

Fire Department Santa Clara County

Customer Service Overview and 2006 Annual Report



Mission Statement:

The Santa Clara County Fire Department exists to protect the lives, property, and environment within the communities served from fires, disasters, and emergency incidents through education, prevention, and emergency response.

Community Education, Fire Prevention and Customer Service

Community Education

County Fire's community education program is among the most proactive in the country, annually reaching more than 15% of the citizens served by delivering a wide variety of public education and community preparedness programs. During 2006, two positions were added to help cities and towns improve their emergency operation plans and to deliver citizen disaster preparedness programs.



Why is this important? It is important, now more than ever, that citizens have plans and procedures in place for all emergencies, including pandemic flu, floods, earthquakes and possible terrorist attacks. In the immediate aftermath of a disaster, needs will be greater than professional emergency service personnel can meet. Citizen preparedness is a vital link for survival. For more information about community education programs and services, please visit www.sccfd.org.

Fire Prevention

Through a comprehensive fire prevention program that includes fire and life safety inspections, plan review, and public education, the number of commercial fires in 2006 was kept to 2.7 per 1,000 occupancies inspected.



Why is this important? Ninety percent (90%) of all businesses that experience a fire loss go out of business within a year, impacting not only the company but also the employees, customers and surrounding community.

Hazardous Materials Safety

One of County Fire's performance measures is to keep reportable hazardous materials releases at or below 1.5 per 100 permitted occupancies. In 2006, there were 0.4 reported releases per 100 permitted occupancies. County Fire uses plan review and facility inspections to promote compliance with local, state and federal hazardous materials regulations.

Why is this important? A chemical release can have devastating consequences to life, the environment, property and the economy. Global concerns about terrorist activities further emphasize the need to use, store and transport hazardous substances safely.

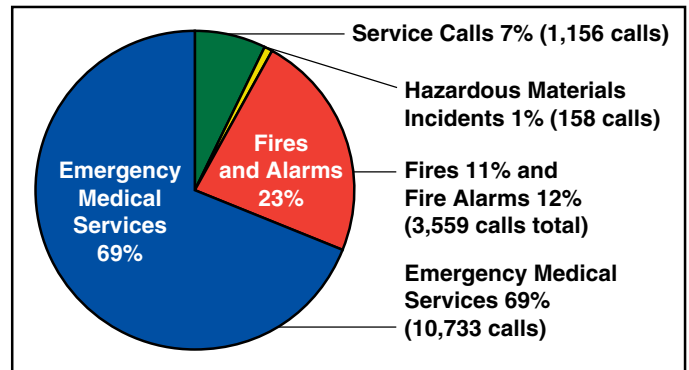


Calls for Service

County Fire responded to a total of 15,606 emergencies in 2006. Below is the call breakdown:



- Emergency medical services (69%) for illness, injuries, traffic collisions and industrial accidents.
- Fires (23%), including structure fires, vegetation fires, smoke investigations, gas leaks and fire alarms.
- Hazardous materials incidents (1%), such as chemical releases, illegal chemical disposal, and investigation of suspicious objects, powders and clandestine operations.
- Service calls (7%) for flooding, citizen assists and lock-outs.



Customer Service

Based on customer survey results, County Fire received an overall customer satisfaction rating of 98.2% in 2006.

Why is this important? Customer service is one of County Fire's highest priorities. Providing compassion to others, protecting cherished family possessions, inspecting businesses, educating the community and being positive role models for today's youth are just as important as preventing and mitigating emergencies.

Accreditation

County Fire was awarded "Accredited Agency" status in August 2005 by the Commission on Fire Accreditation International (CFAI). Just over 100 fire departments around the world have successfully completed the rigorous process of evaluating every facet of their operations to ensure continuous quality improvement and enhancement of service delivery to their communities. County Fire is proud to be one of only four California fire departments to display this level of commitment to validating quality service.



The first annual compliance report to the CFAI, a required condition for maintaining international accreditation status, was accepted in August 2006.

Emergency Services

Emergency Medical Services (EMS)



To provide the best care as quickly as possible, every fire company is staffed with at least one paramedic and all other firefighters are trained as emergency medical technicians (EMTs). County Fire carries advanced cardiac defibrillators on all apparatus and in 2006 obtained a \$227,000 grant to purchase AutoPulse CPR devices—automated chest compression equipment (pictured below). Additionally, 911 dispatchers help citizens by providing instructions to callers until firefighters arrive, and County Fire co-sponsors CPR classes with many community groups.

