

# 2022 ANNUAL REPORT



SANTA CLARA COUNTY FIRE DEPARTMENT



# MESSAGE FROM THE FIRE CHIEF

I'm pleased to present the Santa Clara County Fire Department Annual Report covering the 2022 calendar year. Over the past year, County Fire has remained focused on its mission to protect lives, property, and the environment from fires, emergency incidents, and disasters through preparedness, prevention, education, and emergency response. This mission is made possible by the employees who have committed their professional lives to serving the communities in our District; I look forward to highlighting the great work and special projects staff have undertaken this past year to enable County Fire to deliver its mission throughout this report.



For the last three-years, Department activities have been guided by our 2020-2022 Strategic Plan. In late 2022, County Fire conducted a strategic planning process to develop its 2023-2027 Strategic Plan. Soon to be published, this guiding document represents a collaboration between many Department members and community stakeholders who worked together to assess current services and identify current and future community needs. The Strategic Plan will outline practical objectives and critical tasks necessary for the Department to deliver on those needs.

County Fire continues to prioritize wildfire mitigation efforts with our Pre-Fire Management and Wildfire Resilience Program. This program has completed several projects that increase wildfire preparedness, prevention, and protection in high fire hazard severity zones over the past year. Later in this report, you'll also learn more about our department's support of the Santa Clara County Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP). Two major infrastructure projects requiring significant staff focus and resources in 2022 included a new fire station in Redwood Estates and a new department headquarters in Campbell – both of which remain underway at present time.

I'm proud to report that the Department was awarded the Government Finance Officers Association Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting for its Annual Comprehensive Financial Report for the year ended June 30, 2021. This is the eighth consecutive year the Department has achieved this prestigious award and is a testament to our fiscal responsibility.

I sincerely hope you find the contents of this report informative. I welcome you to send feedback to [publicinfo@sccfd.org](mailto:publicinfo@sccfd.org). For additional information on the topics covered and more, please visit our website at [www.sccfd.org](http://www.sccfd.org).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in red ink that reads "Suwanna L. Kerdkaew".

Suwanna L. Kerdkaew  
Fire Chief

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## REFLECTING THE COMMUNITIES WE SERVE

County Fire takes great pride in fostering a work environment grounded on the values of integrity, trust, respect, and excellence. Representatives from across the Department continue to support the Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Accountability (IDEA) Committee with a focus on community outreach, particularly in high schools. The goal is to inspire youth to pursue a career in public service and introduce them to the variety of career opportunities available in the fire service.

