County's entry is going to the state competition!!!

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:



Fire Investigators/Inspectors conducted 19 site inspections during the month of January and 26 individual plan reviews and conducted several fire cause investigations. In addition, as part of the five-year ISO review, in partnership with local water districts, over 32 fire hydrants were flow tested.

## **Training**

One of the many benefits of being a Volunteer Resident Firefighter with TCFD is being able to work towards State Firefighter 1 certification. This month saw several new and rehires into open positions with one of our Volunteer Resident Firefighters completing his Firefighter I Task Book. He will be receiving his California State Fire Marshal Firefighter I Certificate. This Volunteer Resident Firefighter made great strides towards his dream of becoming a professional Firefighter by also passing the arduous National

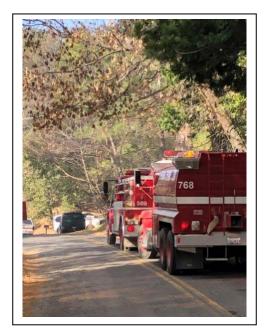


Registry Emergency Medical Technician testing. Well Done!

Another great accomplishment by CAL FIRE/TCFD Fire Apparatus Engineer (FAE) was finished this month by his completion of the California State Fire Marshal (CSFM) - Company Officer Task Book. This is another great accomplishment and covers advanced topics including Human Resource Management, General Administrative Functions of a Company Officer, Fire Inspections and Investigations, All Risk Command Operations, Wildland Incident Operations, and Instructor Methodology. The FAE received his CSFM Company Officer Certificate during February.

Additional staff completed weeklong training in Incident Management and Company Officer

Development. The Incident Management 1 class taught at the Ben Clark Training Center in Riverside



is designed to prepare company officers to command and control emergency incidents and efficiently transfer command to an incoming Battalion Chief. The course is also part of the California Joint Apprenticeship Program. The State Fire Marshal Company Officer 2B class provides training on administrative functions and the implementation of Department policies/procedures; and conveying the fire department's role, mission, and image to the public.

California State Fire Marshal certifications verify and certify that individuals have completed a standard of training set forth by the State Fire Marshal's office and are recognized by Fire Departments across the Country. Often these certifications are prerequisites for a higher level of certification in the future.

We were able to fill a vacant Volunteer Resident Firefighter position when a new recruit joined the crew of at Jamestown Station. The Firefighter comes from Turlock and is a recent graduate of the Modesto Regional Fire Training Center class of Fall 2019. He hopes to join the ranks of CAL FIRE sometime this season as he works towards earning his Firefighter 1 certification.

In addition to the normal monthly skills refresher training, volunteers received an additional 324 hours of training in Emergency Medical Responder, Hazardous Materials First Responder, TCFD Orientation, Illness and Injury Prevention Program, Firefighter Health and Safety, Fire Department Communications, Building Construction, Fire Chemistry, Solar Photovoltaic Safety for Firefighters, and Engine Orientation.





# **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 and supports firefighters in obtaining additional training. 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.

















for our Volunteers.