Why is this important? Cardiac arrest victims have a better chance of survival when CPR is performed by bystanders and advanced life support is delivered in eight minutes or less. In 2006, we were able to obtain return of spontaneous circulation on cardiac arrest patients in the field 12% of the time. The new AutoPulse CPR devices, which have been proven to more efficiently circulate blood to the heart and brain, are expected to further improve survival rates. It is anticipated that all County Fire apparatus will carry these units by mid 2007.



Special Operations

The Special Operations Task Force includes strategically located equipment staffed with specially trained personnel. Through Department of Homeland Security (DHS) grants, County Fire was able to purchase additional equipment for mass decontamination, technical rescue, EMS and public health, and detection of chemical, biological, radiological, and explosive threats. These grants also funded County Fire's new Air & Light Unit (pictured below), one of three in the county.



Why is this important? Specialized equipment ensures the best possible response for critical events, including earthquakes, structural collapse, confined space rescues, hazardous materials releases and terrorist

attacks. The new Air & Light Unit allows firefighters to quickly fill the air bottles for self-contained breathing apparatus on-scene and provides increased lighting at nighttime incidents.

Employee Safety and Training



Training, equipment, physical fitness, policies and procedures, and accident investigation are among the programs that help safeguard County Fire employees. Some of the training and safety measures that were implemented or enhanced during 2006 include:

- Dispatching a safety support unit for all freeway incidents.
- Staffing command vehicles with a second person.
- Debriefing at the close of each emergency event.
- Conducting a post-incident analysis for complex events.
- Providing annual employee medical screening and physical fitness assessments.

Employee Safety and Training (continued)

In honor of Captain Mark F. McCormack, who made the ultimate sacrifice fighting a structure fire in 2005, members of the Santa Clara County Fire Department participated in the National Fallen Firefighter Memorial. The event was held in October 2006 at the National Fire Academy in Emmitsburg, Maryland.

Why is this important? Captain McCormack's sacrifice is a daily reminder for all personnel to remain diligent with regard to safety. Protecting employees (our most valuable resource) helps to provide timely, reliable, and cost-effective service to our customers.

Staffing Levels and Response Times



Normal emergency response staffing consists of 65 firefighters operating out of 16 fire stations with 19 pieces of apparatus and 3 command vehicles. Staffing may be increased based on changing weather and fire conditions.

County Fire does a number of other things to ensure prompt response times, including moving apparatus to cover select fire stations when personnel are committed to other calls, keeping units available whenever possible during non-emergency activities, and overlapping responses with neighboring fire departments to dispatch the closest fire unit, regardless of jurisdiction.

Why is this important? Quick response times are critical to protecting lives and reducing property loss. At least 90% of the time, County Fire units arrive on scene within 7 minutes of being dispatched. The mean average is 4.54 minutes.

Volunteer Division



The fire suppression force is augmented by a volunteer division. Volunteer firefighters train weekly to the same standards as the career firefighters. Volunteers are dispatched by pager and respond in their personal vehicles to structure fires, grass or brush fires, and automatic fire alarms. They also support and participate in a variety of community outreach programs.

Why is this important? The volunteers are a valuable resource, particularly during physically demanding fireground operations. Through the volunteer division, County Fire is able to offer more services at a lower cost. Additionally, the volunteer program creates an opportunity for individuals to contribute to their community and provides hands-on experience for those considering a career in the fire service.



County Fire and Its Partners

County Fire

The Santa Clara County Fire Department is governed by the Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors. The department is divided into five service divisions:



- **Administrative Services** is responsible for accounting, budgeting, long-range planning, employee benefits, payroll, human resources, labor relations and information systems management.
- **Fire Prevention Division** handles building plan review, code enforcement, hazardous materials regulations, and fire and life safety inspections for new construction, commercial businesses, multi-family residential buildings and schools.
- **Operations Division** coordinates emergency response activities and fire investigation.
- **Training Division** coordinates and delivers training to new and existing department employees and assists with the recruitment and promotional testing process. It also manages the public education and community preparedness program, employee wellness program, and emergency medical services.
- **Support Services** is responsible for maintaining fire stations and other facilities, vehicles and fire apparatus, general supplies and communications systems.

Local and Regional Partners



Cooperation among agencies throughout the region has many benefits, including increased federal funding from the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) for training programs and equipment purchases. Several preparedness and response activities are coordinated under the umbrella of the Santa Clara County Fire Chiefs' Association (SCCFCA), which provides more resources and standardization at lower costs for each participating agency. The SCCFCA recently formed a committee subsection to focus on firefighter safety.