# PERFORMANCE MEASURES

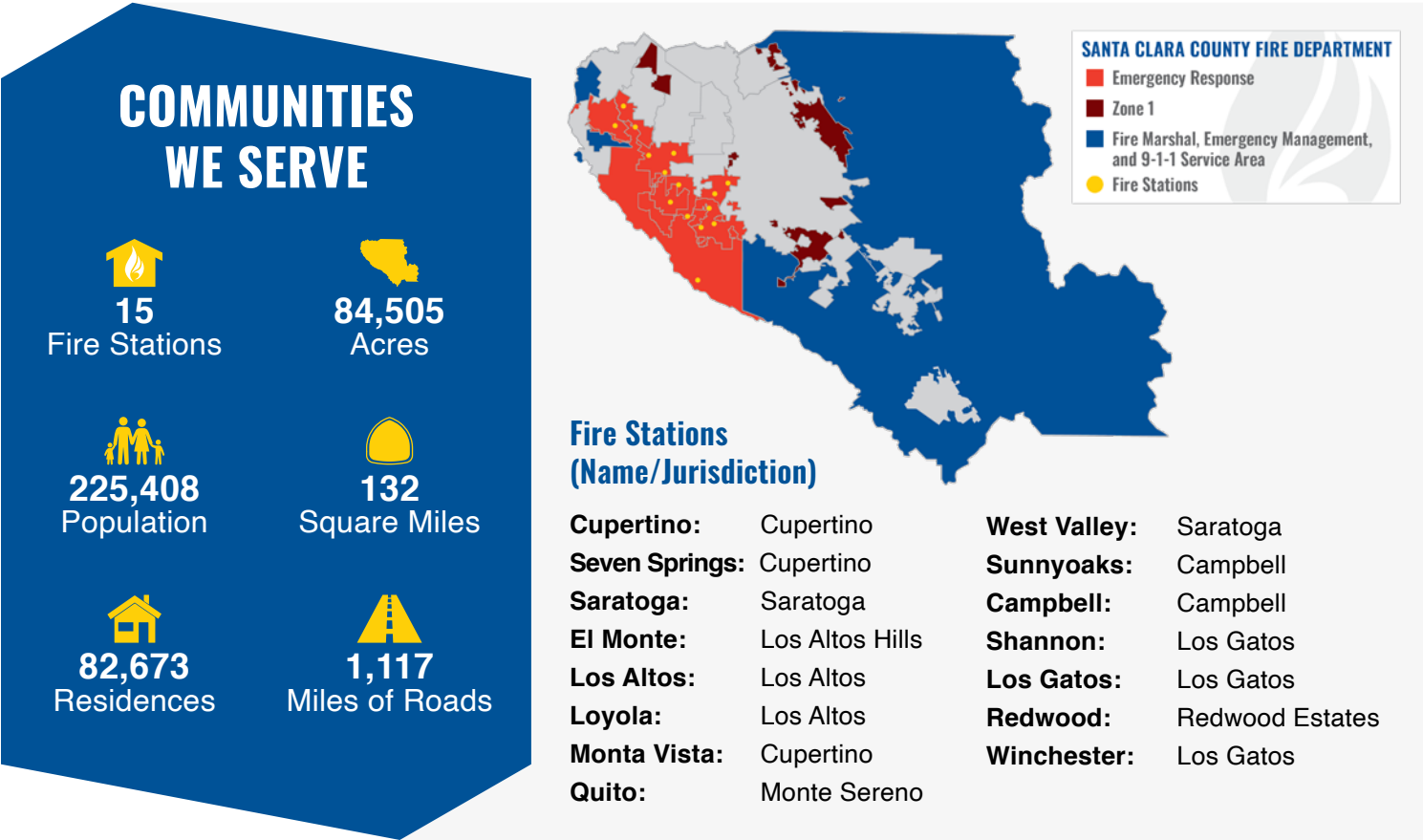
Santa Clara County Fire Department is committed to delivering on its mission and consistent evaluation of the services delivered to our communities to ensure areas for improvement are identified and measurable improvements are made over time. Below are several high-level indicators the Department uses to determine effectiveness and efficiency in several service delivery categories. These benchmarks also provide a meaningful and measurable goal for the Department to strive for. As shown below, the Department successfully met many of its goals. In areas where benchmarks were not met, the Department will continue to focus efforts on reaching those goals to improve service delivery, such as identifying strategies to reduce turnout times to respond to emergency calls as safely and quickly as possible.



BENCHMARKING INDICATORS	
GOAL	PERFORMANCE
Average time for a unit to arrive at a moderate risk emergency medical services (EMS) incident: 7:40/10:40 (urban/rural)	5:53 / 7:47
Average time for the first unit to arrive at a moderate risk fire incident: 7:40/10:40 (urban/rural)	7:25 / 13:00
Average turnout time for an urgent emergency medical services (EMS) incident: 1:20	1:18
Average turnout time for an urgent fire incident: 1:20	1:37
Contain fire to room of origin: 50% of the time	55%
Maintain a fund reserve balance: 10-15%	17%
STRATEGIC INITIATIVE GOALS AND RESULTS	
Keep vegetation fires to 3 acres or less 90% of the time	100%
Maintain a Citizen satisfaction rating at or above 95%	94%
Community education: Make contact with 29% or more of the population served*	23%
Maintain annual employee injury rate below 20% of all employees	26%
Maintain accredited status with the Commission on Fire Accreditation International	Achieved
Maintain Insurance Office (ISO) Class 2 rating or better	Achieved

\*COVID-19 impacts continued through 2022, which is reflected in the Department's underperformance in reaching its community education goals. Many community events remained cancelled, and the Department was not performing in-person school outreach nor allowing station visits or ride-alongs.

