

Fire Department Santa Clara County

Customer Service Overview and 2007 Annual Report



1949 Kenworth



2007 KME

Celebrating 60 Years of Service 1947-2007



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.

Emergency Response, Customer Service and Community Education

Population Served

County Fire 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.



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 89% of the time, County Fire units arrive on scene within 7 minutes of being dispatched. The mean average is 4.56 minutes.

Accreditation

County Fire was awarded "Accredited Agency" status in August 2005 by the Commission on Fire Accreditation International (CFAI). Only 121 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 four California fire departments to display this level of commitment to validating quality service.



The second annual compliance report to the CFAI, a required condition for maintaining international accreditation status, was accepted in July 2007.

Customer Service

Based on customer survey results, County Fire received an overall customer satisfaction rating of 97.6% in 2007.

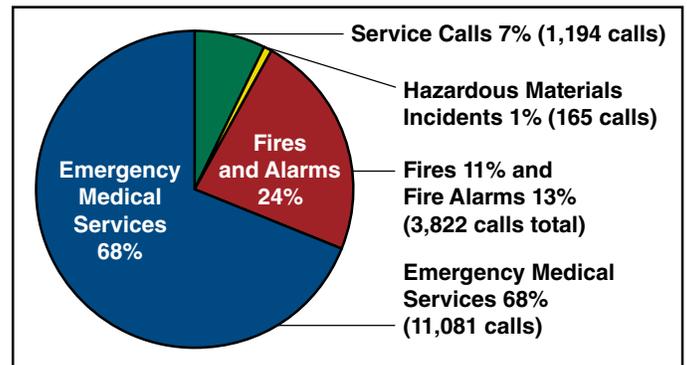
Why is this important? Customer service is one of County Fire's highest priorities. Providing compassion to others, protecting cherished family possessions, inspecting businesses, educating the community and being positive role models for today's youth are just as important as preventing and mitigating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

Calls for Service

County Fire responded to a total of 16,262 emergencies in 2007. Below is the call breakdown:



- Emergency medical services (68%) for illness, injuries, traffic collisions and industrial accidents.
- Fires (24%), 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.



Community Education

County Fire's community education program is among the most proactive in the county, annually reaching almost 20% of the citizens served by delivering a wide variety of public education and community preparedness programs. County Fire employs two full-time Public Education Officers and three Emergency Services Coordinators to deliver fire and life safety and 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.



Performance Report Card

How well does County Fire meet its performance measures?

Customer Service

- ✓ Maintain a customer satisfaction rating at or above 95%.
2007 Result: 97.6%

Public Education

- ✓ Make public education contact with 15% or more of population served.
2007 Result: 20.0%

Fire Prevention

- ✓ Limit commercial fires to 5 per 1000 occupancies inspected.
2007 Result: 2.51 per 1000
- ✓ Limit reportable hazardous materials releases to 1.5 per 100 permitted occupancies.
2007 Result: 0.29 per 100

Response Times (From Dispatch to Arrival on Scene)

- ☐ First unit arrives in under 7 minutes 90% of the time.
2007 Result: 89.2%
- ☒ Second unit arrives in under 9 minutes 90% of the time.
2007 Result: 78.4%
- ✓ Full alarm arrives in under 15 minutes 90% of the time.
2007 Result: 90.8%
- ✓ For EMS calls: A fire company with at least one paramedic arrives in under 7 minutes at least 90% of the time.
2007 Result: 91%

* 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.
2007 Result: 25%
- ✓ 911 dispatchers screen for pre-arrival instructions in at least 65% of EMS calls and provide instructions to callers as warranted.
2007 Result: 98%

Safety

- ✓ Limit firefighter injuries to less than 0.47 per 100 calls.
2007 Result: 0.40 per 100 calls

Finance

- ✓ Comply with generally accepted accounting principles and meet reporting requirements in GASB 43/45.
2007 Result: Successful unqualified opinion from CPA
- ☐ Reduce absenteeism due to illness and Workers' Compensation by no less than 10% from 2003.
2007 Result: Decreased 8%

