



Humboldt County Fire Chiefs' Association 2015



Cover Page Story

Humboldt County Fire Chiefs Association Measure Z Improvements

In 2015, the Humboldt County Fire Chiefs Association received considerable support for rural fire protection from the voters of Humboldt County with the passage of Measure Z and from the Humboldt County Board of Supervisors' allocation of \$2.3 million dollars to be spent on increasing the safety and capability of the fire service within our County. This support and commitment was vital to our county fire service.

This funding was used to purchase compliant and safe self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBAs- air tank assemblies worn by firefighters to provide clean air when fighting structure and vehicle fires or entering toxic or low oxygen environments), structural personal protective equipment (PPE) also known as "turnouts," wildland fire PPE, and updated mobile and handheld radios that are narrow-band capable as required by the Federal Communications Commission. Additionally, funds from Measure Z have been used to help pay fire department dispatching fees, and to support a formal countywide planning effort to address the mismatch between fire related district boundaries and where services are actually being provided. The county planning assistance has been vital to a number of fire departments, including Telegraph Ridge, Fruitland Ridge, and Fieldbrook as they completed the process to become a district or worked to annex areas they have historically responded to into their current district. County and LAFCo staff have also worked with other fire departments, at varying levels, to address response boundary and sustainability issues, including: Blue Lake, Garberville, Honeydew, Kneeland, Miranda, Myers Flat, Petrolia, Phillipsville, Redcrest, Rio Dell, Scotia, Weott, and Willow Creek. These efforts are all in-progress and aim to ensure long-term funding sources and or other means to support the sustainability of these critical public safety services.

The following chart gives a breakdown of where Measure Z funded equipment was distributed. It should be noted that Arcata Fire and Humboldt Bay Fire did not receive any Measure Z funded equipment or dispatch fee support during the 2015-16 fiscal year. Both departments were removed from the first year Measure Z funding allocation to ensure that the basic safety equipment and PPE needs of the more rural fire departments in our county were addressed. Arcata Fire and Humboldt Bay Fire benefit from our neighboring departments being properly equipped with compliant safety equipment when they respond in mutual aid for large incidents.

Measure Z Funding Disbursement

Department	SCBA	PPE: Structure	PPE: Wildland	Radio: Mobile	Radio: Handheld	Dispatch Fees
Alderpoint Fire	8	3	17		8	Yes
Arcata Fire						No
Blue Lake Fire	3	2	2	1		Yes
Briceland Fire	4	15			13	Yes
Bridgeville Fire	6					Yes
Carlotta Fire	8	3	11			Yes
Eel River Tech Resc.						Yes
Ferndale Fire						Yes
Fieldbrook Fire		18	16			Yes
Fortuna Fire	3					No
Fruitland Ridge Fire	6	6	6	4		Yes
Garberville Fire						Yes
Honeydew Fire	6	15	6			Yes
Hoopla Fire	12	17	17	6	3	Yes
Humboldt Bay Fire						No
Kneeland Fire	2	7	7	4		Yes
Loleta Fire	2	9	8			Yes
Miranda Fire	14	15	15			Yes
Myers Flat Fire	6	4	4	8		Yes
Orick Fire	8	12	12	9		Yes
Orleans Fire	8	11	15	6		Yes
Palo Verde Fire	6	7		8		Yes
Petrolia Fire	8	6	6		1	Yes
Phillipsville Fire	6			4		Yes
Redcrest Fire	6	5	5			Yes
Redway Fire	11					Yes
Rio Dell Fire	15	5				Yes
Salmon Creek Fire	6	5	5	6		Yes
Samoa Fire		2			4	Yes
Scotia Fire	20					Yes
Shelter Cove Fire	5	5	4			Yes
SoHum Tech Resc.						Yes
Telegraph Ridge Fire	6	14	10			Yes
Trinidad Fire	3	2	2			Yes
Weott Fire	4	10	10			Yes
Westhaven Fire	12	1	1			Yes
Whitethorn Fire	8					Yes
Willow Creek Fire	16	5				Yes
Totals	228	204	175	56	29	35

