SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY

Fire

ANNUAL REPORT | JULY 2014 - JUNE 2015

SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY
COUNTY OF SAN BERNARDINO
RESCUE
EMS
FIRE

BOARD of SUPERVISORS

James C. Ramos
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Robert A. Lovingood
Vice Chair, First District Supervisor

Janice Rutherford
Second District Supervisor

Curt Hagman
Fourth District Supervisor

Josie Gonzales
Fifth District Supervisor

Gregory C. Devereaux
Chief Executive Officer

CEO Message

The County Fire Department is key to County Government's job of creating a county in which those who reside and invest can prosper and achieve well-being. The department's ambulance operator program, award-winning inmate fire crew program with the Sheriff's Department, and annexation of the Crest Forest Fire Protection District exemplify the County's commitment to innovation, efficiency, collaboration, and public service. We continue to explore expanding the District through annexations as well as expanding its role through pilot programs such as community paramedicine. I am excited by the possibilities and look forward to working with Chief Hartwig and his team as we build the future of the District.

Gregory C. Devereaux
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

COUNTY VISION STATEMENT

We envision a complete county that capitalizes on the diversity of its people, its geography, and its economy to create a broad range of choices for its residents in how they live, work, and play.

We envision a vibrant economy with a skilled workforce that attracts employers who seize the opportunities presented by the County's unique advantages and provide the jobs that create countywide prosperity.

We envision a sustainable system of high quality education, community health, public safety, housing, retail, recreation, arts and culture, and infrastructure, in which development complements our natural resources and environment.

We envision a model community which is governed in an open and ethical manner, where great ideas are replicated and brought to scale, and all sectors work collaboratively to reach shared goals.

From our valleys, across our mountains, and into our deserts, we envision a county that is a destination for visitors and a home for anyone seeking a sense of community and the best life has to offer.

Table of Contents

STANDARD OF COMMITMENT...

"Where Courage, Integrity and Service Meet"

YOUR FIRE CHIEF	1
COUNTY FIRE STATIONS	2
COMMUNITIES SERVED	3
AT A GLANCE	5
ORGANIZATION CHART	6
PERSONNEL & EQUIPMENT	7
EMERGENCY MEDICAL DISPATCH	8
STATISTICS	9
OFFICE OF THE FIRE MARSHAL	10
OFFICE OF EMERGENCY SERVICES	11
BUDGET	12
GRANTS	13
MOVING FORWARD	14

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Follow us on Twitter @SBCountyFire
Sign up for emergency alerts at *www.sbcfire.org*

Photo Credit: Brandon Barsugli, Chris Nichols, HLM Photography, James Quigg (Daily Press), Tod Sudmeier

MISSION STATEMENT

"Community based all risk emergency services organization dedicated to the health and well-being of the citizens of San Bernardino County through a balance of regionalized services delivery and accountability to the local community."

VISION STATEMENT

"Committed to Providing Premier Fire Services"

Your Fire Chief

Duty, Honor, Community

SERVICE MOTTO

The men and women of County Fire continue to push forward on many fronts. Crest Forest Fire Protection District officially consolidated with the County Fire District on June 30, 2015. Lake Arrowhead and Crest Forest have worked closely together since the mid 1920's.

County Fire is a true melting pot of Board Governed, independent, dependent Fire Districts and City Fire Departments. There are Districts in each Service Zone (Valley, Mountain, North Desert, and South Desert) that have been providing fire, rescue, and EMS for over 75 years. The men and women of County Fire honor the service provided by those that have come before us and we are proud of our diverse and storied past. We stand on the shoulders of firefighters and staff who took the first steps to pool resources in order to provide more effective and cost efficient services to their respective communities throughout the County. District Fire Chiefs such as Bob Hedden (Wrightwood), Jim Laurence (Lake Arrowhead), Joe Reyes (Lucerne Valley), Duane Mellinger (Central Valley) and Clarence Gish (Yucca Valley), envisioned a county fire district that exists today.

Fire departments throughout the state are looking for ways to partner with regional neighbors in order to maximize service and efficiency. For those communities looking for options, County Fire offers a sustainable regional solution for fire, rescue and EMS with a focus on local accountability and community involvement. Sustainability and regional stability are achieved through perpetual revenue sources such as property tax and voter-approved special tax assessments. More and more communities in San Bernardino County are inquiring with the local agency formation commission (LAFCO) about the benefits and steps to annexation. The cost to provide fire, rescue, and EMS services, along with retirement and benefit expenses, are rising at a faster pace than revenues in many communities. This increasing disparity is forcing communities to find efficiencies or face potential service reductions. The County Fire District offers economies of scale, a well-developed regional network of services including hand crews, dozers, and an air partnership with the Sheriff.

County Fire is currently providing Community Paramedic services to patients recently discharged from Arrowhead Regional Medical Center. This is in effort to connect members of our communities who have chronic medical conditions, with county public health resources before they need to access 911. Using our community funded licensed healthcare professionals (Paramedics) that reside in our neighborhoods 24-hours a day, 7 days a week, in this innovative program, will help get our constituents the assistance they need in the most appropriate manner possible and reduces emergency room overcrowding.

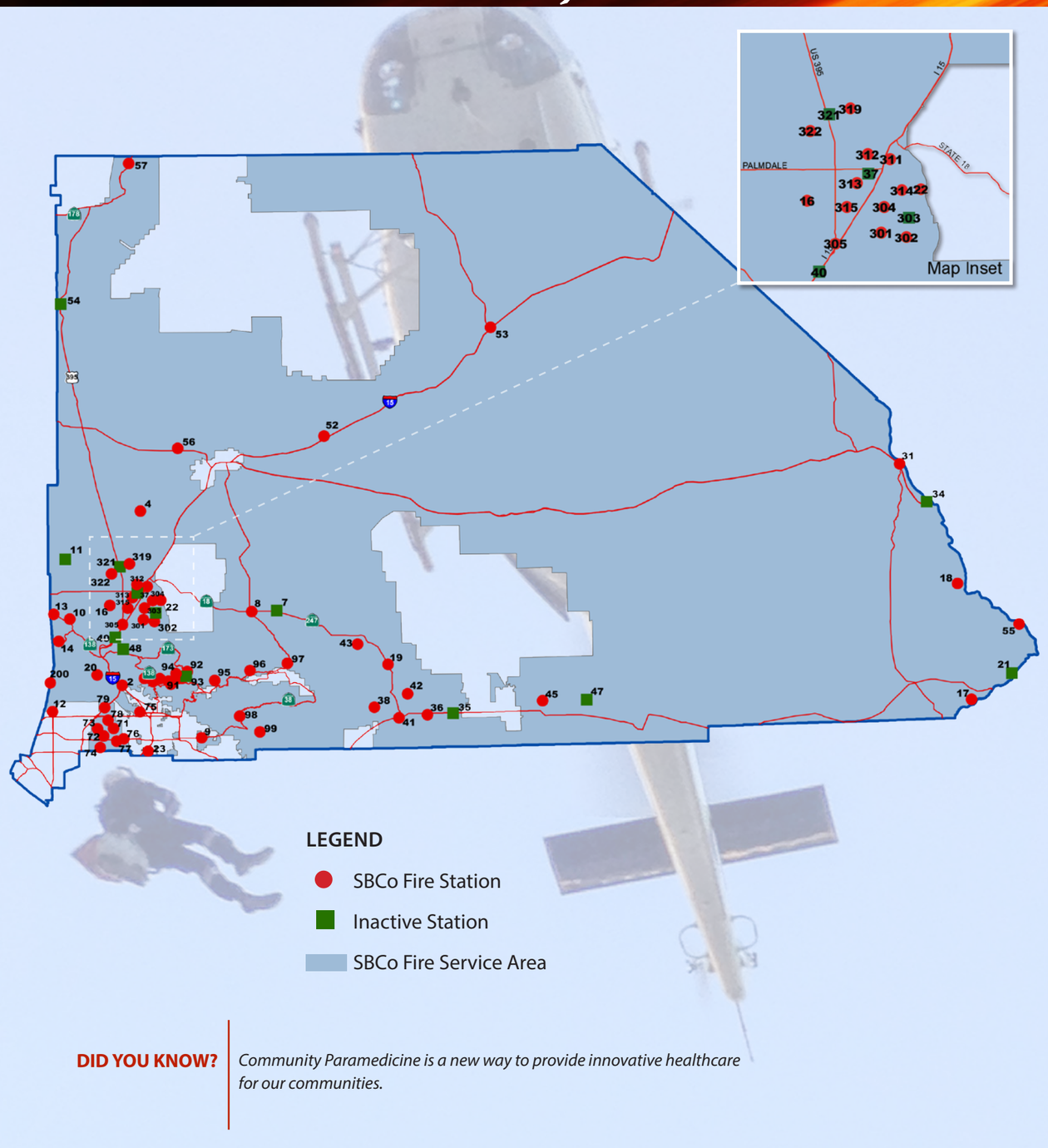
County Fire continues to find innovative and competitive ways to deliver quality services. We will steward that which has been entrusted to us with the utmost reverence and respect. Most importantly, we will hold ourselves to a high standard and be accountable to you, our local community.

