

Santa Cruz Neighbors Meeting
Fire Safety and Preparedness
June 18, 2008
7pm – 8:30 pm
Community Room
155 Center Street, Santa Cruz

1. Welcome and Introductions: Deborah Elston hosted meeting.
2. Please let us know about your July get-togethers.
3. August is National Night Out. The 1st Tuesday in August. Join Santa Cruz Neighbors, SCPD, SCFD, and Graffiti Free Santa Cruz and others to celebrate.
4. Patty Sapone: we are response driven. Use this time and the renewed awareness of fires in our community to reach out to your neighbors to address fire safety.
5. Introduction: Moderator: SCFD Captain Mark Violante.
6. Fire Chief Ron Oliver: Strategic Plan: Where are we going and how to get there”
7. Division Chief Mark Ramos: Prevention and Inspections: (Fire Marshal) enforce all fire codes. All new construction in SC now must have fire sprinklers. Life safety requirements such as exits and lights, sprinklers, fire alarms, special events inspections, etc. Weed abatement, complaint inspections, fire inspector new to force. 3800 businesses, we will try to inspect each business every 3- 5 years. In a fire inspection, we try to determine the origin of the fire, work with SCPD on criminal cases, and believe it or not, we do have arson cases here in Santa Cruz.
8. Captain Jason Hajduk: Rescue Swimmers and Lifeguards: Mariner Safety Division: season runs from Memorial Day to Labor Day. Seasonal lifeguard staff, my division responds when a boat sinks, someone falls off a cliff. Marine Safety supports other areas as well. Santa Cruz hosts about 750000 visitors to the main beach each year. The lifeguard there is preventive. The Marine Rescue is our response team.
9. Captain Brett Taylor: CERT and Child Seat Safety: Fire departments became more proactive and began reaching out to adults as well as kids. CERT: Certified Emergency Rescue Training is a citizen trained groups. It began in LA to prepare people to respond to disasters. We would love to come to your neighborhood. 80-90% chance that we will have a large scale emergency/earthquake in the near future. Empowering people through preparedness to deal with the emergency, fight a fire, turn off utilities, organize search teams, etc. These trained citizen volunteers could save your life. Get CERT trained, and organize your neighborhood. THE NEXT CLASS WILL BE IN SEPTEMBER. Also, we inspect child safety seats. We will train the parent on installing your car seat for your child.
10. Captain Mark Violante, Public Education: I go to most of the schools to talk about fire safety with the students. We find answers for you, we go into retirement homes, nursing facilities, and discuss fire safety from preschool age to high school to elderly.
11. Questions and Answers: How is SCFD doing? SCFD call volume is up 13%, Emergency Medical calls up 20% = 6200 calls or 21 calls per day.
12. How can SCFD help you?
13. What makes SCF so unique?
14. Why are there three firefighters on an engine?
15. What is mutual aid? How does it work?

Q: At the end of Meder Street we have a big gulch, who is responsible for clearing that out?

A: It is our responsibility: we have been maintaining a lot of it and other city property. The city maintains these areas. We've also done Grant up near De Laveaga.

Mark Ramos: Cal Fire said 90% of the homes lost in the recent fires did not have defensible space around the home. We really need to have 100 feet outside the city limits. It is important to have at least 30 feet cut for defensible space in the city limits.

Q: Who would be responsible for those gulches from the hill to the bottom of the hill?

A: Roads are maintained to clear sewer, water and other utilities. The rest of it is a natural preserve and they are open spaces.

Cynthia Mathews: Some homeowners have spent the extra money to have an area made larger for protection.

Deborah Elston: Leslie Keedy 420-5246 has said certain things are required to have reports but the city arborists are working with the neighbors to have a large defensible space around homes.

Mark Ramos: Shake roofs are no longer allowed in Santa Cruz.

Q: Cal Fire is formerly CDF?

A: Yes CDF and State Fire Office consolidated to Cal Fire.

Q: A house isn't keeping up the weeds – who do we call?

A: Call us. We will go out and if we determine if it is a fire hazard, we will have them cut down the weeds.

As a side note: Smoke detectors save lives. They do not work if they are lying on the kitchen counter. They must be working properly to save lives.

Q: Arroyo Seco – if the wind is blowing down the hill from Western Drive, all those eucalyptus trees are going to torch and we are all going up. San Diego Fire Dept (SDFD) was tough and very diligent about fire hazards. But up here in Santa Cruz we are not as diligent. The situation is ripe for another "Oakland Hills Fire" scenario.

A: The open spaces are natural areas and will remain that way. Our weather and fog is unique to this area. Nobody mobilizes better than central California. Because of the number of wildfires we are always on ready.

Q: So a fire gets going through Western Drive and the wind is blowing – what do you do?