Training

- ☐ Maintain skill levels so that no less than 95% of individuals and companies pass both individual and company performance standards on the first attempt.
2007 Result: 93.2%

County Fire and Its Partners

County Fire

County Fire 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** is responsible for fire suppression, emergency medical response and rescue activities. Specialized units within the division include the Special Operations Task Force and the Hazardous Materials Response Team.
- **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



County Fire is committed to finding regional solutions to meet the public safety needs of our community. We work closely with other public safety agencies and participate in several regional working groups. At the direction of the Santa Clara County Fire Chiefs' Association (SCFCA), these groups collaborate on developing and implementing policies, procedures and operational standards to improve firefighter safety and the quality of service delivered to residents throughout Santa Clara County.

Each year, County Fire employees participate in the Santa Clara County Combined Giving Campaign and raised over \$60,000 in 2007 to help support local non-profit organizations.

State, Federal, and International Partners

County Fire personnel participate in special projects with many agencies, including the California State Fire Marshal's office (CSFM) and the State Office of Emergency Services (OES). In 2007, County Fire responded with our regional partners to provide staffing and equipment to the Southern California wildfires. Nationally, County Fire is part of Task Force 3 (a FEMA Urban Search & Rescue Team).

Federal grant programs have enabled County Fire and other local agencies to purchase specialized equipment to detect chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear and explosive hazards. Homeland Security grant programs have also provided significant funding for regional training programs.

During 2007, County Fire hosted nine firefighters from the Lot/Cahors (France) Fire Department and a French intern from the University of Bordeaux as part of an ongoing international exchange program.



County Fire ... A Look at the Past 60 Years

1947-1957

In 1947, following the termination of contract services in the Santa Clara Valley floor by the California Division of Forestry (now CAL FIRE), an election was held to create the Central Fire Protection District (now Santa Clara County Fire Department). The newly formed fire district had only one fire station that protected the county's unincorporated area, which stretched from Monte Sereno across the valley to Mount Hamilton and south to the Almaden area.

Over the next few years, County Fire consolidated with two agencies: the Cottage Grove Fire District and the Oakmead Farms Fire District. In 1949, the Department built four new (state funded) fire stations and opened two additional stations in 1950 and 1952.

Firefighting equipment consisted mostly of 250-gpm pumpers and Army surplus water tankers that were housed in dehydrator buildings. One firefighter was assigned to each piece of equipment, and two shifts rotated continuously, working one 24-hour shift on and one 24-hour shift off. In 1950, County Fire purchased a 1949 Kenworth pumper (pictured on cover). At the time it was the only 1,250-gpm pumper between San Francisco and Los Angeles and was the pride and joy of the Department.

In an effort to improve working conditions, firefighters organized as a union. On June 1, 1954, the firefighters received a charter from the American Federation of Labor (AFL) and became Local 1165.

In 1955, minimum staffing on all apparatus was increased from one to two firefighters, and the work schedule was reduced from an 84-hour to a 72-hour workweek. By 1957, County Fire had 10 fire stations and 72 employees.

1958-1967

Between 1964 and 1967, due to development and service area changes, County Fire closed three fire stations and opened three others: Almaden/Mountain Drive, Monta Vista and West Valley.

The City of Cupertino was expanding rapidly with the completion of DeAnza College and Vallco Shopping Center. In 1966, County Fire purchased its first 85-foot elevating platform truck (1965 VanPelt with Hi-Ranger snorkel).

With the growth and development of the valley came the need for increased knowledge and training for firefighters. In 1967, San Jose City College issued the first Fire Science degree. By the end of 1967, County Fire had 10 fire stations and 113 employees.

1968-1977

In 1970, County Fire consolidated with the Burbank Fire District, the Alma Fire District and the Town of Los Gatos for fire protection services.

The three-platoon shift system was implemented on February 1, 1969. The firefighter shift schedule became a 56-hour workweek, and staffing on apparatus was increased from two to three firefighters on March 13, 1972.