To further explain what each of the recipient departments received, a SCBA included the actual SCBA, one air cylinder in the SCBA, one spare air cylinder, and a minimum of one SCBA facemask. A set of structural PPE outfitted a firefighter from head to toe, and included a structure helmet, protective hood, turnout coat, turnout pants, suspenders, structure boots, and structure gloves. A set of wildland PPE also outfitted a firefighter from head to toe, and included a wildland helmet with goggles and shroud, wildland gloves, wildland shirt and pants, and leather wildland boots. The PPE was properly sized and fitted to the individual firefighters who would receive the gear.

The SCBAs were placed in service beginning in October, 2015. In some cases, those SCBAs were pressed into service by the recipient department almost immediately. Fruitland Ridge Fire had the new SCBAs in service less than a day after conducting training, and deployed the new SCBAs on a structure fire within their jurisdiction. In Fruitland Ridge and in other locations, departments praised the new SCBAs, especially the ability to swap spare bottles with other departments to keep firefighters working. The PPE was custom made from a specification that the Humboldt County Fire Chiefs Association developed, and as with any custom produced product, took longer to deliver into the county. As the garments arrived and were distributed, departments pushed the new PPE into emergency service immediately, responding to structure and vehicle fires, traffic collisions, and medical aid calls. The vendor reports that more than a dozen other fire departments from across northern California and southern Oregon have been purchasing PPE for their departments based upon the "Humboldt Spec."

The Humboldt County Fire Chiefs Association would again like to thank the voters and the Board of Supervisors for their support of the county fire service through Measure Z funding. Additional support is needed for the Humboldt County fire service to continue to address ongoing PPE needs, dispatch fee support, and replacement of aging apparatus and lack of secure facilities to store fire apparatus and equipment. Also vital to the fire service, is the ability to train with neighboring departments without having to leave their respective response areas. Additionally, ongoing support of the county planning assistance component remains vital to assisting fire companies and districts with formation, annexation, and the establishment of funding mechanisms to assist with long-term service sustainability.

Thank you for your support.

In Memory

The Humboldt County Fire Chiefs Association 2015 Annual report is dedicated to the memory of five local fire service members who passed away over the past year. Each dedicated their commitment of time and service to their respective department and community faithfully over the course of many years.

***Harrell Snodgrass** passed away on December 10, 2014. Harrell was a retired firefighter who previously served the Redway Volunteer Fire Department and his community for 27 years.*

***John Van Meter** passed away on January 18, 2015. John was also a retired firefighter who previously served the Redway Volunteer Fire Department, and served his community for 20 years.*

***Brice Ford Thompson** passed away on September 25, 2015. Brice was a retired firefighter who previously served in the fire service in Humboldt County for more than 50 years, first serving the community of Samoa, and then spending the majority of his 50 years with the Blue Lake Fire Department.*

***Howard Phun** passed away in December, 2015. Howard was a founding member of the Telegraph Ridge Volunteer Fire Company in 1988. Howard served Telegraph Ridge for more than 25 years, and became Assistant Chief of the Telegraph Ridge Fire Protection District. Howard continues to serve his community; the Telegraph Ridge fire station is located on Howard's property under a long term lease.*

***George Alan Davis** passed away April 11, 2015. Alan, as he was known to many, received the dedication of the 2014 Humboldt County Fire Chiefs Association Annual Report, but is included in this dedication as a fire service member of our community who passed away over the past year. Alan was a long time active member of the Arcata Fire Department, and was previously a career Fire Captain with the City of Milpitas Fire Department.*

The Humboldt County Fire Chiefs Association honors and thanks each for their service over the years.