Yours in Service,

Mark A. Hartwig

Fire Chief/Fire Warden

San Bernardino County Fire Stations



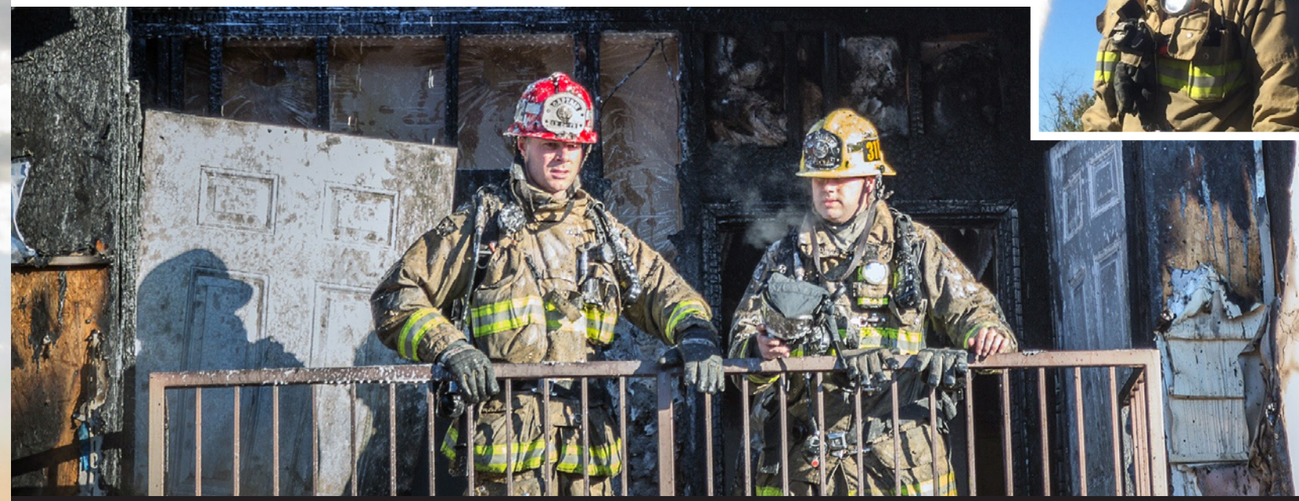
DID YOU KNOW? *Community Paramedicine is a new way to provide innovative healthcare for our communities.*

Communities Served

Proudly serving the following cities, towns and communities:

City of Adelanto
Amboy
Angelus Oaks
Baker
Baldy Mesa
Barton Flats
Big River
Black Meadow Landing
Bloomington
Blue Jay
Cedar Glen
Crest Park
Crestline
Deer Lodge Park
Devore
Earp
El Mirage
Fawnskin
Flamingo Heights
City of Fontana
Forest Falls
City of Grand Terrace
Green Valley Lake
Harvard
Havasu Landing
Helendale
City of Hesperia
Hinkley
Johnson Valley
Joshua Tree
Lake Arrowhead
Lake Gregory
Landers
Lucerne Valley
Ludlow
Lytle Creek
Mentone
Mount Baldy
Mountain Home Village
Mountain Pass
Mountain View Acres
Muscoy
City of Needles
Oak Hills
Oro Grande
Panorama Heights
Park Moabi
Phelan
Pinon Hills
Pioneertown
Red Mountain
San Antonio Heights
Searles Valley/Trona
Silver Lakes
Sky Forest
Spring Valley Lake
Summit Valley
Twin Peaks
City of Victorville
Windy Acres
Wonder Valley
Wrightwood
Town of Yucca Valley