On-scene emergency medicine emerged as a new field during the Vietnam War and influenced fire departments across the country to begin providing emergency medical services (EMS). County Fire firefighters became trained as certified First Responders. In 1975, the Department also put into service three Hurst Tools (Jaws of Life) to perform auto extrication rescues.

1968-1977 (continued)

To improve fire protection to the unincorporated east side service area, a contract was established with the City of San Jose, and on September 4, 1977, five fire stations and 70 employees transferred to San Jose Fire Department. Following implementation of the new contract, County Fire had 128 employees and 8 fire stations.

1978-1987

In 1981, County Fire personnel were trained as Emergency Medical Technicians (EMTs), further improving the level of service for medical aid calls. That same year, the County Fire Marshal's office closed as the result of post-Proposition 13 revenue problems. County Fire began its own Fire Prevention Division, eventually taking on the management role for the Santa Clara County Fire Marshal's Office.

In 1982, County Fire hired its first full-time female firefighter. The same year, a committee of public and private entities was formed to improve how hazardous materials (hazmat) were both stored and disposed of by industrial facilities. The committee developed the Hazardous Materials Storage Ordinance, which later became the model for many state and federal hazmat regulations.

On September 26, 1984, following adoption of the ordinance, County Fire put into service a specialized unit to respond to hazmat emergencies. By the end of 1987, County Fire served 108,000 residents and had 8 fire stations and 142 employees.

1988-1997

In 1989, County Fire purchased "Haz Mat 2," a full-service state-of-the-art hazardous materials response vehicle (1988 Ford/Paoletti Cargo 800) that was later housed at Seven Springs fire station, which opened in 1992.

In 1990, automatic external defibrillators (AEDs) were placed on emergency apparatus. In 1995, the Department began staffing a paramedic-firefighter on each piece of equipment.

County Fire celebrated a landmark year in 1993 by contracting with the City of Campbell for services, which added two fire stations and 33 personnel. Three years later, the Department contracted with the City of Los Altos, the Los Altos Hills County Fire District and the City of Morgan Hill, bringing the total number of stations to 16 with 236 employees.

1998-2007

Following the attacks of September 11, 2001, a Special Operations Task Force of 45 trained personnel was established to respond to terrorist attacks and natural disasters.

In 2005, County Fire became one of only four fire departments in California to be accredited by the Commission on Fire Accreditation International (CFAI). The Department purchased AutoPulse CPR devices in 2006, significantly improving the survival rate of cardiac arrest victims.

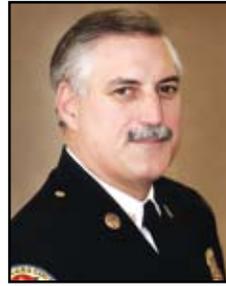
Today, County Fire is the second largest fire agency in Santa Clara County with 16 fire stations and 283 employees. The suppression force is augmented by 40 volunteer firefighters.

The 1949 Kenworth pumper (now Engine 20) only participates in parades and community events these days, but it continues to be a source of pride and joy for the Department and is a nostalgic reminder of County Fire's 60-year history.

Fire Chief's Message

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On behalf of the Santa Clara County Fire Department, I am pleased to provide this annual report for your review.



County Fire celebrated 60 years of service in 2007. The organization's accomplishments since its inception in 1947 are a source of pride for County Fire's members – past and present. Our goal has been, and continues to be, to provide quality and excellence in service delivery.

We hold fast to the legacy created by our predecessors, who established our organizational mission, core values, and vision of being a regional service provider. These elements continue to empower and motivate our personnel as we address the significant challenges encountered in the world today.

It is a privilege to serve you, and providing this annual report is an opportunity to be accountable for the service County Fire provides to its communities. If you would like more information, please visit our website or call our administrative office.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Kenneth L. Waldvogel". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Kenneth L. Waldvogel
Fire Chief



Santa Clara County Fire Department

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