To: Humboldt County Board of Supervisors

An Overview of 2015 Humboldt County Fire Services:

2015 was a year of very interesting changes and improvements to the Humboldt County fire service and our local departments. Over the past year, we have experienced an increase in calls for service to a large majority of the departments in Humboldt County. Calls ranging from all manner of fires, public service assistance calls, and calls for medical assistance all have increased. This shows that the communities of this county are relying more and more on the fire service than ever before. Most of the fire departments and districts providing services in Humboldt County are staffed by volunteers, and funded by property taxes and special assessments, and through various community fundraisers. This year has seen a couple of volunteer companies form into districts, which were voted into existence by their respective communities. The advantage of district formation is that it allows the fire agency to be funded by parcel taxes and not just the weekly or monthly fundraisers put on by the volunteer companies to put fuel in the tanks of their apparatus and pay their insurance. As the volume of calls for service goes up, the costs to the fire departments increase as well through fuel and maintenance.

It was fortunate for the rural fire service of Humboldt County that voters approved funds for public safety through Measure Z, and that the Humboldt County Board of Supervisors supported funding to the level of \$2,234,735 for rural fire. These funds have been used to purchase basic safety equipment to bring rural fire departments up to a minimum level in the first year. Items purchased included Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA), National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) compliant structural turnout and wildland personal protective equipment (PPE), and radios for communication and interoperability between departments. This safety equipment has been dispersed to the departments most in need, trained with, and has been put to use. Additional Measure Z funding is being used to pay fire department dispatch fees and to fund County Planning assistance to help with the establishment and expansion of fire related districts or other measures to address the lack of complete community coverage and sustainable revenue. It is the goal of the Humboldt County Fire Chiefs Association (Chiefs Association) to continue to request Measure Z funding to further improve the rural fire departments in Humboldt County, so that their

respective communities are protected, and so that visitors, friends and family enjoying the rural beauty of our county are also protected should a situation requiring emergency response arise. Safe, effective, compliant equipment is vital to delivery of this service.

The past year has continued to see fire departments working together in our county cooperatively in mutual aid and automatic aid to assist neighboring departments during times of emergency. Fire departments are training together more, whether through formal academy training such as the Eel Valley Training Academy or in less formal situations where neighboring departments are sharing training to improve working relationships. Working together improves the way we serve our communities and the county as a whole. However, this has not always been the case. During my more than 30 years of being a volunteer, I have seen times when various departments almost came to blows over jurisdictional district lines, training, and working together. Recent collaboration is a testament to all the firefighters within Humboldt County and the understanding that we are here to serve not only our own respective districts, but the greater community and our many visitors, and that our neighbors will be there to help if needed.

The Chiefs Association would like to thank the Board of Supervisors for their continued support to the firefighters of Humboldt County; without this support we would not have the current level of service provided today.

Sincerely,

Jeff Robison, President

Humboldt County Fire Chiefs Association

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Acronyms

ALS	Advanced Life Support
ARFF	Aircraft Rescue Firefighting
AFFF	Aqueous Film-Forming Foam
AED	Automated External Defibrillator
BLS	Basic Life Support
BIA	Bureau of Indian Affairs
Cal-OES	California Governor's Office of Emergency Services
CSD	Community Services District
CAFS	Compressed Air Foam System
CAD	Computer Aided Dispatch
EMS	Emergency Medical Service
EMT	Emergency Medical Technician
EMT-I	Emergency Medical Technician-Intermediate
FFP	Federal Fire Policy
GPM	Gallons per minute
LAFCo	Local Agency Formation Committee
NFPA	National Fire Protection Association
PPE	Personal Protective Equipment
SCBA	Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus
SE	South East
TRT	Technical Rescue Team
USAR	Urban Search and Rescue