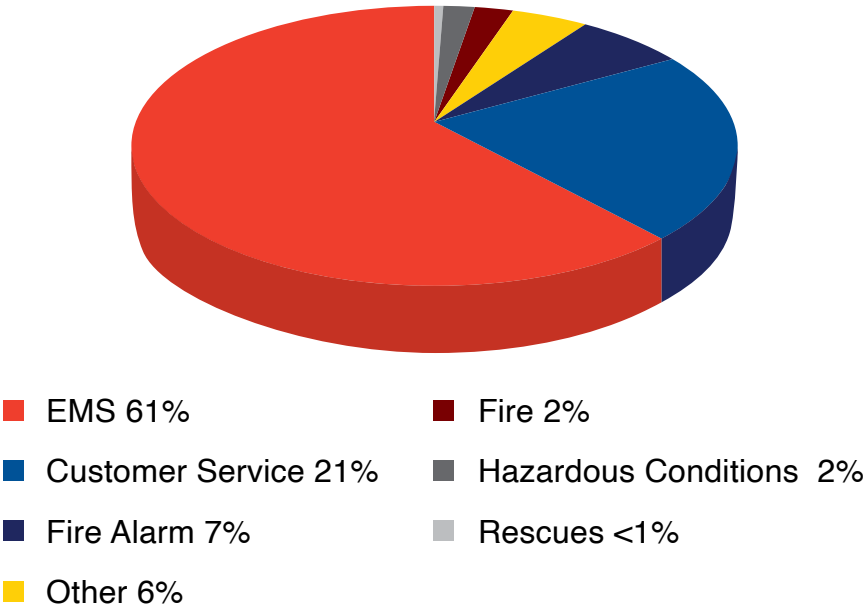
# COUNTY FIRE AT A GLANCE



## 2022 BY THE NUMBERS

20,888	Total Calls
12,810	Emergency Medical Services (EMS)
4,455	Customer Service Calls
1,391	Fire Alarm Calls
1,232	Other
515	Fires
412	Hazardous Conditions
73	Rescues

