



EL CERRITO-KENSINGTON FIRE DEPARTMENT

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DATE: April 6, 2022

TO: Bill Hansell: General Manager

FROM: Michael Pigoni: Fire Chief

RE: **Fire Chief's Report for the April 2022 Fire District Board Meeting**

March Incident Run Reports

There were 29 incidents that occurred during the month of March in the community of Kensington. This is a decrease of 7 calls over the previous month. Engine 165 responded to a total of 56 calls in March which is an increase of 2 calls over the previous month. Overall, the El Cerrito / Kensington Fire Department responded to 356 calls for service during the month which is an increase of 76 calls over the previous month.

While there was a significant increase in incidents last month. Engine 165's total response remained steady with a significant decrease within the community. The main area of decrease was medicals and false alarms. The increase overall is attributed to the fact that March has more days than February as well as some of the colder weather led to an increase in exterior warming fires along the avenue and freeways which did not affect Station 65.

Fire Chief Recruitment

The executive search company Peckham and McKenney retrained by the City of El Cerrito to recruit a new Fire Chief have reported that they have several qualified personnel that have applied for the position. Panels consisting of the City Manager and Assistant City Manager, department heads, labor representative as well as a Fire District representative will be interviewing the candidates on April 21st. There is no time frame for the final process, but the City will be expediting the process to bring the new Chief on board prior to the start of budget planning.

Evacuation Drill

Planning for the evacuation drill is progressing and is on schedule for April 9th at 9:00 am. Fire and Kensington PD has plans in place to conduct a voluntary evacuation exercise of zone ECK-E0008 (Zone 8) and a shelter in place drill for zone ECK-E0007 (Zone 7). All residents of Zones 7&8 will be provided with a link to the District's website to indicate they received the alerts and provide feedback. More information will be provided at the Board meeting on the April 13.

Vegetation Inspections

With the dry start to the year and the area entering the third year of drought, the Fire Department has started residential inspections for compliance to the District's Vegetation Management Policy. Residents maintaining their property is not a seasonal task as State Law requires compliance in "Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones" at all times. Even annual grasses and weeds are required to be always cut and maintained to a height of 4" to 6". While it entails more work, it is much safer to cut or mow short dry grass that waiting till it is 2' or taller and dry. There is more information on the District's website as well as Cal Fire's web site on safe practices around the home to create a safe environment.

COVID-19 Mandates

The County continues to see a decline in COVID infections and hospitalizations since the peak in January. There were no new deaths reported in Kensington from the virus and at this time there has been only 10 new cases since last month and only been 2 new cases in the last 14 days in the community. While the County and the Fire Department has relaxed some of their protocols, the Department continue to test all non-vaccinated personnel at the start of their shift and require masks to be worn on all responses.

Register with the Contra Costa County Community Warning System

It cannot be stressed enough the importance to take a moment to register cell phones with the Contra Costa County Community Warning System (CWS). CWS will alert you when life-threatening incidents, like wildfire or power shutdowns, occur. www.cwsalerts.com