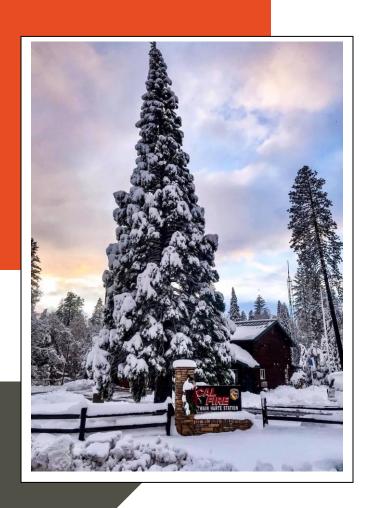
Tuolumne County Fire Department Monthly Activity Report



December 2019

Tuolumne County Fire Department

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Month in Review	3
Station Responses	
Significant Incidents	
Fleet	
Prevention/Education	8
Training	9









MONTH IN REVIEW

DECEMBER 2019

December is a month of celebrating beliefs and bringing families together. Your TCFD continued in its mission to not just serve the community by responding to emergencies and calls for assistance, but also by giving back to the communities that support their fire department so much. CAL FIRE/TCFD career and volunteer firefighters joined together in several acts of giving throughout the community.

In early December, the annual Sue Arrouzet Toy Drive was held and received several thousands of dollars in donations and literally a truck load of donations from the public and staff for those in need in Tuolumne and Calaveras County. Sue Arrouzet is a retired CAL FIRE Tuolumne-Calaveras Unit Fire

Captain that sustained career-ending injuries on a structure fire while assigned to the CAL FIRE Copperopolis Station. Prior to her assignment in Copperopolis, she spent many years working at CAL FIRE and TCFD fire stations in Tuolumne County. After the injury, Sue's co-workers wanted to find a way to honor Sue for her service and sacrifice, but also give back to the communities she served. The toys and money donated is divided between ATCAA in Tuolumne County and



The Resource Connection in Calaveras County and they deliver to families in need. To date, thousands of toys and several hundred bicycles have been donated by the community and your firefighters to our local residents to make their holiday a memorable one.

In early December, CAL FIRE declared fire season over, allowing residents to start burning debris without a CAL FIRE permit on air pollution control declared burn days. Firefighters also use this time to remove fuels by burning that aren't chipped from ongoing fuels reduction projects throughout the county. Fire Season 2019 was a mild one, according to the record books, with approximately 1,000 acres burned compared to over 14,000 in 2018 throughout the CAL FIRE Tuolumne Calaveras Unit. However, it is never time to let your guard down and think that more fires won't occur next fire season or the ones after that. Continue your diligence with fuels reduction around your home, work with your neighbors to develop or join local FireWise communities and be prepared for emergencies of any sort.

As the large wildfire threat diminished with the increased precipitation, the County again entered the time of year when funds from the County allow the ability to keep a few CAL FIRE fire stations open.

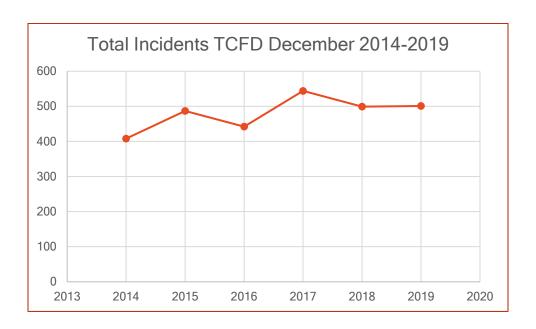
What is known as the "Amador Plan" allows the county to keep the CAL FIRE stations open to respond to emergencies when the fire stations wouldn't normally be open. Twain Harte CAL FIRE and Blanchard (Don Pedro) CAL FIRE stations remained open as the fire season came to a close as a result of that agreement, meaning at least two firefighters will be on duty 24/7 through the winter and early spring period. When the state prepares to enter fire season next spring, the County funding will end, and State funding will provide for the staff and equipment until next fall when the process starts again.

The CAL FIRE California Climate Investment grant was applied for by the TCFD for \$250,000 for the purchase of a Peterbilt 337/IMT Mechanic Package, a Landoll L2024 A Industrial Tag Trailer, and a Fecon Bull Hog BH74SS Forestry Mulcher to combine with the Caterpillar 299D2 XHP Compact Loader that was awarded on the same grant in 2018. We should find out the status sometime in March 2020.