### 2022 INCIDENTS



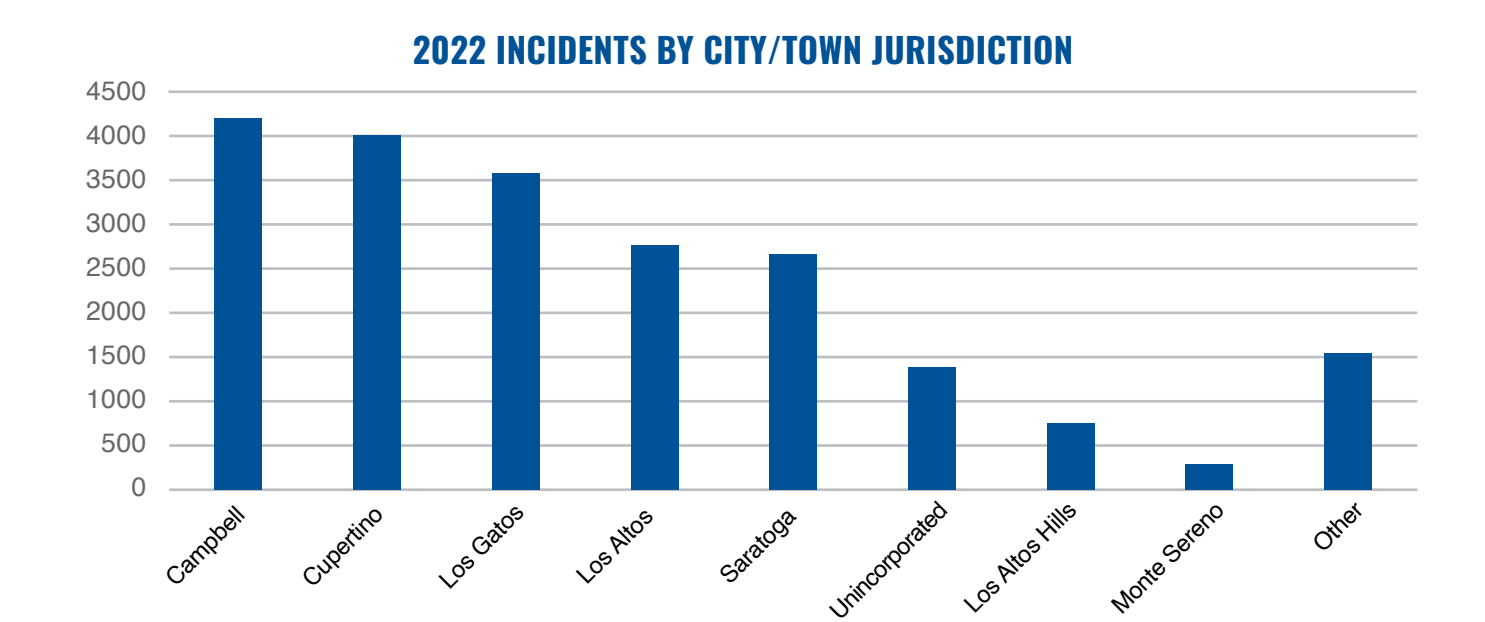
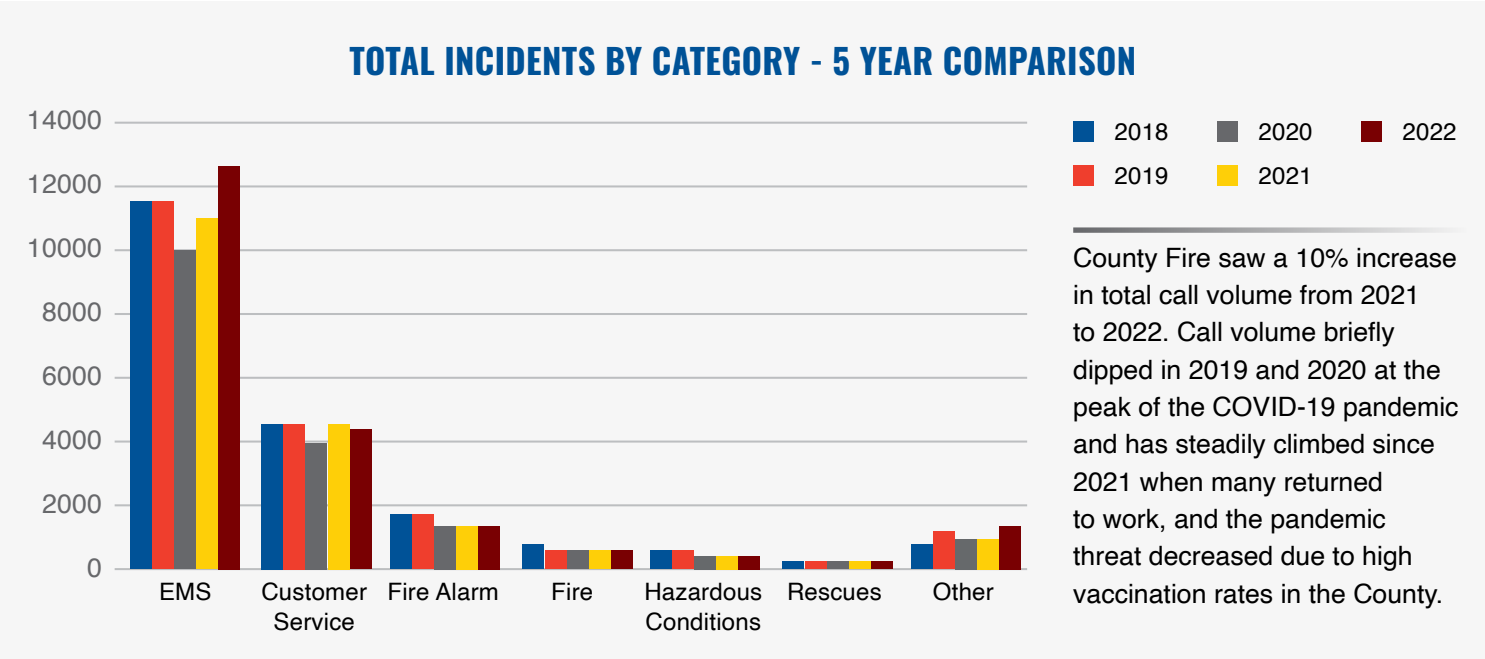