Humboldt County

Local Fire Protection



Legend

Humboldt County Fire Departments

Local Fire Organization

- District
- Out of District
- Non-Tax

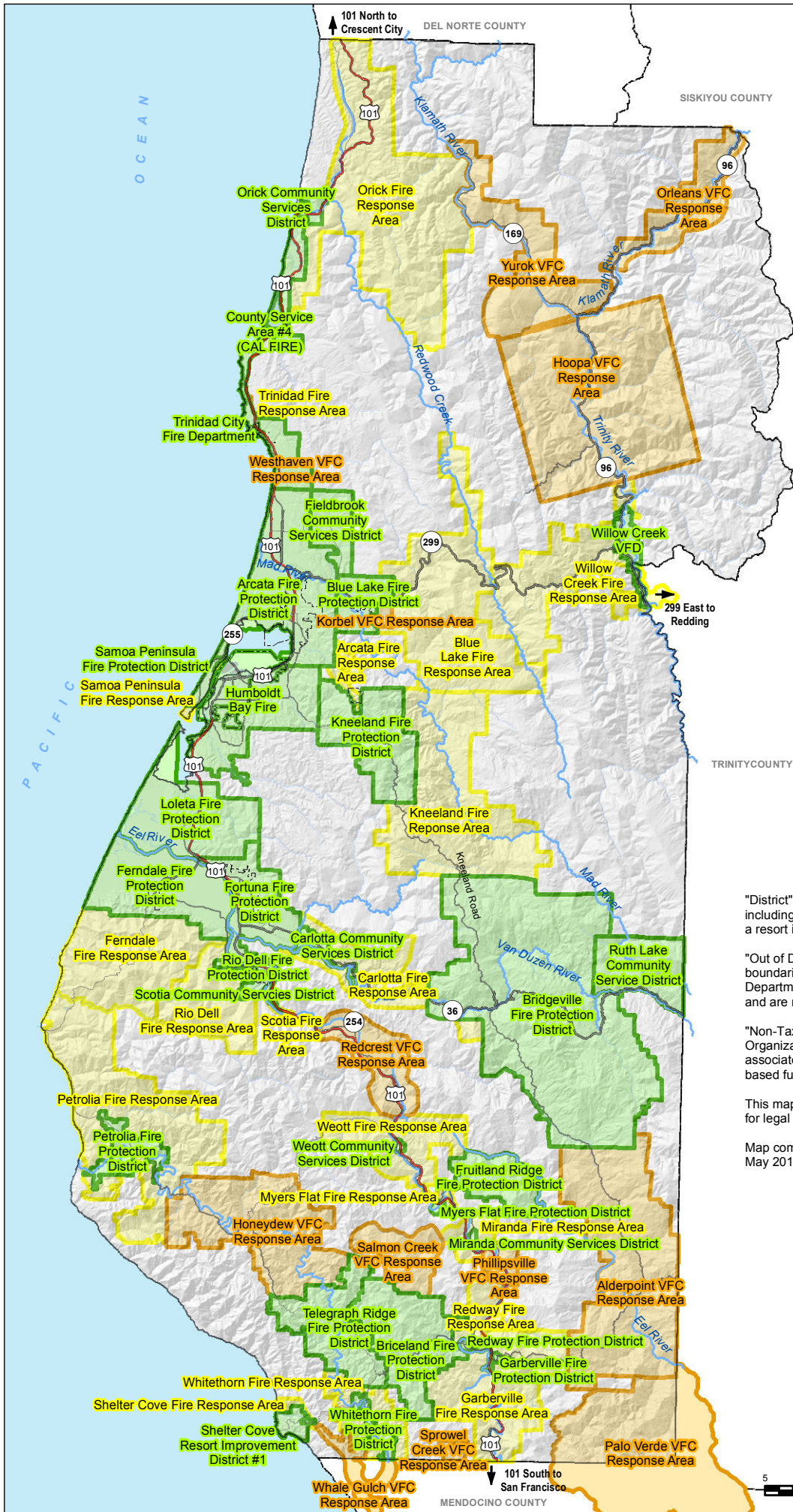
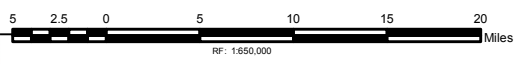
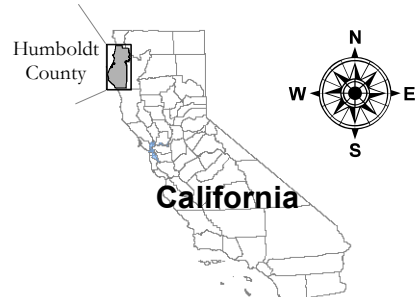
"District" denotes all special districts that provide fire service, including fire protection districts, community services districts, a resort improvement district, and a county service area.