AT A GLANCE

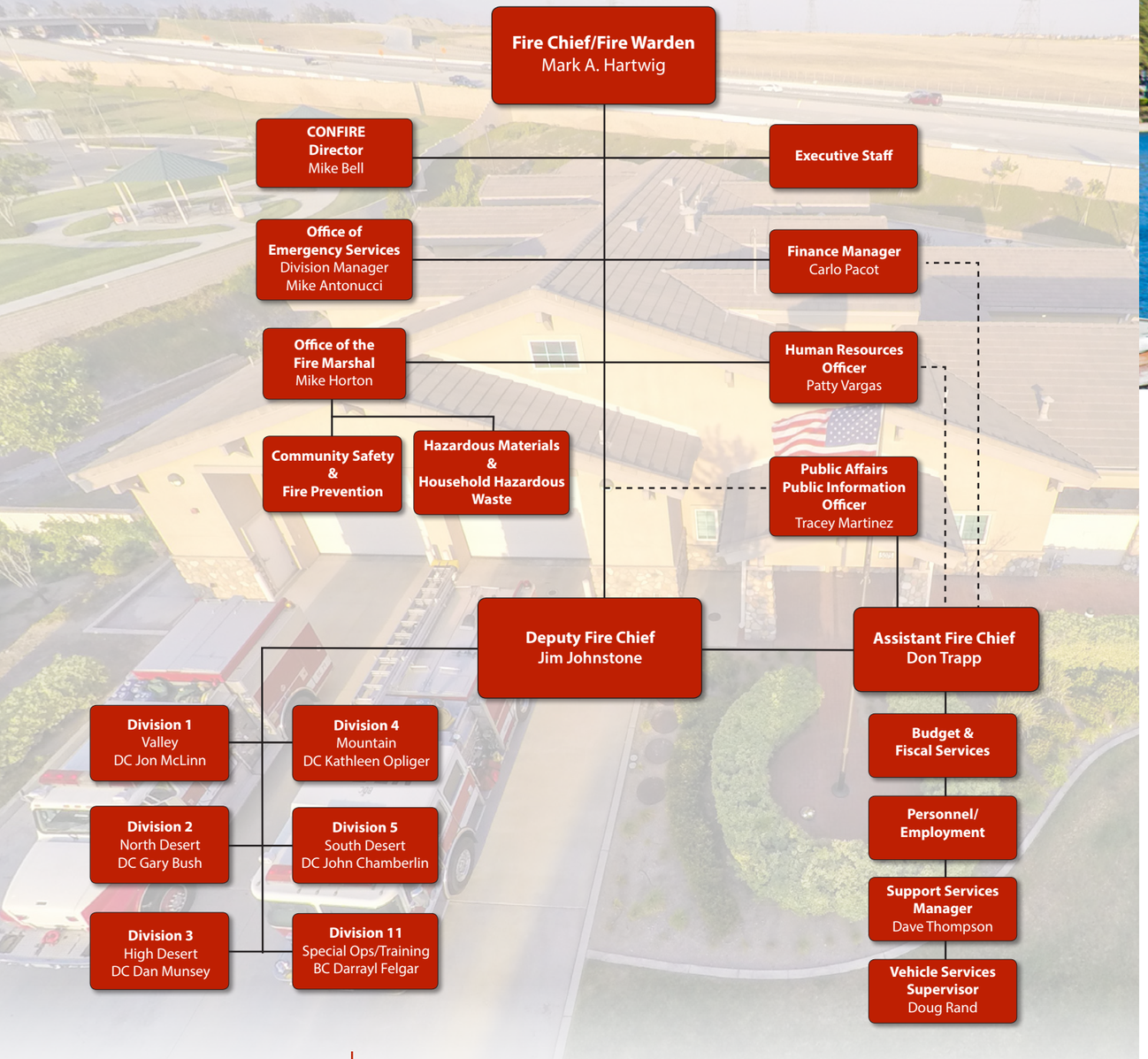


San Bernardino County is the fifth largest county in California in terms of population, at just over two million residents, and the largest county in the contiguous U.S. in terms of land area.

San Bernardino County Fire proudly serves the citizens of its five contract cities: Adelanto, Fontana, Hesperia, Needles and Victorville.

Square Miles in the County	20,160
Square Miles Covered by County Fire	16,535
Population in San Bernardino County	Over 2 Million
Incorporated Cities	24
Number of Active Fire Stations	56
Number of Fire Personnel	977
Number of Fire Suppression Personnel	639
2014/15 Calls for Service	83,695
County Fire Budget	$164,816,627

Organization Chart



DID YOU KNOW? *A grand total of 3,352,654 lbs. of household hazardous wastes were diverted from local landfills in the last year through participation in the San Bernardino County Hazardous Waste Program.*

Personnel & Equipment

PERSONNEL

Fire Chief	1
Deputy Chief	1
Assistant Chief	1
Fire Marshal	1
Deputy Fire Marshal	1
Division Chief	6
Battalion Chief	17
Captain	123
Engineer	114
Firefighter	148
Limited-Term Firefighter	72
*Paid-Call Firefighter	154
Suppression Total	**639**
Professional Staff	244
Fire Suppression Aides	35
Ambulance Operators	59
TOTAL PERSONNEL	**977**

** Paid-Call Firefighter positions fluctuate throughout the year.*

EQUIPMENT

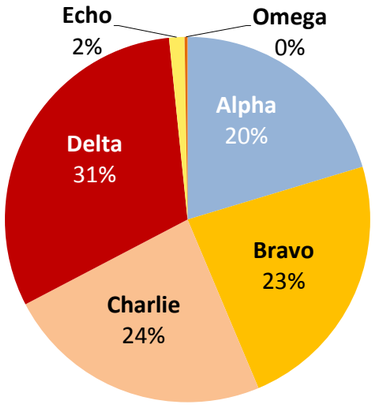
Airport Rescue Units	6
Ambulances	37
Boats	4
Brush Engines (Type 3)	22
Brush Patrols (Type 6)	31
Command Posts	3
Communication Support Vehicles	3
Crew Carriers	10
Dozers	2
Fire Engines (Type 1 and Type 2)	70
Foam Units	2
Hazardous Materials Rigs	2
Hazardous Materials Squads	9
Ladder Trucks	6
Loaders	9
Rescues	7
Snow Cats	8
Squads	11
Water Tenders	23

Emergency Medical Dispatch

MEDICAL AID CALLS

The Medical Priority Dispatch System (MPDS) is a medically-approved, unified system used to dispatch appropriate aid to medical emergencies including systematized caller interrogation and pre-arrival instructions. MPDS starts with the dispatcher asking the caller key questions. These questions allow the dispatchers to categorize the call by chief complaint and set a determinant level ranging from A (minor) to E (immediately life threatening) relating to the severity of the patient's condition.

Each call is assigned a sub-category or code, often used as a means of gathering further statistics about performance. Each category is numbered from 1 (abdominal pain) through 32 (unknown). This is used for brevity and privacy over the radio. It also helps in analyzing the call; comparing how the call was described by the informant, to the injury or illness found when the crew attends. This can then be used to help improve the questioning system which gives the MPDS classification.



LETTER	SEVERITY	RESOURCES	RESPONSE
Alpha	Non Life-Threatening	Basic Life Support	Non-Emergency
Bravo	Possibly Life-Threatening	Basic Life Support	Emergency
Charlie	Life-Threatening	Advanced Life Support	Emergency
Delta	Serious Life Threat	Advanced Life Support	Emergency
Echo	Life Status Questionable	Closest Available (Multiple Resources Sent)	Emergency

Statistics

	DIVISION 1 (Valley) + Contact City of Fontana		DIVISION 2 (North Desert) + Contact City of Hesperia & Adelanto		DIVISION 3 (High Desert) + Contact City of Victorville		DIVISION 4 (Mountains)		DIVISION 5 (South Desert) + Contact City of Needles		TOTALS	
INCIDENT TYPE	**FY 13/14**	**FY 14/15**	**FY 13/14**	**FY14/15**	**FY 13/14**	**FY 14/15**	**FY 13/14**	**FY 14/15**	**FY 13/14**	**FY 14/15**	**FY 13/14**	**FY 14/15**
Structure Fires	110	179	77	157	92	182	22	32	49	70	350	**620**
Vegetation Fires	107	137	94	113	83	131	22	32	29	46	335	**459**
Vehicle Fires	156	270	101	167	127	239	7	35	45	95	436	**806**
Other Fires *	250	333	232	254	215	256	38	45	75	98	810	**986**
Rescues	39	51	17	24	24	27	11	17	15	26	106	**145**
Medical Calls	14,799	16,396	13,679	14,818	11,757	11,729	2,398	2,725	5,091	5,706	47,724	**51,374**
Traffic Collisions	1,290	1,487	1,022	1,200	968	730	125	149	326	297	3,731	**3,863**
Traffic Collisions with Extrication	42	48	19	34	45	50	3	8	23	27	132	**167**
Hazardous Materials Incidents **	388	434	184	266	170	276	93	89	104	117	939	**1,182**
Public Service ***	1,368	1,954	1,382	1,696	985	1,601	328	436	656	664	4,719	**6,351**
Other Incidents	4,952	3,300	4,415	4,285	6,648	7,647	1,050	1,017	1,711	1,493	18,776	**17,742**
FY 13/14 Totals	23,501		21,222		21,114		4,097		8,124		78,058	
FY 14/15 Totals		**24,589**		**23,014**		**22,868**		**4,585**		**8,639**		**83,695**