# COUNTY FIRE OVERVIEW

Established in 1947, the Santa Clara County Fire Department (County Fire) is an internationally Accredited Fire Protection District. Services provided include all-hazard emergency response covering fire suppression, technical rescue, HazMat mitigation, and emergency medical services to over 225,000 residents in the communities of Campbell, Cupertino, Los Altos, Los Altos Hills, Los Gatos, Monte Sereno, Redwood Estates, Saratoga, and adjacent unincorporated areas.

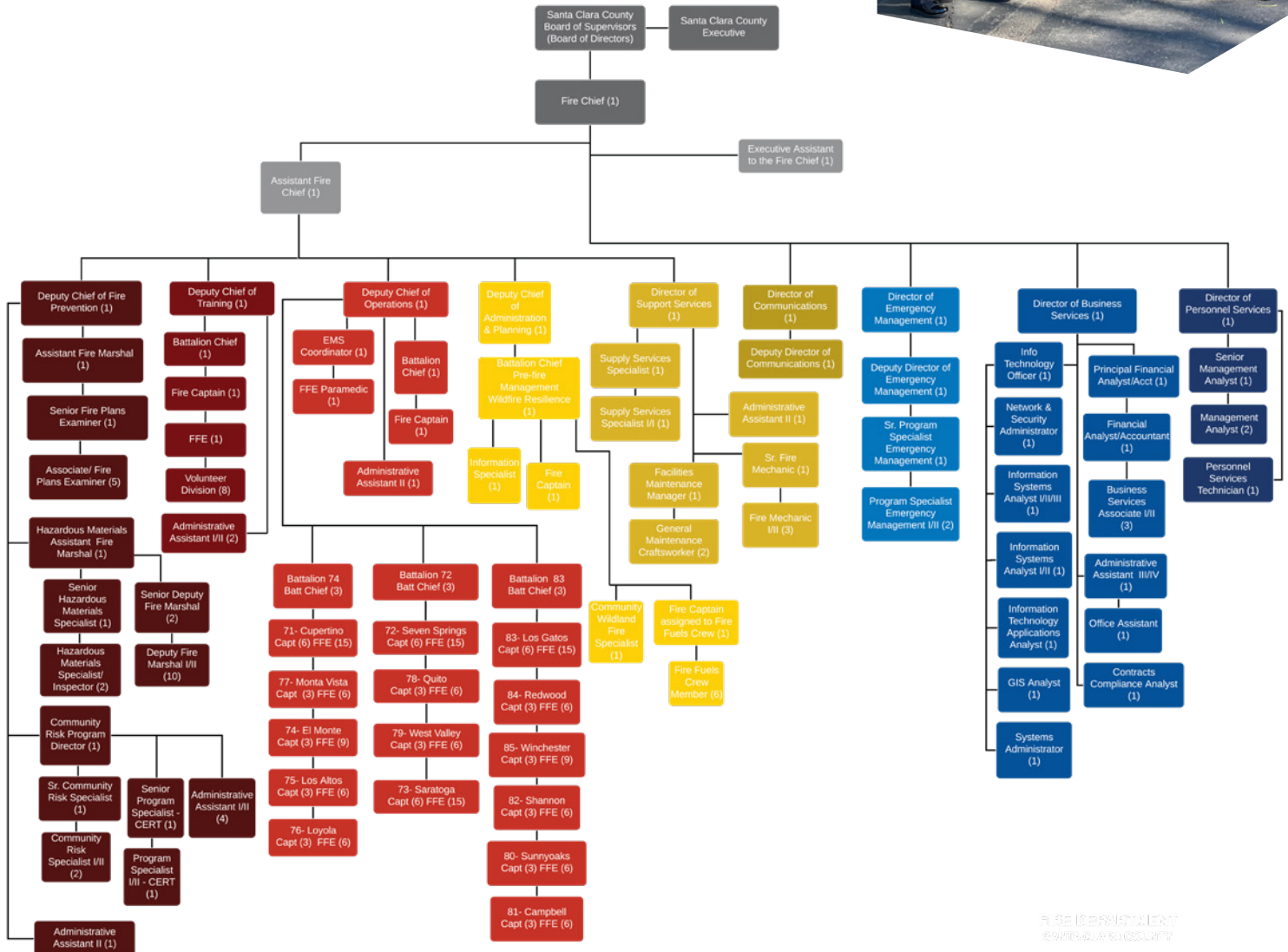
County Fire currently has 334 budgeted staff positions, including sworn and civilian personnel. Daily emergency response staffing consists of 66 firefighters and officers on 24-hour shifts operating out of 15 fire stations, with 31 front-line fire apparatus and 3 battalion chief command vehicles.