A: To broad, but the answer is we respond, assess, mitigate the fire. The Summit and Martin Fires are very different than what would happen in the City. The City's response is much higher. The surrounding City's mobilize very quickly. MTZs (Mutual Threat Zones) area in green belt areas. These areas are bounded by Santa Cruz on one side and Cal Fire areas on the other. This zone rings the entire city. The response will be much higher in this area.

Q: Western Drive – there is a huge problem.

A: Motivate your neighbors.

Q: Aren't there state requirements?

A: Only on State property.

Q: Why does the FD always show up?

A: Because we drive the fastest – no, really we are positioned to show up first.

Q: Along those lines, we are anticipating 1000 calls this year. Is there any way the neighborhoods can work with the Fire Department to slow down the calls?

A: Chief: We don't know why there is such an increase. We are trying to figure it out. A very large number of calls are related to the homeless.

Q: What percentage would you say is related to homeless?

A: We aren't allowed to track that information because of HIPPA

Q: When do you bill for fire response?

A: We don't bill even for arson, even for out of state vehicle fires.

Q: Sometimes when neighbors convert garages to living and then have storage sheds too close to the property line? Is Access an issue?

A: Side yard storage requirements are a code enforcement issue. You have a great code enforcement office. We could be concerned, in those cases, with code compliance. The city is the employer for all of us. If you report something to code enforcement, they will get us involved if necessary. Also, vacant lots can be mowed by a contractor and the owner then billed for the cutting.

Q: In Santa Clara County adopted an ordinance from International Code that you cannot have a BBQ on your balcony in a multi residential building.

A: We decided not to adopt that ordinance. It's more a matter of public education than regulation. We can adopt portions of the international code, delete portions, add some, because the State never adopted the International Code.

Q: How much did the City help with the Martin Fire and who was left to watch out for us?

A: We back fill positions when we send out help to these fires. There is a Cal OSHA requirement for manpower. We get another engine to cover, we are required to do this by Cal OSHA, to basically drop our boundaries and we are dispatched as if we are all one department.

Chief: We have to have a certain number of people – 13 people – OSHA requires on duty at all times. So off duty officers are called back. Our OT charges go sky high.

Cynthia Mathews: To Discuss Measure T: A Safety Issue

Measure T will be on a special mail in ballot in August. It is related to the 911 fee. This fee was established to generate the funds to cover the 911Center, all counties & cities are paying their proportional share.

Last month, an appelland court ruled, it was a tax and must be voted on. So this \$3.50 per month must be voted on to stay in place. That fee generated about \$1.5 million – the 911 fee. It is not gone. If this \$3.50/month fee is gone those services will be greatly diminished.

Q: Is this just for the city?

A: Yes it is. Watsonville and other cities are grappling with this as well. We can't afford to lose this. Polling is very encouraging.

Information will be at the table in back.

Back to Questions for the Fire Department:

Q: I have smelled no noxious fumes near my home. Who is responsible for that?

A: The fire department should check that out. Make a phone call. We will go see if it is an immediate hazard. We have HazMat techs. Also, call Code Compliance. They are excellent.

Q: Businesses adjacent to residential areas – do they have special codes?

A: Yes – businesses have to comply to business codes, residential to residential codes. Zones are for specific uses. Some areas are intermixed. We will check businesses every 3-5 years. Complaint inspections can be at any time.

Q: Reservoir is down on the Westside. When will that be back on line?

A: It really isn't a factor for us. If we have a major earthquake, that might have an effect. It should be completed by 2009.

Q: Brett: What is covered in the 5 weeks of CERT training?

A: 1 – Start out with disaster preparedness, preparing their own kit, and team organization.

2 – Firefighting, hazardous materials fires

3 – Disaster medical preparedness, basic first aid and triage teams

4 – Search and rescue

5 – last is a simulated disaster.

Q: What is the city doing to keep all the CERT participants organized?

A: Well, some people do not want to connect with others. They do not want others to know they took the CERT course. The best approach is to get your neighbors together and get trained. Organize those who are not organized. People may want to work with the CERT program to help the city get organized. I welcome that effort!

**PLEASE SEE MEETING NOTES FROM SANTA CRUZ NEIGHBORS MEETING
APRIL, 2007 FOR MORE EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS INFORMATION**



City of Santa Cruz
FIRE DEPARTMENT

MISSION STATEMENT:

We regard everyone as a customer; our Mission is to serve them with excellence through ever-increasing Innovation, Proficiency and Safety

CREDO:

We are professionals
People trust us to serve them
We are always on stage
We make our actions applaudable

DAILY PRIORITIES:

Respond professionally to calls for help
Train and educate
Maintain excellent physical fitness and equipment readiness
Provide unexpected service
Communicate effectively at all times

ORGANIZATIONAL VALUES:

Trustworthiness	Flexible and resilience
Ethical behavior	Self Discipline
Kindness	Responsibility
Respectfulness	Loyalty
Candor	



AGENDA

Welcome: Deborah Elston (Neighborhood Association)
Captain Mark Violante (Santa Cruz Fire Department)

Opening comments: Fire Chief Ron Oliver (strategic plan)
“Where are we going and how to get there”

Prevention and Inspections: Division Chief Mark Ramos

Rescue Swimmers and Lifeguards: Captain Jason Hajduk

CERT and Child Seat Safety: Captain Brett Taylor

Public Education: Captain Mark Violante

Questions and Answers: How is Santa Cruz Fire Department doing?

