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SACRAMENTO METROPOLITAN FIRE DISTRICT



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A Message from the Fire Chief



Recently, I formed a Citizens Advisory Committee, made up of leaders throughout the community, to assist the District with its future planning. Our primary mission in working with this committee is to ensure our firefighters and paramedics



1st Quarter Newsletter

photo by Dr. Elsburgh Clarke

Dear Brenda,

Metro Fire strives to provide our communities with the best service possible every day. In this newsletter, you will hear from Fire Chief Kurt P. Henke, learn the current state of Metro Fire's finances, and understand how a public-private partnership made it possible for a local community to obtain a life-saving medical device. Valuable tips to keep your home safe during the cold winter months are also included.

PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS

Rancho Murieta Country Club and other local partners have raised \$15,000 to purchase a single life-saving mechanical device, the Lucas Device. This device doubles the likelihood of getting pulses back on a person under CPR. It will be housed on the Metro Fire ambulance serving the community of Rancho Murieta. Though Metro Fire would like one of these on all of our ambulances, in these challenging economic times, that is not an option, given the \$15,000 price tag for each device.

Arnold Billingsly, General Manager for Rancho Murieta Country Club, explained why they felt it was so important to collaborate with Metro Fire to obtain a Lucas Device for their community. "We've had people pass away on the course due to strokes and heart attacks," said Billingsly. "If

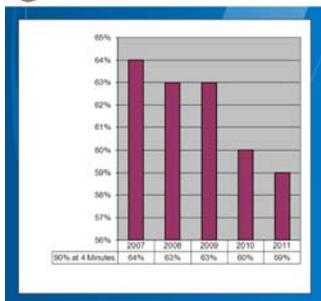
can consistently arrive at emergency incidents as close to national best practice standards as possible.

As a direct result of the \$24 million decrease in property tax revenues as compared to five years ago, Metro Fire struggles daily to provide adequate emergency response to our communities. While call volume has increased, fire stations have been closed and services have had to be cut back.

Taking proactive steps to reduce expenses, Metro Fire has increased operational efficiencies while personnel have had salaries frozen since 2008 and currently pay 12% of their pension costs. Though these steps have helped the situation, they are not enough to solve the problem of slower emergency response times.

With guidance from our Citizens Advisory Committee, we are looking at every available option, including revenue enhancement, to provide a more acceptable standard of fire protection and emergency medical services to our communities.

 Travel Time Decay



[Larger Image](#)

Stay Safe this Winter!
Turn your space

we could save even one life because of this, then we would all feel tremendous." By working together through this public-private partnership, Metro Fire and Rancho Murieta Country Club were able to successfully overcome financial limitations and provide the citizens of Rancho Murieta with a device that could save their lives.



Metro Fire paramedic demonstrating the use of the Lucas Device at Rancho Murieta Country Club

MID-YEAR BUDGET

This time of year marks the halfway point in Metro Fire's fiscal year. The "mid-year budget" process enables the District to evaluate how actual revenues and expenditures have performed against initial budget projections, and to take action, as needed. As in previous years, every line item was evaluated and changes to revenue sources were examined by each department.

The 2012-13 Mid-Year Budget evaluation identified the following:

- Projected revenue from property tax is \$1.9 million less than the prior year. This reduction marks five straight years of property tax decline. The budget had originally projected a \$4 million decline in this revenue stream.
- Costs are now projected to be \$5.5 million more than previously estimated in the budget due to a variety of factors: deployments outside the District to assist other agencies, emergency station and equipment repairs, recruitment and training new firefighters as part of a federal two-year grant, and funding the Single Role Paramedic Program.
- Most of the increased costs will be offset by reimbursements from other agencies, residual payments from termination of redevelopment agencies by the State of California, and a smaller reduction in property tax than projected. However, the District was forced to draw down on its general fund contingency reserves by \$1.2 million.

Despite these adjustments, Metro Fire still faces the annual loss of \$24 million in property tax revenue since 2007. The fire station closures and other service reductions made to address the funding loss have resulted in slower emergency response times to homes and businesses. These

heaters off when you go to sleep and make sure your smoke alarms are working.



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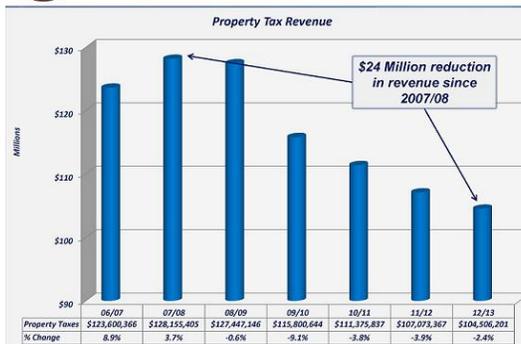
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service levels cannot be restored with the current funding sources available to the District.



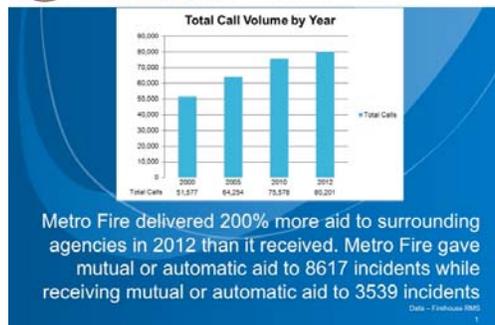
Property Tax Revenue



[Larger Image](#)



Increasing Call Volume



[Larger Image](#)

THE SEARCH FOR ALTERNATIVE HEATING SOURCES

The high cost of heating a home during winter leads us all to look for alternative heat sources. Wood burning stoves and space heaters are commonly used, yet both are major contributing factors in home fires. According to the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), space heaters cause roughly one-third of home heating fires and four out of five home heating fire **deaths**.

Some simple steps can prevent most heating-related fires from happening.

- Keep anything combustible at least three feet away from open fires and heaters.
- If you use an electric heater, keep it away from water, and be careful not to overload the circuit. Only use extension cords that have the necessary rating to carry the amp load.
- Have your chimney inspected annually and cleaned when needed. Place cool ashes in a metal container outside and well away from your house and fence.

To find more information on winter safety, check out our website at www.metrofire.ca.gov.



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