*Other Fires include rubbish fires, chimney fires, cooking fires, outside storage fires
**Haz-Mat Incidents include explosions, fireworks, hazardous materials such as chemical, biological, and electrical hazards with no fire involved
***Public Service calls include false alarms & weather related incidents

Office of the Fire Marshal

COMMUNITY SAFETY DIVISION

DESCRIPTION OF SERVICES	COUNTY AREAS	CITY OF FONTANA	CITY OF HESPERIA	CITY OF VICTORVILLE	TOTALS
Investigations	217	80	37	101	**435**
Annual Inspections	743	0	293	1,741	**2,777**
New Construction Inspections	1,786	3,195	108	579	**5,668**
Plan Reviews	1,100	1,113	223	267	**2,703**
Special Event Inspections	134	56	293	15	**498**

HAZARDOUS MATERIALS DIVISION

HAZARDOUS MATERIALS REGULATION, RESPONSE, REQUEST FOR INFORMATION, CUPA	FY 13/14	FY 14/15
Regulated Facilities	6,596	**6,629**
Facility Inspections	5,355	**5,403**
Non-Emergency Calls	540	**330**
Haz-Mat Team Responses	233	**166**
Underground Storage Tank Facilities	801	**783**
Underground Storage Tank Systems	1,830	**2,164**
Requests for Records & Certified Records Research	788	**780**
HOUSEHOLD HAZARDOUS WASTE & SMALL BUSINESS		
Pounds of Hazardous Waste Managed	2,838,306	**3,352,654**
Residents Served	48,130	**51,664**
Businesses Served	201	**201**

Office of Emergency Services

The Operational Area (OA) Emergency Operations Center (EOC) activated a total of five times in the reporting period of July 1, 2014 to the same date in 2015. A flood and a fire event served as EOC Activation bookends.

In August, when it rained, it poured. The OA EOC Activated to Level I in support of "August Severe Weather", which involved a swift water rescue, flood and debris flow activities in the San Bernardino Mountains causing over $6 million in initial damage estimates. The Forest Falls Community Center housed nearly 100 campers and staff that sheltered in place overnight. In the morning, a front end loader transported meals and hygiene kits provided by the American Red Cross to the Center. Less than a week later, straight line winds in excess of 80 mph, torrential rains and lightning caused an estimated $2 Million in damage to the community of Needles. The EOC was activated for a total of 8 days with a lion's share of the activities supporting the collection of initial damage estimates from county departments and local jurisdictions.

Three of six activations occurred in the month of December – setting a new record for the number of activations in any given month. In early December the OA EOC was activated for 4 days to coordinate transportation needs with Inland Counties Emergency Medical Association (ICEMA). The Arrowhead Regional Medical Center Patient Relocation utilized 24 ambulance strike teams to transport patients to alternate hospitals and medical facilities. In mid-December, a large scale power outage in the City of San Bernardino stood up the OA EOC in anticipation of mutual aid requests and calls for alternate power sources from the City of San Bernardino.

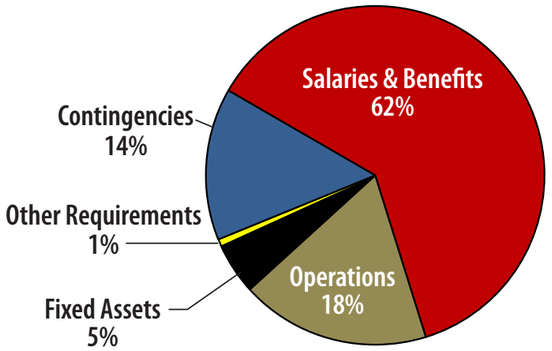
To wrap up 2014, the EOC was activated on New Year's Eve for the "Highway 138 Incident" in support of the communities of Crestline and Mount Baldy. Overzealous snow-players were stranded in the San Bernardino Mountains when they ignored CalTrans and CHP warnings to race to local ski resorts during the short but intense overnight snow fall. The EOC helped to coordinate the efforts of County Sheriff, the American Red Cross, Cal Trans and County Fire to provide snow plows, snow cats and shelter sites. Approximately 100 stranded motorists rang in the New Year at one of two shelters where they remained until they could safely retrieve their vehicles.

In late March of 2015, the stubborn "River Bottom Fire" burned for two days along the Mojave Riverbed and threatened homes in the Town of Apple Valley. As an end note, the OA EOC activated on June 17, 2015 for the "Lake Fire" incident which began in the San Bernardino County Mountain community of Big Bear. OES sent an EOC/ICP Liaison to the Lake Fire Base camp and staffed 24 hour shifts at the Emergency Operations Center. The EOC was activated a total of three weeks, coordinating county support from the initial intelligence gathering to advance planning efforts and culminated once county assets were released in the damage assessment phase.

DID YOU KNOW? *County unincorporated CERT Program now boasts over 950 members!*

2014/15 Budget

EXPENDITURES



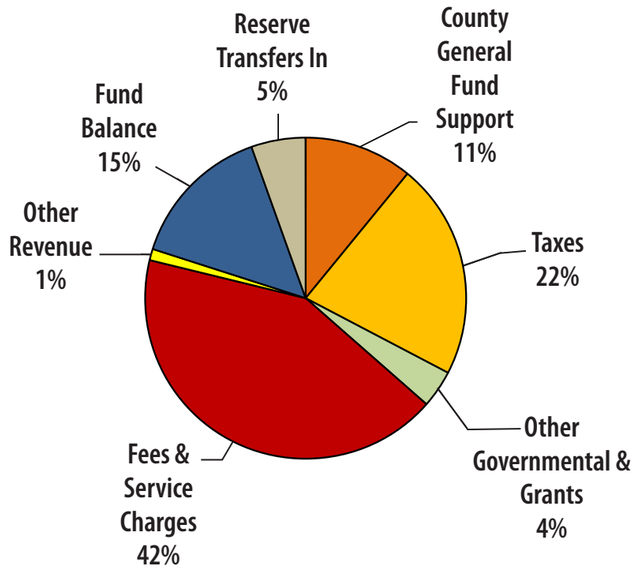
Total: $164,816,627

Capital Set-Asides

Capital Replacement	30,077,032
Termination Benefits	6,943,698
Total	**$36,020,730**

** Fees & ServicCharges include service contracts*

FINANCING SOURCES



Grants

Homeland Security Grant Program

The San Bernardino County Fire Office of Emergency Services (OES) manages the Homeland Security Grant Program (HSGP) for the Operational Area (OA) of San Bernardino County. Through coordination with the Approval Authority, the grant award is allocated among local jurisdictions, law enforcement and fire agencies, and other local agencies for planning, training/exercise, and equipment projects that meet the objectives and strategies of HSGP. The 2014 HSGP award for the entire OA was $2,204,020. Jurisdictions used their HSGP allocations to purchase personal protective equipment, thermal imaging optics, public address systems, and personnel/package screening systems. OES enhanced the San Bernardino County CERT program through planning and printing projects, and developed a standardized OA training template for OA EOC Responders.

Emergency Management Program Grant

The 2014 Emergency Management Performance Grant (EMPG) allocation of $564,131 allowed the emergency management community of San Bernardino County to complete various training, planning, and equipment projects. Utilizing 2014 EMPG, cities/towns were able to revise their Emergency Operations Plans (EOP), develop and implement a Multi-Year Training Plan, and enhance or maintain their Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) programs.In August 2014, cities/towns, and County departments committed resources while responding to and repairing damage caused by severe weather storms. OES used its 2014 EMPG allocation to bring Disaster Cost Recovery training to the County to help County departments, cities and towns navigate through one of the most complex aspects of a disaster: cost recovery. Other OES projects included Public Information Officer training and projects that included A/V Press Patch, whiteboards, a portable PA system, and other equipment that would aid the Joint Information Center at the Emergency Operations Center.