"Out of District" response areas are areas outside of district boundaries that fire departments currently respond to. Fire Departments do not receive funding for "Out of District" areas and are not legally obligated to respond.

"Non-Tax" response areas are covered by Non-Governmental Organizations, usually Volunteer Fire Companies (VFC) not associated with a district. Such organizations do not receive tax based funding.

This map is intended for planning purposes only and is not intended for legal property boundary determinations or precise measurement.

Map compiled by County of Humboldt
 May 2016. Contact: jvondohlen@co.humboldt.ca.us



MENDOCINO COUNTY

RF: 1:650,000

2015 Annual Report Introduction

This report documents fire and emergency response provided by the local, state and federal fire service as well as details about emergency medical services, technical rescue and disaster response groups. A summary is provided of the role played in Humboldt County by the Fire Chiefs' Associations followed by a page dedicated to each local service provider. With a few exceptions, fire service providers associated with a special district are labeled "Volunteer Fire Department", meaning they receive some tax or fee revenue gathered from within a mapped boundary. Those that do not receive tax revenue and are funded primarily through fundraisers and donations are generally labeled "Volunteer Fire Company". There are also combination departments. These departments, Humboldt Bay Fire and Arcata Fire Protection District, are combination departments, with both career and volunteer firefighters. While there are only two in this category, those two have the majority of incident responses that make up the county total. Local fire service provider pages are organized by Humboldt County Supervisorial District.

The map on the previous page illustrates where and what type of local fire protection is provided throughout Humboldt County. The special districts that deliver fire services are identified in the map legend as "District" and are shown on the map in green. These districts were formed to provide services within a specific jurisdictional boundary and are supported by revenue from a combination of taxes, fees, and fundraising. Many of these jurisdictional boundaries were created as far back as the 1930's. Since that time, neighborhoods, scattered subdivisions, and rural residential development have emerged outside of district boundaries. This newer development requires year-round fire protection and emergency services, which it receives in a variety of ways. Since 2012, three new fire protection districts have been formed (Briceland, Bridgeville and Fruitland Ridge). In addition, two district expansions have been completed so that jurisdictional areas better match where services are being provided (Telegraph Ridge and Fieldbrook)