Governed by the Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors, the Fire Chief serves as the County Fire Marshal and provides management oversight for the County’s Office of Emergency Management and 9-1-1 Communications Center.



# DEPARTMENT STRUCTURE

County Fire is structured around seven distinct service divisions: fire prevention, training, operations, administration and planning, support services, business services, and personnel services. As mentioned previously, County Fire also provides executive oversight over the County of Santa Clara's Office of Emergency Management and 9-1-1 Communication Center.










FIRE DEPARTMENT  
SANTA CLARA COUNTY

01/06/2022

# FIRE PREVENTION & EDUCATION

Fire prevention is a key focus area and is paramount to the mission of County Fire. In support of our mission, the Fire Prevention Division oversees community education and risk reduction services. Additionally, the Division provides fire plan reviews, inspection services, permit processes, fire investigation, and HazMat compliance for the served cities, towns, and unincorporated areas of the county. Additionally, County Fire provides Fire Marshall services through a contract with the County of Santa Clara.

## BY THE NUMBERS

-  **4,345** Construction plan reviews
-  **1,849** Construction field inspections
-  **6,644** Field inspections
-  **4,173** Wildfire preparedness inspections
-  **454** HazMat inspections
-  **284** Urban Runoff Program inspections
-  **53** Underground storage tank inspections
-  **335** Fire investigations
-  **17** Arson Arrests\*

*\*County Fire contracts with the City of Campbell Police Department to conduct fire-related criminal investigations and prosecute individuals as necessary.*

## CONTRACT SERVICES FOR COUNTY FIRE MARSHALL'S OFFICE



**1753**

Construction plan reviews



**709**

Construction field inspections

## COMMUNITY EDUCATION & RISK REDUCTION

During 2022, a total of 457 community education and risk reduction programs were provided and reached 52,753 community members. Programming was taught both in-person and virtually; this hybrid model will continue through 2023. Community members are encouraged to attend complimentary educational programs covering topics such as emergency preparedness, fall prevention, CPR, fire safety for young children, preparing for medical emergencies and more. Visit [www.sccfd.org](http://www.sccfd.org) or email [communityoutreach@sccfd.org](mailto:communityoutreach@sccfd.org) for course information.



