



EL CERRITO-KENSINGTON FIRE DEPARTMENT

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DATE: May 3, 2021

TO: Bill Hansell: General Manager

FROM: Michael Pigoni: Fire Chief

RE: **Fire Chief's Report for the May 2021 Fire District Board Meeting**

April Run Report

There were 24 incidents in Kensington for the month of April. This was a decrease of 10 calls over the previous month. Biggest decline was in medical incidents and public assists. Total incident for Station 65 in April was 51 calls which was a decrease of 2 calls over the previous month. There was one significant call for a vehicle fire in the 500 block of Coventry Road on April 20th just a few minutes past midnight. The vehicle was totally destroyed, and some landscape was burned, but otherwise no one was injured and no other damage.

Overall, the El Cerrito / Kensington Fire Department responded to 314 calls of service during the month.

Class A Foam

After any fire, there is always a chance that residents may see a foam layer on a structure, in a car or in the burnt vegetation. For over 25 years, the Fire Department has been using a Class A foam concentrate to assist with firefighting efforts. Class A foam used primarily on Class A fuel such as wood, vegetation and similar materials as compared to Class B which is used exclusively for fuels such as gasoline, diesel and oil type fires.

Class A foam is essentially a synthetic detergent (wetting agent) that when mixed with water, reduces the surface tension and allows it to soak into materials easier and extinguish the fire much quicker, cool the material faster and prevent rekindles. While it will make copious amounts of foam (suds), it is actually used at a very low concentration, ½% or 1/2 gallon for every 100 gallons of water. While it will dry skin due to the detergent removing natural oils, it is not hazardous to one's health when used properly.

Class A foam provides faster knockdown by making water more efficient and protects the lives of the firefighters.

Vegetation Management

Seasonal rainfall is all but over it appears and was extremely low this year. The local vegetation fuel moisture levels continue to drop and are at late summer levels. Due to these conditions, the Fire Department has started early this year and is continuing with residential inspections of properties in the community in an attempt to get 100% compliance before the super critical late summer/fall heat and Diablo winds. All residents are urged to cut weeds, trim bushes, and prune up tree limbs to develop a defensible space around their homes and property. Early spring cleanup of resident's property will make the Fire Department's job easier and help everyone avoid inspection fees and abatement costs. Vegetation Management Information is available at the Department's website.

Texas A&M Fire School

Last month the Fire Department's four newest firefighters spent a week in College Station, Texas to attend 5 days of intense live fire training at Texas A&M's fire school. The school is located on hundreds of acres with

props to simulate all types of fires using liquefied fuel. The education that our firefighters received was an invaluable experience. The entire cost of this training, including air travel, hotels, meals and the school itself, was paid for by Chevron. More information on this school is available at: <https://youtu.be/sM27Asn71Oc>

Occupancy Inspections

With the COVID-19 picture improving, the Fire Department is starting to conduct occupancy or Fire Safety inspections at the businesses and apartments. This program was put on hold most of last year due to the COVID-19 concerns and the initial uncertainties. With many businesses opening back up or increasing their capacities, it is important to complete these inspections and ensure compliance to the fire and safety codes.

Virtual Evacuation Test

The Contra Costa County Office of Emergency Services conducted a virtual live test of the Community Warning System on Sunday May 2nd. The event started at 8:00 am and cycled through the various zones sending out text message, emails and automated phone recordings. The messages were very clear that it was a test only and requested recipients complete a short survey. Hundreds of surveys were received including residents submitting information on special needs such as requiring extra time to evacuated due to mobility and/or other health issues.

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