Mountain Residents Receive Assistance with Roof Replacement

County Fire continues working with FEMA to execute the Legislative Pre Disaster Management Grant (LPDM) grant to replace wood shake shingle roofs in mountain residential areas. As these areas are designated high fire hazard in the County's Development Code, eliminating wood shingle roofs will reduce the potential for a catastrophic wildland fire. By working in collaboration with County Fire, Big Bear Lake Fire, the Mountain Area Safety Taskforce, and Cal OES, and within the FEMA guidelines, the homeowner can receive from FEMA 75% of the replacement cost up to $4,500.

Through team efforts of County Fire and Big Bear Lake Fire, the planning phase (PL14) and the implementation of the reroofing project (PJ02) have been completed ahead of schedule which resulted in savings that were reallocated to the final reroofing project (PJ15) of the LPDM grant. As of June 30, 2015, the PJ15 is 62% complete and is ahead of schedule. Once PJ15 is closed out, the LPDM grant would be considered complete with the reroofing of almost 2,000 wood shingle roofs.

DID YOU KNOW? *Ready! Set! Go! can help you prepare for a Wildfire. Get your free information kit at www.sbcfire.org.*

Moving Forward

Crest Forest Annexation

In July 2013 SBCoFire entered into a contract with the Crest Forest Fire Protection District and welcomed its 21 employees to the County Fire organization. Founded in 1929, the Crest Forest FPD operated two full-time stations, one in Crestline, the other in Twin Peaks, along with 4 paid-call fire stations, covering 23 square miles and serving the communities of Agua Fria, Blue Jay, Cedar Pines Park, Crestline, Rim Forest, Twin Peaks and Valley of Enchantment. The district serves a population over 25,000.

On July 1, 2015 the annexation process was completed and the Crest Forest FPD became a part of San Bernardino County Fire. Combining the two fire stations and PCF stations with the 3 fire stations in Lake Arrowhead has improved Fire & Emergency Medical Services on the west side of the mountain, ultimately providing regionalized services to its citizens.

Hartwig Continues Service on California Commission on Emergency Medical Services

On January 12, Fire Chief Mark Hartwig was reappointed by Governor Brown to the California Commission on Emergency Medical Services (EMS), a position he has held since December 2012. The Commission on EMS supports the role of EMS agencies to ensure that patients have adequate access to quality emergency medical care, and to ensure the long term stability of these services. The Commission reviews and approves regulations, standards, and guidelines that are developed by the authority to implement its EMS responsibilities. They make recommendations for further development and future directions of EMS in the State based upon evaluations of the EMS systems. Amongst other things, the Commission also advises the Director with regard to communications, medical equipment, personnel training, facilities and other components of the EMS system.

GEMT Funding Offsets Cost of Delivering Healthcare

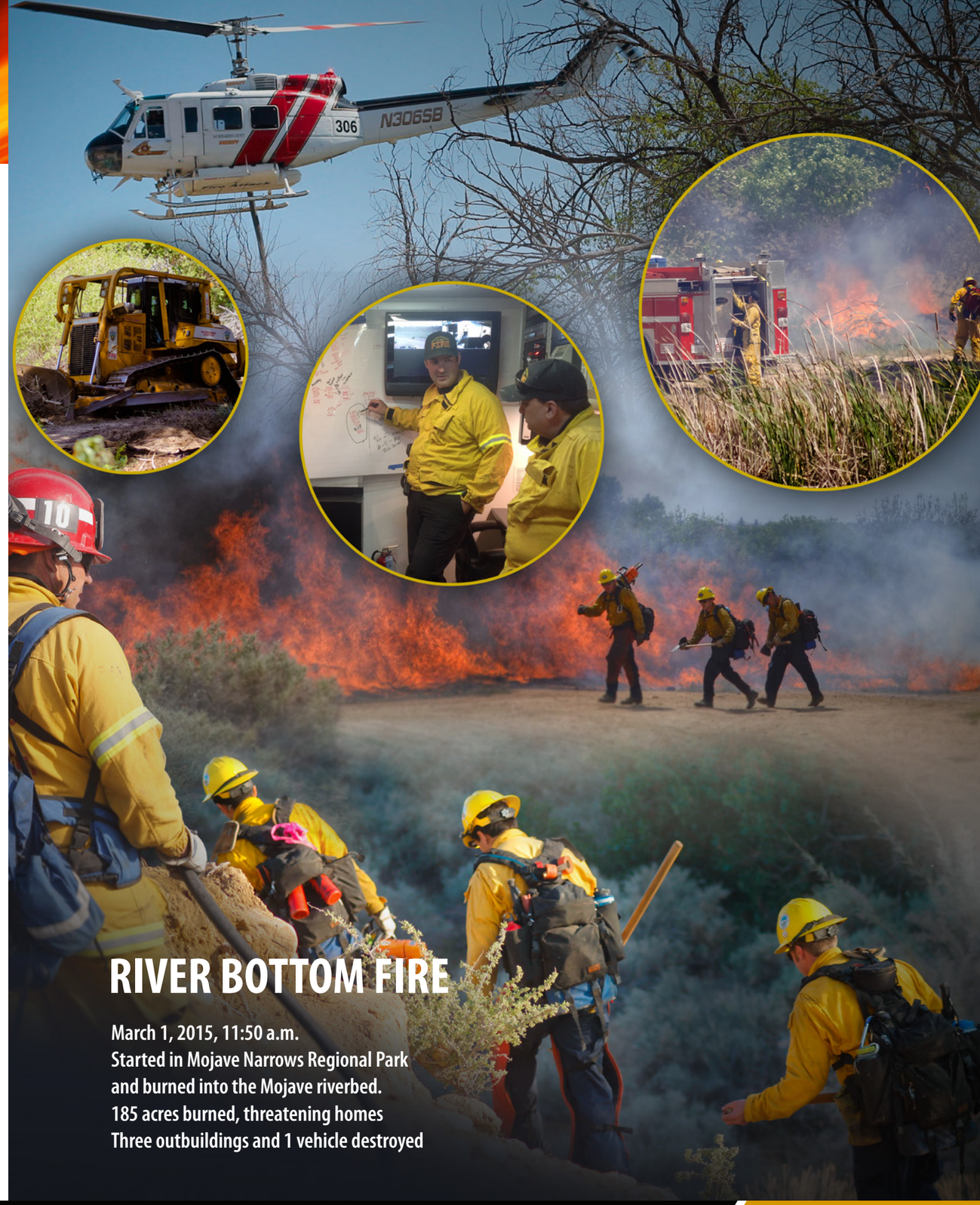
San Bernardino County Fire is the second largest provider of Paramedic ambulance transport in the County. The Ground Emergency Medical Transportation (GEMT) Services Supplemental Reimbursement Program is a federally funded program that provides supplemental reimbursement for unrecovered costs for providing medical transports to Medi-Cal beneficiaries. Currently Medi-Cal pays less than 10% of SBCoFire's average full cost of about $2,600 for medical transports. In February 2014, the department submitted their application for $3.1 million in retroactive reimbursement, based on a time period of January 2010 through June 2013. As of September 2014, SBCoFire has received $2.57 million in reimbursement. In October 2014, the department applied for reimbursement of an additional $884,000. The ongoing annual projected revenue under this program is about $800,000.