*After 2 years of strictly virtual learning, County Fire was excited to also begin to offer in-person educational programming in mid-2022. Featured above is our Community Emergency Response Team training where program volunteers learn to assist their local community in the event of a large-scale disaster. Learn more about the program and register for trainings at: [www.sccfd.org/CERT](http://www.sccfd.org/CERT).*



# TRAINING & SUPPORT SERVICES



*In 2022, Training staff secured new live fire and auto extrication props to aid in providing realistic training scenarios to recruit firefighters.*

## TRAINING NEW & CURRENT FIREFIGHTERS

Training is critical to ensuring our firefighters have the skills to safely respond to emergencies of all types. In August 2022, County Fire achieved initial accreditation as an Accredited Local Academy (ALA) from the California State Board of Fire Services. This is a distinction the Department is immensely proud of, as we are 1 of only twenty-seven ALAs in California. This accreditation allows us to hire personnel with no fire experience and train them to the California State Fire Training Firefighter I and Firefighter II certification levels. Over the previous year, the training division provided training and testing for 40 probationary firefighters who are now working to keep the community safe.

## FACILITIES, FLEET & INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS

Our Support Services division manages 132,000 square feet of building space housing the Department's fire stations, headquarters, and the McCormack Training Center. The Division also maintains and repairs the Department's fleet of approximately 60 fire apparatus and equipment, 70 support vehicles and several antique County Fire engines.

### BY THE NUMBERS

- 5** New apparatus placed into service (Rescue 74, Rescue 83, Truck 85, Urban Search & Rescue [USAR] 85, and Fire Fuels Crew wood-chipper)
- 2** Major infrastructure projects underway (Redwood Fire Station and new Administrative District Headquarters)
- 1** Land agreements secured (Lease of property at Vasona County Park for the new Fire Fuels Crew)



*Our various types of apparatus enable us to respond to all hazards in the community. Each apparatus provides the tools and equipment necessary for firefighters to perform their duties and keep the community safe.*

# WILDFIRE PROGRAMS

## WILDFIRE RESILIENCE PROGRAM

In response to the devastating impacts of wildfires seen across the state in recent years, County Fire's Pre-Fire Management and Wildfire Resilience Program was introduced in 2021 and welcomed the Vasona Fire Fuels Crew in July 2022. The team works on public lands within the district to reduce combustible material in high fire hazard severity zones with a primary goal of protecting critical infrastructure. They also create and maintain fuel breaks, creating a wide strip of land in strategic locations and reducing or otherwise modifying vegetation so that a fire burning into it can be better controlled. Fuel breaks work to ensure primary community escape routes are as safe as possible in the event of a wildfire.

### BY THE NUMBERS

- 4** Fire Fuels reduction projects completed
- 60** Acres cleared
- 8** Community education events
- 8** Community Wildfire Protection Plan meetings
- 8** Seasonal staff hired

The program supported the Santa Clara County Park Ranger Academy by hosting two chainsaw training classes at Camp Stuart. Additionally, the Fire Fuels Crew responded to and mitigated several fallen hazardous trees within our jurisdiction over the past year. In support of the Department's focus on community involvement, a Community Wildfire Specialist was added to the team in December 2022 to engage with local stakeholder groups and support community leaders in their pre-fire wildland management efforts.