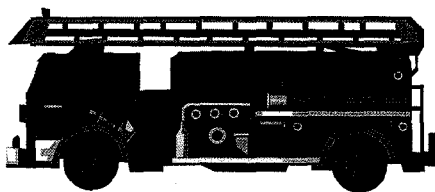
How can Santa Cruz Fire Department help you?

What makes Santa Cruz Fire so unique?

Why are there three firefighters on an engine?

What is mutual aid? How does it work?

CITY OF SANTA CRUZ FIRE DEPARTMENT



FIRE CHIEF

Ron Oliver

DEPUTY CHIEF

Matthew Tracy

DIVISION CHIEF TRAINING

Eric Aasen

DIVISION CHIEF PREVENTION

Mark Ramos

BATTALION CHIEFS

John Lucchesi

Matthew McCaslin

Mike Venezia

MARINE SAFETY

Captain Jason Hajduk

COMMUNITY SERVICE PROGRAMS

Captain Brett Taylor

Moderator

Captain Mark Violante



ADMINISTRATION HEADQUARTERS

230 Walnut Avenue

(831) 420-5280

FIRE STATION ONE

(Downtown)

711 Center Street

FIRE STATION TWO

(Eastside)

1103 Soquel Avenue

FIRE STATION THREE

(Westside)

335 Younglove

STATION FOUR

Lifeguard Headquarters

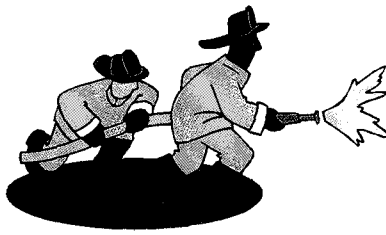
(on the Wharf)

Area of response

From the Monterey Bay

North: Highway 1 to Dimeo Lane / UCSC / Wilder Ranch /
Grey Whale Ranch / Pogonip / up Highway 9 to R/R crossing / to
Pasatiempo Dr / Delaveage Park/
Softball diamonds / golf course

East: including Carbonera / Emeline complex / Shooting /
Archery range / Harbor High School to 7th Avenue / Yacht harbor/



SANTA CRUZ FIRE DEPARTMENT

2 Administrative Clerical

4 Chief Officers

3 Battalion Chiefs

12 Captains

1 Marine Rescue Captain

1 Deputy Fire Marshal

1 Fire Prevention Inspector

12 Engineers

18 Firefighters

45 Lifeguards (Seasonal)

APPARATUS

5 Engines (pumpers)

1 100' Ladder Truck

1 Air Cascade Unit

1 Utility Pickup

Assorted staff vehicles

Unique Aspects of Santa Cruz Fire Department

A survey of all Santa Cruz County Fire Departments was completed for the Santa Cruz Fire Department Strategic Plan. As a result of this survey, it was determined that there were no agencies in the County comparable to Santa Cruz Fire Department. Multiple unique aspects and services provided contribute to that uniqueness. Some of these are:

- Advanced Life Support (ALS) provided by all on-duty companies
- 18 members of the 25 member Regional HazMat Team which covers response to all areas of the county and mutual aid at the regional and state levels.
- Water rescue for ocean and non-swift water incidents
- Beach lifeguard services- 5 towers and mobile vehicle
- High risk wildland fire areas.
- Small Craft Harbor- over 300 vessels, commercial fishing, on board year-round living
- Public Municipal Wharf- one quarter mile wooden structure-retail, restaurants, and tourist boat landing
- First and second busiest fire stations in all of county.
- Respond to 30% of the total calls for service countywide.
- Two railway routes traversing through the City; one hauling cargo and one a historical tourist train travel along elevated tracks near steep canyons.
- Nearby Lockheed research facility- using transport routes through city.
- Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk which has numerous high amusement park rides and brings in an additional 20,000-30,000 visitors daily during summer months.
- International surfing destination with numerous events held by steep rugged cliffs and ocean waters with dangerous rip currents.
- One large hospital facility
- Two high schools, two middle schools, and several elementary schools
- Growing number of elder residential care, foster care, assisted living facilities
- Sole provider in the county for Confined Space Rescue
- Automatic service agreement with University California Santa Cruz having a population of 25,000 students, faculty and staff.
- Downtown area with numerous buildings over 4 stories in height.
- High security detention facility
- Significant medical services impact from homeless population
- Two major transportation highways traversing the city
- Provide community outreach in both English and Spanish- CERT and Child Car Seat Safety Programs
- Population growth creating greater traffic congestion