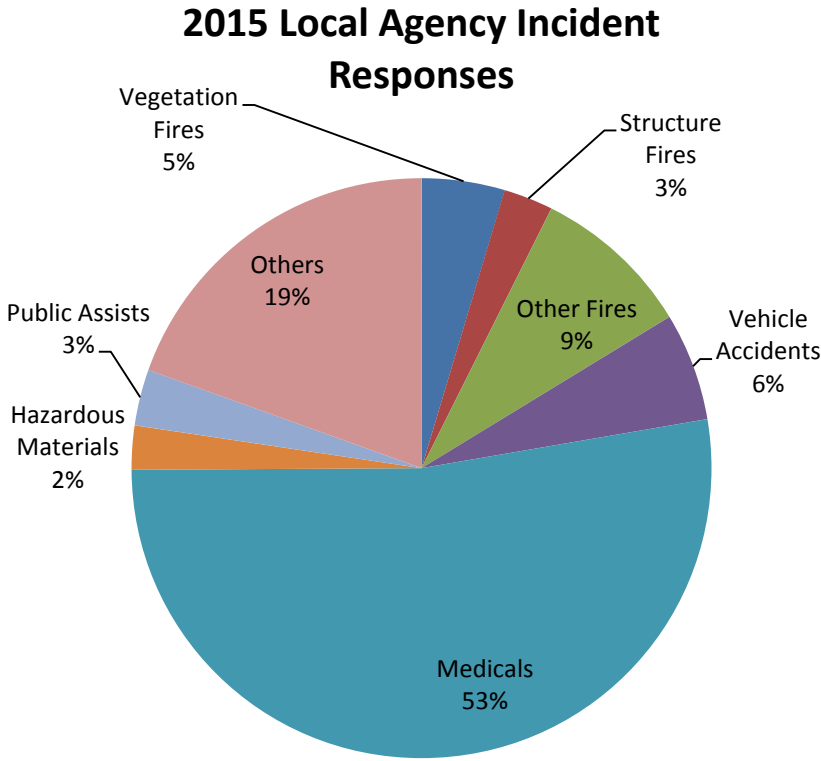
There are still many areas outside the boundaries of an established district that receive fire protection from district resources responding outside of their jurisdiction. This type of service, which is often referred to as "goodwill service", is identified in the map legend as "Out of District" and is shown on the map in yellow. District fire departments provide service to these areas even though they are under no obligation to do so and receive no compensation for their service, other than donations. This practice can put a strain on already limited resources. Furthermore, property owners within the district may question why the services funded through their taxes are benefiting residents who live outside of the district, particularly if they pay a special tax or benefit assessment specifically for fire protection.

Many areas outside the boundaries of an established district receive fire protection from a volunteer fire company that is not affiliated with a district. These volunteer fire companies receive no tax revenue and for that reason are identified on the map legend as "Non-Tax" and are illustrated on the map in orange. The survival of these fire companies depends on revenue generated from community donations, fundraisers, and grants. Some communities are more supportive of their local fire companies than others and support can fluctuate dramatically depending on local economic conditions.

The following pages provide graphic illustrations of types of responses provided during 2015. There are two pie charts—one for local agencies and one for state and federal agencies—which illustrate total 2015 fire service responses with percentages for each recorded category. It is interesting to note that, for local agency fire service calls, over 50 percent are medical emergency dispatches. This underscores the fact that most of the local fire departments and companies provide "all-risk" protection which includes much more than fire response.

Volunteer hours contributed by all local service providers is also summarized by various categories including time spent responding to incidents, training, maintaining equipment and facilities, and fundraising. A total of 102,862 volunteer hours were reported in 2015. This is likely an underestimate of what is actually contributed by the over 650 volunteers who support the network of active local fire departments, fire companies and technical rescue groups in Humboldt County.

2015
Volunteer Hours
for Humboldt County
Fire and
Technical Rescue
Services



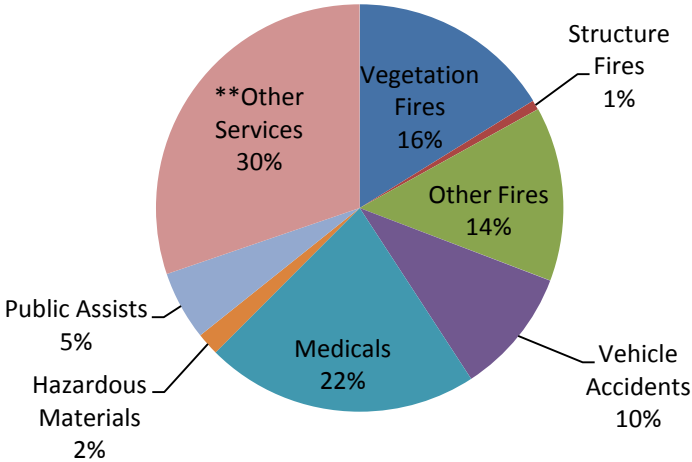
Incidents

31,736

Training

45,235

2015 State & Federal Agency Incident Responses



Maintenance

10,274

Fundraising

15,617

Total Hours

102,862

Humboldt County Fire Chiefs Working Together: Fire Chiefs Associations

Humboldt County Fire Chiefs Association

President: Jeff Robison
Phone: 707-441-4017
Email: firecrewman@gmail.com

Vice President: Bill Gillespie
Phone: (707) 441-4000
Email: bgillespie@hbfire.org