TCFD began preparing in early December for our five-year Insurance Services Office (ISO) review. The ISO Public Protection Classification (PPC) program provides important, up-to-date information on the quality of public fire protection in nearly 50,000 fire protection areas across the United States since 1971. They analyze fire departments, water supply systems, emergency communications, and community risk reduction efforts and assign a PPC grade from 1 (superior property fire protection) to 10 (doesn't meet ISO's minimum criteria). Most U.S. property insurers use the PPC grade in calculating premiums. Generally, a community with a good PPC grade receives lower rates than a community with a poor PPC grade, assuming all other factors are equal. Some of the benefits of the PPC program include: lower premiums from insurance companies; incentive for improving and maintaining public fire protection, which could reduce losses; helping fire departments and public officials plan, budget for, and justify improvements; and helping communities prepare to fight fires effectively. Tuolumne County currently has an insurance Class 4/4Y. We will meet with the ISO review team in early January 2020 and results will be mailed to the County Administrator and County Fire Chief by the end of summer. We will have one year to respond to any needed corrections or to make any needed upgrades before the score is published for the insurance industry to review. Insurance is one of the biggest issues in Tuolumne County and we strive to do our part to not add any hurdles to the process of homeowners receiving appropriately priced policies.

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

There was a total of 501 calls for service in the TCFD jurisdiction in December, a minor increase from 499 during the same period in 2018, and a 28.6% increase above the 408 incidents in 2014. Of the 501 incidents this month, there were 363 medical aids, 30 fire calls, 92 public assists, and 16 other calls.



TCFD Station Responses

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

Mono Village Station 51 (6 career / 6 volunteers) 175 incidents

Ponderosa Hills Station 53 (3 volunteers) 33 incidents

Long Barn Station 54 (no volunteers) 4 incidents

Pinecrest Station 55 (8 volunteers) 10 incidents

Mono Vista Station 56 (6 volunteers) 92 incidents

Crystal Falls Station 57 (no volunteers) 45 incidents

Cedar Ridge Station 58 (16 volunteers) 16 incidents

Chinese Camp Station 61 (1 volunteer) 19 incidents

Don Pedro Station 64 (2 volunteers) 17 incidents

Jamestown Station 76 (5 career / 6 volunteers) 138 incidents

Columbia College Station 79 (5 student firefighters) 40 incidents

Blanchard CAL FIRE "Amador" Station (7 career) 27 incidents

Twain Harte CAL FIRE "Amador" Station (7 career) 74 incidents

In 2019, TCFD has had 5,951 incidents within its jurisdiction, including 95 vegetation fires, 41 structure fires, 406 other fires, 4,183 medical aids, 928 public assists/service calls, and 299 miscellaneous calls, compared to 5,822 incidents in 2018.

Significant Incidents

<u>December 6, 2019 - Vehicle Accident,</u> Wards Ferry Road.

Near the intersection of Tinnin Road, firefighters responded and found a vehicle off the roadway that had damaged two power poles, bringing energized lines down onto the roadway and another vehicle, trapping the driver. The dramatic event resulted in no injuries.



December 9, 2019 - Commercial Vehicle Fire, Stockton Road

Firefighters responded to a recreational vehicle fully involved with fire. Due to difficult access, they needed to put down several hundred feet of hose to reach the vehicle. The fire was contained to the vehicle and no injuries were reported.

December 11, 2019 - Vehicle Accident, Highway 108 Mono Vista

Firefighters responded to a major injury vehicle accident and resulting fire. In a very dramatic sequence of events, a bystander was able to remove two patients from a vehicle as the fire was igniting prior to firefighter's arrival. Firefighters were able to rapidly triage the several injured occupants from the two vehicles and prevent the fire from spreading.

December 13, 2019 - Vehicle Accident, Stockton Road

Firefighters responded to assist the City of Sonora on a major injury accident at Stockton Road near Mill Villa Ct. Two vehicles were involved with a single occupant in each vehicle. One patient succumbed to his injuries and one patient was flown to a valley trauma center with major injuries.

December 14, 2019 - Residential Structure Fire, Sturgis Road

Firefighters arrived at scene and found a patient outside of a home filled with smoke. As the first firefighters treated the resident, additional firefighters found fire in the attic and a coordinated attack confined the fire to the area of origin with minimal damage to adjoining rooms.