The GEMT Program has helped reduce the department's reliance on the County general fund. Currently SBCoFire provides ambulance service in outlying areas that don't generate enough revenue to cover expenses. This program is a step towards being in line with the County's goals and objectives to make each department self-sufficient and not reliant upon supplemental funding from the County general fund. *(http://www.sbcounty.gov/uploads/CAO/Uploads/Content/2013-14-Goals-and-Objectives.pdf)*

Ambulance Operator Program Put into Action

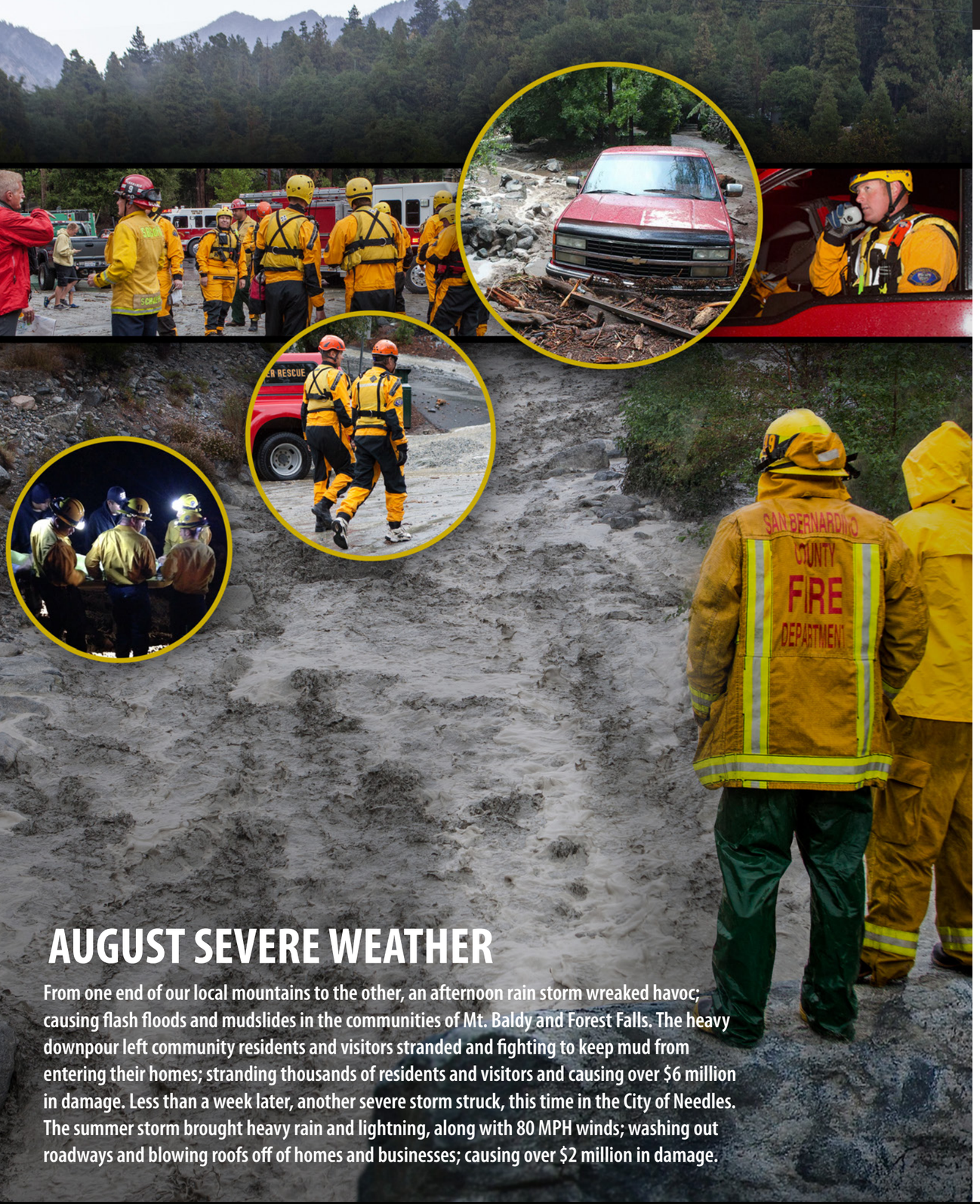
In September 2014, County Fire implemented its first ever Ambulance Operator Program; with 21 Paramedic Ambulance Operators (Paramedic AO) and 21 Emergency Medical Technician Ambulance Operators (EMT AO) ready for service. This pioneer program is designed to augment staffing levels by putting licensed medical responders in the field so that professional firefighters can return to service and provide a more effective work force to ensure our communities are provided with the highest level of firefighting services. In some parts of the County, this program has increased staffing from two to three firefighters per engine. Additionally, with the increase in wait time at hospital emergency rooms it is not uncommon for firefighter paramedics to spend extended time at a hospital caring for a patient while waiting for the ER to take over patient care.

The Ambulance Operator Program is a more effective use of our resources and has greatly benefited our outlying communities. This ground-breaking program is another step in our mission to provide efficient critical life safety services.



RIVER BOTTOM FIRE

March 1, 2015, 11:50 a.m.
Started in Mojave Narrows Regional Park and burned into the Mojave riverbed.
185 acres burned, threatening homes
Three outbuildings and 1 vehicle destroyed



AUGUST SEVERE WEATHER

From one end of our local mountains to the other, an afternoon rain storm wreaked havoc; causing flash floods and mudslides in the communities of Mt. Baldy and Forest Falls. The heavy downpour left community residents and visitors stranded and fighting to keep mud from entering their homes; stranding thousands of residents and visitors and causing over $6 million in damage. Less than a week later, another severe storm struck, this time in the City of Needles. The summer storm brought heavy rain and lightning, along with 80 MPH winds; washing out roadways and blowing roofs off of homes and businesses; causing over $2 million in damage.

Community Paramedicine: Next Step in HealthCare

In January, SBCoFire was chosen to participate in a statewide pilot project that studies the value of Community Paramedicine (CP); the next innovative wave in healthcare. The goal of the program is to augment the patient's current plan of care with resources currently established within the community, which will provide the patient with the necessary education and tools to maintain and improve wellness outside the hospital setting.

San Bernardino County is one of twelve locations chosen to participate in this 12-18 month pilot program to study various aspects of CP. County Fire has been awarded the opportunity to study post discharge follow-up of the congestive heart failure (CHF) patient. We have partnered with Rialto Fire Department, San Bernardino County Department of Public Health, Arrowhead Regional Medical Center and the Inland Counties Emergency Medical Agency (ICEMA) to provide a post discharge follow-up visit to the patient's home in order to perform a detailed physical assessment on the patient and ensure they are maintaining or improving their post hospital discharge status. During the follow-up visit, the community paramedic will also verify the patient's understanding of their disease process, discharge medications and follow-up plan. Should the patient require further medical treatment, the community paramedic will assist the patient in accessing primary care or fulfilling their healthcare need.

Air Rescue A Vital Resource

The partnership between the Sheriff and Fire Department continues to be a positive step forward in public safety. Whether operating on fires, rescues, or transporting critically ill or injured victims, Air Rescue is an invaluable resource in the countries' largest geographical county. Numerous lives have been directly saved by the action of the deputies and firefighters assigned to the Rescue Helicopter.