Meetings: *The Humboldt County Fire Chiefs Association meets from 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. on the 4th Wednesday of each month at various locations throughout the county.*



The Humboldt County Fire Chiefs' Association (Fire Chiefs) works hard to improve the level of service throughout the county through increased coordination, communication, standardization, and support. The desire to work together to improve interoperability is the driving force behind the efforts of the Fire Chiefs. At their monthly meetings, the group receives regular reports from committees and/or sub groups of the Association including fire instructors/training, fire prevention officers and a fire/arson investigation unit. Cal OES, CAL FIRE, Cal Chiefs, County OES, North Coast EMS, the Humboldt County Fire Safe Council (HCFSC), and others as available also contribute valuable information. These meetings provide a venue for sharing information about training, prevention, standards, legislation, grants, and new initiatives and innovations. Collaboration with these and other agencies has enabled the growth of productive and effective relationships that have proven to be beneficial to all parties.

The Fire Chiefs coordinate and sustain several programs and innovations that work together to support an ever-increasing level of fire service in Humboldt County. In order to provide quick and adequate response to fires, the Fire Chiefs developed and maintain a countywide mutual aid agreement in the form of a memorandum of understanding (MOU). The MOU was made and entered into by and between all local fire service providers in the county as well as CAL FIRE. It states that the equipment, facilities, and trained personnel of each fire department are available to the other participants in the agreement on an as requested basis, which allows for a quick, decisive dispatch of resources. This agreement has been put to the test many times since its inception and has proven to be of great value as witnessed as recently as 2012 in Fairhaven and again in 2015 at the Star Hotel Fire in Fortuna.

The on-going collaboration between the many fire agencies in Humboldt County has resulted in development of a county-wide designator system - a standardized numbering system to identify individual departments and their apparatus, an alarm matrix system designed to streamline dispatching of resources for larger incidents requiring aid from neighboring departments and numerous initiatives providing protocols for firefighter safety during various emergency operations with the most recent addressing the hazards associated with hash oil manufacturing.

Looking out for and assisting one-another is a consistent theme within the Fire Chief's Association, recently establishing an "immediate needs" request program enabling Individual fire agencies to solicit critical equipment needs from other fire agencies in the county. This new program has proven to be very successful in quickly fulfilling those equipment requests through donations from other Fire departments.

The County Fire Service faces numerous challenges that are inherent with the rural nature of the area in which we live. We continually struggle with financial hardship, volunteer recruitment and retention and providing services beyond jurisdictional boundaries; however, the Humboldt County Fire Chiefs and the departments they serve are determined to continue to work with the Board of Supervisors and County staff to find solutions. As Humboldt County's Fire Service, we do not take lightly the responsibility of providing high quality emergency services to our communities and we appreciate and value the opportunity to provide these services.

Southern Humboldt Fire Chiefs Association

President: Robert Richardson
Phone: 707-223-3246
Email: rrdawg911@yahoo.com

Vice President: Robert Puno
Phone: 707-986-7561
Email: whitethorn.fire@gmail.com

Meetings: *The Southern Humboldt Fire Chiefs Association meets at 5:00pm on the 4th Monday of every month at the CAL FIRE Station in Garberville. A meal is shared at 5:00pm and the meeting agenda begins at 6:00 p.m.*



The Southern Humboldt Fire Chiefs Association (SHFCA) is a venue for fire departments and community organizations in Southern Humboldt to collaborate for preparedness. The SHFCA is a chapter of the Humboldt County Fire Chiefs Association, a 501(c)3, and comprises firefighters from all the departments and companies in the Southern Humboldt region.

