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SACRAMENTO METROPOLITAN FIRE DISTRICT Newsletter

► KEEPING BUSINESSES IN BUSINESS



It seems nearly every night there is news about a fire that destroyed somebody's business or home. National statistics show that 80% of businesses that suffer a major fire incident never reopen their doors.

In an effort to help businesses stay in business while keeping our communities safe, Metro Fire launched a new program in 2012. The design of the program was to

perform a fire and life safety inspection on every business within our District, finding those problem areas that increase fire risk and having them corrected. Metro Fire personnel conducted more than 6,000 of these inspections. The benefit was clear: decreasing the risk to one business directly lowers the risk to neighboring businesses. Even if a business owner has done everything to make their business a low fire hazard, a fire that starts next door as a result of, for example, papers being stacked by the water heater or extension cords being plugged into extension cords, will quickly spread to other neighboring businesses. That is why we are inspecting every business in our District, because this one systematic inspection provides security to so many more.

As with all new programs, we encountered unforeseen challenges. Based on valuable input from business owners who expressed concerns and outside consultation with experts in this area, Metro Fire staff developed modifications to this program, which will be presented to its Board of Directors in December.

Under the redesigned program, Metro Fire will inspect businesses every two years. The proposed changes to the fee structure are more data driven, equitable and a more accurate reflection of the staff hours spent conducting these inspections.

More information about the business inspection program and proposed revisions is available on our [website](#).

► FEMA AWARDS GRANT FOR COMMUNITY WILDFIRE PREVENTION



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Fires raging through California this year have highlighted how quickly homes, communities, forests, and the economy can be destroyed. Locally, wildland fires represent 37% of Metro's fire responses; that's an average of 869 wildland fires every year. The risks posed by these fires highlight our need for a wildland fire prevention program. Metro Fire was recently awarded a grant of \$993,504 from the Federal Emergency Management Agency to establish such a program. The goal is to reduce wildfire risk and increase community resiliency through public education and the development of a Community Wildfire Protection Plan, helping Metro Fire and our local communities for years to come.

These grant funds are being used to prepare our community for wildfires in a multitude of ways: providing education through nationally recognized, no-cost courses on wildfire mitigation; defining the Wildland Urban Interface areas and developing action plans; assessing risk and risk-reduction programs proven to be most effective; and delivering real-time mapping information to firefighters to help them stay safer while fighting wildland fires.

Community education courses are being provided through the National Fire Protection Association and will provide the community with simple and easy steps to help reduce a home's risk by preparing ahead of a wildfire.

► MONEY-SAVING, FUEL EFFICIENT AMBULANCES ROLL INTO METRO FLEET

In a continuing effort to reduce costs and streamline efficiencies, four new ambulances rolled into Metro's fleet. They are smaller, cost less to purchase and maintain, and consume less than half the fuel of a full-size fire medic.

Why the move to smaller ambulances? With the launch of the Single Role Paramedic Program earlier this year, Metro Fire was able to reduce costs while enhancing the District's ability to respond to medical emergencies. The roll of the Paramedics and EMTs on these ambulances is strictly medical; they do not engage in firefighting. Without the need for specialized firefighting gear and equipment, the District can utilize medic units with less storage space. The remainder of the Single Role Fleet is expected to be replaced in 2014.



"These new ambulances are good for the community, the environment and taxpayers. They just make sense," states Steve Cormier, Metro Fire EMS Captain. Moving to these smaller ambulances is just one more way Metro is adapting to reduced property tax revenues.

To read the article published by The Sacramento Bee, click [here](#).

► METRO FIRE SENIOR MANAGEMENT RECOGNIZED FOR ACHIEVEMENTS

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"Forged from a long line of tradition, we are Metro Fire - working together to serve our community with honor, integrity and selfless devotion to duty."



Two members of Metro Fire's senior staff were recently recognized for excellence amongst their peers: Fire Chief Kurt P. Henke was named Fire Chief of the Year from the California Fire Chiefs Association, and Chief Financial Officer Rhonda McFarlane won an award from the Sacramento Business Journal for "CFO of the Year" for Large Nonprofit/Public Agencies.

Both of these prestigious awards acknowledge the strong leadership and innovative ideas that have strengthened Metro Fire during challenging economic times. Major accomplishments to address reduced property tax revenues include increased cost recovery efforts, launching of the Single Role Paramedic program (which created a 30% expansion of Metro Fire's ALS ambulance program), and 100% Advanced Life Support coverage on all engine companies.



To read the press release regarding Chief Henke's award, click [here](#).

To read the article regarding CFO McFarlane's award, click [here](#).

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