Each year County Fire participates in the Combined Giving Campaign, which raises funds to support local nonprofit organizations, and the Community Toy Program, which collects and distributes toys for underprivileged children during the holidays. In 2006, County Fire and the Campbell Police Department co-hosted a family emergency preparedness event.

State, Federal, and International Partners



County Fire works with agencies at the state, national, and international level. At the state level, personnel participate in special projects with the State Fire Marshal's office (CSFM), the State Office of Emergency Services (OES), and other entities. Nationally, personnel have responded as members of a FEMA Task Force Team to incidents such as Hurricanes Katrina and Ernesto.

In 2006, six personnel traveled to France as part of an international firefighter exchange program, and bomberos (firefighters) from Mexico received advanced firefighter training while attending a county-wide sponsored conference. County Fire plans to host ten firefighters from Cahors, France, during 2007.

Performance Report Card

How well does County Fire meet its performance measures?

Customer Service

- ☑ Maintain a customer satisfaction rating at or above 95%.
2006 Result: 98.2%

Public Education

- ☑ Make public education contact with 15% or more of population served.
2006 Result: 19%

Fire Prevention

- ☑ Limit commercial fires to 5 per 1000 occupancies inspected.
2006 Result: 2.7 per 1000
- ☑ Limit reportable hazardous materials releases to 1.5 per 100 permitted occupancies.
2006 Result: 0.4 per 100

Response Times - From Dispatch to Arrival on Scene

- ☑ First unit arrives in under 7 minutes 90% of the time.
2006 Result: 90%
- ☑ Second unit arrives in under 9 minutes 90% of the time.
2006 Result: 79%
- ☑ Full alarm arrives in under 15 minutes 90% of the time.
2006 Result: 88%
- ☑ For EMS calls: A fire company with at least 1 paramedic arrives in under 7 minutes at least 90% of the time.
2006 Result: 92%
- * Responses fell below target due to dispatch of additional apparatus for safety support on freeway incidents.

Emergency Medical Services

- ☑ Obtain return of circulation or shock rhythm on cardiac arrest patients in the field at least 8% of the time.
2006 Result: 12%
- ☑ 911 dispatchers screen for pre-arrival instructions in at least 65% of EMS calls and provide instructions to callers as warranted.
2006 Result: 98%

Safety

- ☑ Limit firefighter injuries to less than 0.47 per 100 calls.
2006 Result: 0.37 per 100 calls

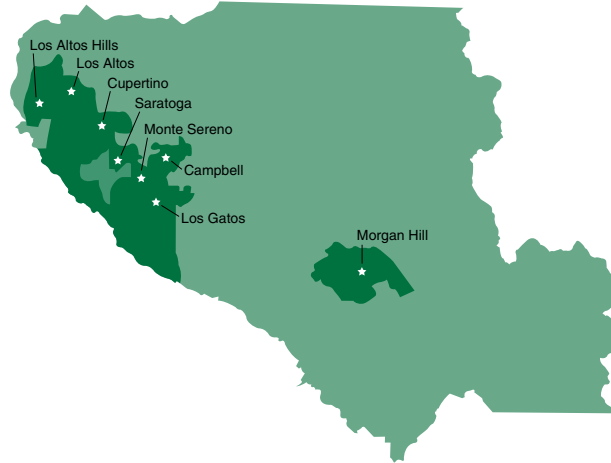
Finance

- ☑ Comply with generally accepted accounting principles and meet reporting requirements in GASB 34.
2006 Result: Successful unqualified opinion from CPA
- ☑ Reduce absenteeism due to Workers' Compensation by no less than 10%.
2006 Result: Reduced by 11%

Our Customers

Population Served

County Fire proudly serves more than 226,000 residents and 100 square miles of territory within the communities of Campbell, Cupertino, Los Altos, Los Altos Hills, Los Gatos, Monte Sereno, Morgan Hill, Saratoga, and adjacent unincorporated areas.



Fire Chief's Message

The purpose of this document is to demonstrate accountability by providing a report card for our customers to review. Our motto "Courtesy and Service" is simple, but important. We strive to provide excellent quality service to the citizens we serve.



In 2006, we said farewell to now retired Fire Chief Ben Lopes and several other County Fire personnel and welcomed 37 new employees. This year we are planning activities to celebrate the 60th anniversary of the Santa Clara County Fire Department.

For more information, please visit our website or contact us at the telephone number listed below.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, which reads "Kenneth L. Waldvogel".

Kenneth L. Waldvogel
Acting Fire Chief



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Photographs provided courtesy of Craig Allyn Rose, Chris Harrington, Ron Vega, Brad Darbro, Kelly Seitz, and Arleigh Movitz