The initial purpose of the SHFCA was to provide a stronger voice for fire departments to bring more training opportunities to the southern part of the county, increase communication between local departments and with CAL FIRE, and to create a stronger fire department identification and numbering system. Successful implementation of those goals over the last 18 years has grown the SHFCA to include representatives from the Southern Humboldt Fire Safe Council, the Humboldt County Fire Safe Council, the Red Cross, the Southern Humboldt Emergency Preparedness Team (SHEPT), the County Radio Dispatch Co-op, CAL-EMA, Humboldt County OES, and other emergency preparedness groups.

The SHFCA sponsors the Southern Humboldt Technical Rescue Team (SHTRT). The SHTRT is comprised of firefighters from the local departments who specialize in rope, water, and wilderness rescue. Team members are highly dedicated firefighters who train and respond to rescues in addition to the normal training and duties of their respective fire departments.

The SHFCA recognizes that Southern Humboldt communities need to be informed about the issues surrounding wildfires, structure fires, emergencies, and disaster management. One of the tools used to inform the public is the "Burning Issues" fire and rescue radio talk show on KMUD FM radio. This show provides the SHFCA an opportunity to voice information to the public about training, prevention, standards, legislation, grant writing, and new initiatives and innovations. The show takes place on the fifth Sunday of any month with five Sundays, 1:30 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Eel River Valley Fire Chiefs Association

Ben Fleek, Bridgeville FPD: 707-777-3424;

John Broadstock, Scotia VFD: 707-845-2995;

Winburn, Fortuna FPD: 707-725-5021;

Dennis DelBiaggio, Ferndale FPD: 707-768-9909 (2016 Chief, **Daniel Del Biaggio**)

John Church, Carlotta CSD: 707-768-1714;

Ken Nielson, Loleta FPD: 707-733-5407; **Lon**

Shane Wilson, Rio Dell FPD: 707-764-3329;



Left: Eel River Valley; source: www.lostcoastoutpost.com

Right: Eel River Valley Fire Academy

The goal of the Eel River Valley (ERV) Fire Chiefs Association is to improve and streamline administrative and operational objectives with the major focus being interoperability throughout the immediate area. The Fire Chiefs of the Eel River Valley Fire Departments meet quarterly to discuss and improve emergency response and training within the Eel River Valley and along Highway 36, east to Bridgeville. These discussions and planning sessions have led to various auto-aid agreements, communications plans, and fire pre-planning throughout the area.

The ERV Fire Chiefs Association represents seven volunteer fire departments (VFD), including Scotia, Rio Dell, Ferndale, Loleta, Fortuna, Carlotta, and Bridgeville; and is responsible for the development and direction of the Eel River Valley Technical Resource Team. All departments utilize the ERV Fire Academy, an 80-hour basic firefighting course, to accomplish entry level firefighter training for new members. In addition the group hosts an annual driver-operator training, company officer training and various other topics including live-fire training on a valley-wide concept.

Through the Boy Scouts of America, the Eel River Valley Fire Chiefs supports the Explorer Learning for Life Program—a career education program that is open to youth ranging from 14 to 20 years of age. The program builds career opportunities, life skills, citizenship and community involvement, character education and leadership experience, with the goal of helping young people mature and become responsible and caring adults. The program also serves as a recruitment tool for volunteer fire agencies, as many participating youth do become volunteer firefighters. The Fortuna VFD started an Explorer Post three years ago, Loleta VFD came on board with a Post one year ago, and Ferndale VFD started an Explorer Post just recently. An Explorer Post in Rio Dell is expected to begin in the near future. There are currently 12 youth participating in the Eel River Valley Explorers Program. These youth attend trainings, assist with community events and occasionally assist at fire/rescue scenes. **For more information on the Explorer Learning for Life Program, contact Sandi Petersen at 707-845-9472.**