Notably, are the "pick off" rescues that have been accomplished. In these incidents, persons out hiking or climbing in our forest areas have found themselves stuck on a cliff face and unable to move up or down due to unstable footing. Ground based rescues would likely take several hours to complete. However, Air Rescue has been able to move into position, "pick off" the victim from the side of the cliff, and move them to safety in a matter of minutes.

Being "Multi-Mission", Air Rescue has also been instrumental in several fires in the local responsibility area. On the "River Bottom" incident, AR306 logged more than 100 bucket drops on the first day of action!

Glen Helen Fire Camp Operational

On August 20, 2014 the San Bernardino County Fire and Sheriff's Department held an open house of its first Fire Camp. Located at Glen Helen North in Devore, the eight acre Fire Camp, overseen by a camp superintendent, provides living quarters for full-time firefighter hand crews 6-1 and 6-2, houses inmate fire hand crew team members, and provides a centralized storage location for the firefighting Dozers.

The newly renovated Fire Camp was designed specifically to house up to 96 inmate hand crew members; allowing for a quicker response 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Currently the process to pull the hand crew from the jail facility can take upward to two hours. Having the inmate crews at the Camp also allows time for additional training.

Firefighter Hand Crews Essential to Department and Community

San Bernardino County Fire's paid fire crew program began in 2012 as a paid call firefighter "pick-up" crew out of Fire Station 40 in Oak Hills. Since then the program has evolved into two fully-staffed initial attack hand crews with dedicated fire suppression aides. They now operate out of Fire Camp 6, located in Devore. Crews 6-1, "Old Cajon," and 6-2, "Las Flores," have quickly become a highly reliable and credible part of SBCoFire. These crews have taken pride in maintaining their physical and mental fitness as well as exemplifying a positive attitude.

Under the leadership of two full-time firefighters, the SBCoFire Hand Crew currently has 36 members. These Crews provide assistance and support on all incidents within the County, including vegetation fires, structure fires, floods, search & rescues, and other all-risk incidents. The program has also secured numerous contracts with San Bernardino County Land Use Services, County Parks and County Public Works for fuel modification projects; saving tax payers over a quarter of a million dollars.

This year, both hand crews responded to numerous rescues, multiple mass flooding incidents and over 40 vegetation fires including the Lake Fire, River Bottom Fire, the North Fire, and the King Fire (Northern California.) They have completed numerous fuelbreaks for the Natural Resource Conservation Service including locations at Santa's Village, Burnt Mill and Green Valley Lake. They also completed a fuelbreak for the Arrowhead Communities Fire Safe Council at Hook Creek, and assisted the U.S. Forest Service on the Boa fuelbreak project in Lytle Creek.

Moving Forward *(Continued)*

Every year, before the start of fire season, the two crews complete their "Critical Training." It is a fully immersive and physically demanding program that simulates every aspect of life as a County Fire Hand Crew member. The training culminates in a 36 hour incident simulation where both crews come together as a Strike Team and put to work their training in wildland fire behavior, fireline construction, structure defense, fire shelter deployments, and more.

Along with their regular training and responding to calls, Hand Crew members participate in community events such as the Sheriff's Department 10K Trail Run (1st place), 25K 5 Lap Slap (1st place), Go Ruck 5K military transition charity race (1st place), Memorial Day 22 mile Go Ruck "Tough" challenge and the Ft. Irwin to Barstow 42 mile hike for the Soldiers Home charity, the Spark of Love Toy Drive, Chili's Tip-A-Firefighter, and the Grand Terrace Firefighters Association Pancake Breakfast.

Inmate Hand Crews a Viable Resource

In 2013, Fire Chief Mark Hartwig and Sheriff John McMahon announced a partnership between SBCoFire and the Sheriff's Department – the first County Inmate Hand Crew Program. With the inmate realignment, many of the inmates used on fire crews by the State are now at local jails, placing the responsibility and opportunity to provide fire crew services at a local government level.

The project work the inmate hand crews provide has saved tax payers over $1.3 million, and these numbers are even greater with the assistance they provide in the field during an incident. Firefighter crews can be committed to a location for several hours. Having inmate hand crews trained for overhaul and mop up operation allows firefighters and medic engines to quickly return back to service.

This past year the inmate hand crews provided free community chipping for residents in our mountain communities. They also filled over 10,000 sand bags for flooding incidents, responded to over 100 vegetation fires, assisted Colton, Rialto, Rancho Cucamonga, and Apple Valley fire departments, responded to over 20 rescues to hike patients out of Forest Falls, and much more. Glen Helen Crews 15-1 and 15-2 responded to the Lake Fire and provided structure defense near the community of Pioneertown.

When the Camp first opened there were three inmate fire hand crews, for a total of 45 inmate crew members. Since then, more crews have completed training at the Glen Helen Camp and plans to further expand the program are underway. Each crew has a full-time firefighter/paramedic as a crew foreman, along with a fire suppression aid.

Some of the inmate crew members have had previous training on State hand crews, bringing with them knowledge and experience in the trade. Once released, several members of the Inmate Hand Crews have gone on to find work in the firefighting profession.

Committed to Conserving a Precious Resource

California's drought is a nationally recognized crisis. Along with residential water users, emergency service personnel are feeling the pressure of mandatory usage cuts. As the drought continues, SBCoFire is exploring different ways to conserve water, from training exercises to building maintenance and personal use. The department made strides in this direction by implementing a new method during this year's Engineer Exam, instead of wasting California's most precious resource.

By utilizing a portable drafting trailer, SBCoFire saved almost one million gallons of water over a three day testing period. For the first time, candidates used water from the portable drafting trailer that can hold up to four thousand gallons of water and circulates the water back into itself. Along with the annual Engineer Exam, firefighters participate in several workshops throughout the year and multiple training exercises. Just from the exam and the workshops, SBCoFire is saving almost three million gallons of water annually.

DID YOU KNOW? *SBCoFire operates and staffs the only Gel Task Force in the County and one of very few in the state.*

LAKE FIRE

June 17, 2015, 4:00 p.m.
Barton Flats area off of Hwy. 38
31,359 acres burned, threatening homes and historical campgrounds
One structure and 3 outbuilding destroyed

Moving Forward *(Continued)*

What is CUPA

Certified Unified Program Agencies, or CUPAs, are local agencies that are certified by the Secretary of the California Environmental Protection Agency (Cal/EPA) to implement the Cal/EPA Unified Program elements in the CUPAs jurisdiction. The first CUPA, along with San Bernardino County, was certified in 1996. San Bernardino County CUPA Program is solely supported through permit fees. CUPAs have the statutory authority to require permits, inspect facilities, issue violations, and perform enforcement actions. This division consists of 26 field inspectors, 8 clerical support, 2 supervisors, 1 Deputy Fire Marshal, and 1 Fire Marshal positions. Within the CUPA program, there is an Emergency Response Unit. The Emergency Response Unit conducts inspections during the day, and is also assigned after-hours rotation to respond countywide, as requested, for emergency response purposes.

San Bernardino County CUPA regulates approximately 6,600 facilities throughout the County. Approximately 780 of these facilities have underground storage tank systems, like those you find at gas stations. Over 5,400 inspections are conducted on an annual basis. In 2015, the Victorville City CUPA will be absorbed into the County.

OES Volunteers Hit It Out of the Park!

The Office of Emergency Services (OES) shows its pride in volunteers. On April 18, over 170 OES volunteers, staff and guests spent a night out at the ballgame. The inaugural event was organized by OES as a way to say "thank you" to its volunteers and took place at the LoanMart Field in Rancho Cucamonga.