### FIRE FUELS CREW PROJECTS COMPLETED IN 2022 INCLUDE:

- 🔥 Joint project with CAL FIRE to maintain a strategic fuel break designed to break up large, continuous tracts of dense natural fuels to limit the uncontrolled spread of wildfire along Charcoal Road between Highway 35 and Stevens Creek in Saratoga
- 🔥 Evacuation route hardening along Manzanita Way in Los Gatos
- 🔥 Protective fuel break (smaller scale project focused on protecting communities and critical infrastructure) along Pageant Way at Los Gatos Town Hall/Police Station
- 🔥 Protective fuel break along Garden Hill Lane near Vasona County Park



*In 2022, our Vasona Fire Fuels crew consisted of a fire captain and 6 members who were responsible for completing all the fuel reduction projects mentioned.*





## COMMUNITY WILDFIRE PROTECTION PLAN

As wildfire severity increases, communities need a plan to help prepare for, reduce the risk of, and adapt to wildfire events. County Fire has been supporting the Santa Clara County Fire Safe Council as they work to update the Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP). The CWPP provides a plan and recommendations that are intended to reduce the extreme severity or risk of wildland fire. County Fire supported eight community meetings in 2022 to help gather input from community members. The CWPP is a living document that will be continuously updated. For more information about the Plan or to provide input, visit [www.sccfd.org/cwpp](http://www.sccfd.org/cwpp).

### ALERTSCC

Managed by the County of Santa Clara Office of Emergency Management, AlertSCC is the official emergency alert and warning system used in the County to deliver important safety messages during an emergency or disaster to help community members make an informed decision on what actions to take. In 2022, the AlertSCC subscriber base increased by 62.5% to 223,486. Although this marks tremendous growth, this number represents a small fraction (8.4%) of the County's total population (1.9M). If you are not currently subscribed, please visit [www.AlertSCC.org](http://www.AlertSCC.org) to register today. You may opt to receive notifications via text message, email, and/or phone call.

### ZONEHAVEN®

County Fire has adopted Zonehaven to provide specific, timely, and accurate information regarding evacuations. Zonehaven divides geographic regions into smaller zones, based on several factors, and is accessible online. By navigating to [community.zonehaven.com](http://community.zonehaven.com), community members can view a map of area evacuations and search for specific addresses to determine if they are affected by an evacuation order, evacuation warning, or other critical advisory.

### INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY SOLUTIONS SUPPORTING WILDFIRE RESPONSE CAPABILITIES

County Fire's Information Technology division has worked to implement several technology solutions to aid in the delivery of the Department's mission. A few notable accomplishments include:

- 🔥 Replacement of the Department's legacy Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) database with an ArcGIS® Field Map App, providing a mobile solution that allows for data capture, inspections, field notes, and sharing of information. Real-time Inspection statuses are made available on iPads® through Intterra®.
- 🔥 Intterra maps were updated with 'Nested Layers' and integrated with Zonehaven Evacuation Zones.
- 🔥 MARVLIS® was updated to support newer mapping data formats to include live Zonehaven Zones.

# 9-1-1 COMMUNICATIONS & EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

## 9-1-1 COMMUNICATIONS

County Fire is proud to have provided executive leadership to the Santa Clara County 9-1-1 Communications Center since 2017. In addition to providing dispatch services for County Fire, the Communications Center also serves the Sheriff's Office, County Ambulance, and the County Parks and Recreation Department. Dispatchers are responsible for coordinating resources and staffing with other county agencies.

### BY THE NUMBERS

- 403,514** Total inbound calls
- 143,012** Total outbound calls
- 75,545** Total 9-1-1 calls inclusive of wireless, wireline, Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP), text, and text to telephone (TTY)



*The Santa Clara County 9-1-1 Communications Department exists to protect lives, property, and the environment by providing the vital connection between the community and emergency responders.*

## EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

County Fire also provides executive leadership to the County's Office of Emergency Management (OEM), which is responsible for strategic coordination of operations and resources across the entire County during all phases of emergency management. A key focus area for OEM has been on strengthening the County's ability to serve all community members and reach them with critical safety messaging during emergencies. In 2022, this resulted in the establishment of the Access and Functional Needs (AFN) and Cultural Competency Workgroup and the AFN Annex. OEM also produced the Emergency Communications Annex and the Wildfire Annex, which are both currently under review. These efforts serve to strengthen the entire community's ability to prepare for and recover from disaster.



**SANTA CLARA COUNTY FIRE DEPARTMENT**

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