<u>December 20, 2019 - Residential Structure</u> Fire, Toby Street

Firefighters from TCFD and around the area responded into the City of Sonora to assist with a structure fire. When firefighters arrived, the building was nearly completely



engulfed with fire. Firefighters were able to salvage several items from the home of sentimental value and contained the fire to the building of origin, preventing any surrounding buildings from being damaged by fire.

December 21, 2019 - Vegetation Fire, Parkridge Avenue. Firefighters were dispatched to a smoke check in the area of Ridgewood Drive. On arrival firefighters found a small vegetation fire about a half-acre in size. Please remember that even with a little moisture, all it takes is a few hours of sun and a little breeze to make some fuels receptive to burn, no matter the time of year. Be careful with your burn piles.



Fleet

Major mechanical work was performed throughout the month on our Engine 761. Issues were identified in the rear-end and a head gasket replacement was needed and both items were repaired. One of the great benefits the relationship between the County and CAL FIRE allows is the sharing of some fleet repair facilities. Most repairs to the fleet are completed at the firehouse or at the County Shop at Baseline Camp. However, with major or unique repairs the new CAL FIRE Altaville Auto Shop is utilized, saving the County from sending the work out to the valley.



Prevention/Education

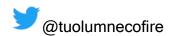
<u>December 7, 2019</u> - As mentioned briefly above, CAL FIRE and TCFD engine companies and other on and off duty employees, participated in the 8th annual Sue Arrouzet Toy Drive at Walmart collecting toys and money for Calaveras and Tuolumne County children in honor of a CAL FIRE Captain injured in the line of duty in 2011.

<u>December 8, 2019</u> - Firefighters presented the TCFD Resident Firefighter program and hiring opportunities to students of Modesto Junior College's Firefighter Academy. Recruitment presentations inform the public about opportunities with TCFD. Those selected as Resident Firefighters receive a small stipend to work 48 hours per week and gain valuable experience to start their careers.

<u>December 13, 2019</u> - A Sonora High School freshman joined the Station 51 team for a job shadow assignment. With the crew, the young man pulled fire hose, flowed water, performed ladder raises and carries, familiarization with automotive extrication tools, and what it takes to be a Tuolumne County Firefighter. He's now interested in joining our Fire Explorer program.

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:

(a) Instagram tuolumnecountyfire



Fire Investigators/Inspectors conducted 23 site inspections during the month of December and 46 individual plan reviews and conducted several fire cause investigations. Many permits were received this month ahead of the new Fire Code and Building Code taking effect on January 1, 2020.

During one of the inspections in December at a hotel in the county, Fire Inspectors found several violations including use of a portable propane stove in a commercial kitchen and improperly installed dryer vent. Inspections of multi-occupancy commercial businesses are mandated by the California State Fire Marshal. The county currently performs these and follow up inspections at no charge.



However, with the direction and foresight of the Board of Supervisors, the TCFD and County staff are reviewing



possible changes to the billing structure to reflect actual cost of performing these inspections and enhancing the inspection program to include all businesses in the TCFD jurisdiction. A proactive fire code and life safety inspection program will make our community safer, reduce property loss and injury from fire, and increase business by keeping insurance rates lowered.

Training

<u>December 2, and December 6, 2019</u> - Battalion training was held over two days with Jamestown, Mono Village, Standard and Twain Harte fire stations participating in a multi-casualty drill with Tuolumne County Ambulance personnel. Staff refreshed skills using simulations focused on Tuolumne County's Multi-Casualty Incident Plan of triage and rapid transport when faced with incidents that have multiple patients.

<u>December 3, 2019</u> - Firefighters assisted Columbia College's Fire Academy during their Wildland Fire training. Staff educated and supervised students for the Progressive Hoselay portion of their training,

in preparation for their skills exam later that week. Progressive hoselays are used by firefighters to reach areas where fire engines can't drive to by connecting lengths of 100' of hose to reach their target.

<u>December 18-19, 2019</u> - Several staff attended a two-day grant-writing class in Sunnyvale. TCFD relies on grants to purchase much needed equipment. In the last 18 months, TCFD has secured over \$800,000 in grants for necessities. This training will allow us to pursue additional grants and opportunities.

There were several hundred additional personnel hours of training through a multitude of hands on training with topics covered such as structure fire response, fire attack, large hose deployment and handling, hydrant changeovers, chainsaw use and safety, low angle rope rescue and many other topics.