During an Award Ceremony conducted prior to the baseball game OES staff awarded volunteers from the County's Community Emergency Response Team (CERT), Emergency Communications Service (ECS) and California Disaster Corps programs for their outstanding service. Following the ceremony, leaders from all three programs were escorted onto the field for a special recognition and the presentation of the OES Eagle Award. Ed and Bonnie Ross of Wrightwood CERT were awarded OES' highest award which is given to volunteers who go above and beyond in their service to their respective programs and the County as a whole. Before volunteers enjoyed the baseball game and each other's company the SBCoFire Honor Guard accompanied by the Pipes and Drums, presented the colors.

Office of Emergency Services Wins Gold for Second Year

For the second year in a row, the Office of Emergency Services (OES) accepted the Gold Award from the California Emergency Services Association (CESA) at their annual conference. On September 10, OES received the association's highest honor for its creation of the "ROPE FOG" (Responders Organized for Pass Emergencies - Field Operations Guide). Last year's award was received for the development of the innovative Shelter Operations Compound, or SHOC, plan.

Recognizing the nationwide significance of the Cajon Pass/I-15 corridor, lessons learned from the 1996 train derailment that caused a 59 hour I-15 full freeway closure; and taking into account the possibility of a 7.8 catastrophic earthquake, County Fire OES took the lead in assembling critical stakeholders to address vulnerabilities and challenges faced in a catastrophic incident affecting the Cajon Pass. Stabilizing and restoring critical utilities is of the utmost importance to sustaining life, restoring the economy, and overall recovery.

OES steered the two-year effort and established a planning team, comprised of all the Cajon Pass stakeholders, to help create the ROPE FOG. Evaluating the progress of the FOG development involved a combination of training events, exercises, and real-world experience to determine whether the needs of the end user were addressed by the FOG. The end result was the creation of a user-friendly hands-on tool that provides critical incident communications planning guidance, locates possible sites for essential operational locations and pinpoints critical infrastructure.

Receipt of the CESA Gold Award by County OES demonstrates the commitment of the County to be prepared for all hazards and serves as a reminder to all residents to take steps to be prepared themselves. Visit: *www.sbcounty.gov/Uploads/SBCFire/content/oes/pdf/FamilyDisasterPlan.pdf* to download your own copy of "Your Family Disaster Plan" and learn how you can take steps now to become better prepared for San Bernardino County's next disaster.

OES Awarded NACo Award

In June, the Office of Emergency Services (OES) received the National Association of Counties (NACo) recognition for its WebEOC Program. The NACo applauds county governments that are embracing innovative and more effective ways to serve their constituents.

WebEOC is an innovative software program that provides county stakeholders situational awareness from any internet enabled device during disasters. The WebEOC Program has nearly 1,000 users at the county, state and federal levels assigned to one or more of 475 possible positions. It encompasses 187 custom "web boards" that provide incident information "push and pull".

The WebEOC Program represents a "three-peat" for the Office of Emergency Services, following in the footsteps of 2013 & 2014 NACo winners, the Shelter Operations Compound concept and the Responders Organized for Pass Emergencies Field Operations Guide respectively.

WeTip Names Mike Horton as Fire Marshal of the Year

San Bernardino County Fire Marshal Mike Horton received the Fire Marshal of the Year award from WeTip at its annual National Crime-Fighting Conference held in April 2015. The recognition was part of its 2015 Outstanding Service Awards presented to those individuals who have shown extraordinary efforts and outstanding service in the field of crime prevention and WeTip service.

WeTip has been a great resource for SBCoFire; providing an anonymous source for community members to report crime. The WeTip National Arson Crime Reporting Hotline is setting national records. WeTip provides fire services and law enforcement agencies with arson information that has been called in by concerned, anonymous citizens. SBCoFire investigators have received several leads through the WeTip hotline, ultimately leading to arrests and convictions.

Forest Falls Sees Increase in Rescues

Fed by the southwest drainage of the San Gorgonio Wilderness, Falls Creek becomes Big Falls, the highest year'round waterfall in Southern California. The close proximity and easy hike from the falls recreation area sees over 200,000 visitors a year enjoy the crisp water and numerous cascades of Big Falls, Mill Creek and the tree shaded picnic area.

The Rescue season at Big Falls normally starts on or after Memorial Day weekend and a typical year will produce 3-10 rescues. However in June 2015, the 24th rescue of the year was completed. Many suspect the 4th year of the drought, having reduced the flow of Falls Creek and in particular to one 40 foot section of flow, has allowed the growth of algae. This area is easily accessible to the public, dramatically increasing the slip/fall injuries which typically include a fall from 12-30 feet in height down a steep cascade.

Most Big Falls rescues include the carry out of the victim in a litter basket. Of the 24 rescues conducted up to Memorial Day 2015, there were 33 patients of which 9 received on scene ALS intervention by SBCoFire Paramedics, 7 patients were hoisted to safety by the Sheriff's Air Rescue 06 and 13 patients were transported to area hospitals by ALS ground ambulance. In addition to ground rescuers from SBCoFire, mutual aid is often received by the San Bernardino National Forest.

Snow Storm Strands Mountain Motorists

A winter storm that brought heavy snow to the San Bernardino Mountains late December 30 crippled motorists, leading to a widespread rescue effort by firefighters near the communities of Mt. Baldy and Crestline.

Near Crestline, a total of 136 motorists in dozens of vehicles became stranded on the steep, snowy switchbacks on State Highway 138 from one mile north of Old Mill Road to Pilot Rock. SBCoFire Snow-Cat apparatus were used to navigate the snowy roads. Staffed with firefighter/paramedics, these crews began to retrieve the stranded and take them to shelter. Near Mt. Baldy, approximately 50 people were stranded in similar conditions, primarily in two separate locations. Near the Mt. Baldy ski area, approximately 25 people were stranded; meanwhile, further down the mountain near Mt. Baldy Village, another two dozen motorists awaited rescue. All Rescue operations were completed by 3:00 a.m., December 31.

Moving Forward *(Continued)*

Strike Teams & Hand Crew Respond to Northern California Fires

In August 2014, a SBCoFire strike team responded to North Fork, Ca. to the French Fire where they were assigned to structure defense. They were then assigned to the Whites Fire in Etna, Ca., where they had the arduous task of keeping the fire from reaching a historical mining area and nearby community, which is home to a Catholic church built in 1855.

The following month, a SBCoFire strike team set out for Placerville, Ca where the King Fire was burning and threating homes and businesses. The strike team was assigned to protect structures known as Uncle Tom's Cabin, a bar built in 1864 and surrounded by 10 cabins. Firefighters were instrumental in aving all the structures as the fire ripped through the compound shortly after arrival. Both strike team assignments were fought in steep, rugged terrain and consisted of structure defense, cutting line and constructing firelines and fuelbreaks to suppress the fire.

A Strike Team consists of a strike team leader and five engines staffed with 20 firefighters. Often times strike team assignments last a minimum of 14 days. A fire crew of 18 from Hand Crew 6-1 responded to the King Fire for 18 days working to construct fireline. During that time, the hand crew hiked several miles through mountainous terrain carrying heavy backpacks and firefighting tools, where they spike camped for five days. A Spike Camp is usually set up near a fireline, where firefighting personnel are basically on their own in a remote area for several days conducting firefighting operations.

DID YOU KNOW? *SBCoFire is one of 12 Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) Regional Task Forces in the state trained for response to earthquakes, transportations incidents, swift-water incidents, act of terrorism and mudslides/avalanches.*

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