



NEWS



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YUCCA VALLEY MAN NAMED NEW SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY FIRE CHIEF

Staff Writer, Z107.7 FM News

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Newly appointed San Bernardino County Fire Chief Dan Munsey

Assistant County Fire Chief Dan Munsey of Yucca Valley will serve as the new fire chief for the **San Bernardino County Fire Department**. Munsey, who has served with County Fire since 1995, succeeds Mark Hartwig, who left the department in February to accept a job as fire chief for Santa Barbara County. Munsey's appointment followed a nationwide recruiting effort. In his most recent assignment as Assistant Chief, Division 11, Munsey was responsible for rescue operations, fire, and emergency medical response in the Hi-Desert region, which is the largest of the five regions served by San Bernardino County Fire.

Munsey said, "Being chosen to serve as fire chief for this organization is a tremendous honor.... I am excited about this opportunity to lead them."

Munsey is also a board member of the Hi-Desert Water District in Yucca Valley.

<http://z1077fm.com/yucca-valley-man-named-new-san-bernardino-county-fire-chief/>

Active Shooter Drills Conducted by County First Responders

Nick Kipley, Mountain News

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Nick Kipley

It started at 8 a.m., deputies for the San Bernardino County Sheriff's Station in Twin Peaks held an active shooter drill on the campus that used to be Grandview Elementary.

Deputies ran through a flume of purple smoke fountaining from a smoke grenade dropped by one of the "shooters" at the entrance to the school.

With guns raised, deputies entered the building, turned a corner, and advanced down the hallway in a tactical crouch. They moved in a defensive echelon as they swept each classroom, seeking out "hostages" and "victims" whose screams for help echoed off the low ceiling. One woman managed to break free from her "captors" and bolted down the hallway in a panic. She was swiftly apprehended by deputies and shepherded safely past to join the body-armor-clad fire paramedic crews following closely behind.

WHOMP!

A flashbang grenade ignites with a big thump of bass-sound but produces no other ill effect as the squadron charge into the classroom where the "shooter" is holed-up.

“Drop your weapon!” one of the deputies shout.

The “gunman” refuses, choosing instead to raise his pistol at the deputies.

POP! POP! POP!

In the next moment, the “shooter” is lying on the floor as the deputies move in to put on the cuffs.

“A true flashbang will blow out the windows and knock you silly,” Lt. Don Lupear later explains as he stands just outside the classroom, monitoring the results of the morning’s exercise. “It doesn’t make any shrapnel, but it’ll still make you bleed. They’re used for a good purpose, though.”

The currently-deserted Grandview Elementary School was the site chosen for the Nov. 18 to 19 joint-training exercise held by the **San Bernardino County Fire** Department and Twin Peaks Sheriff’s Station because it makes for an excellent venue for law enforcement and emergency teams to run “active shooter” training skirmishes. From 5 to 9 a.m. on both days, Sheriff Deputies and Firefighter Paramedics repeatedly practiced charging into a hostile and chaotic simulated school shooting.

The “shooter” this morning is Sgt. Jarred Besheer of the Twin Peaks Sheriff’s Station. He is wearing a bright orange suit made out of a thick material that allows him to be shot multiple times by the deputies’ dye-coated, acrylic, ‘man-marking’ rounds without having to suffer a stinging spate of 9mm-width welts. Besheer stands in the back corner of the empty classroom flanked by a Sheriff Explorer “hostage,” two cardboard “civilians,” and one reporter from the Mountain News.

“I guess if they shoot you they’ll fail the scenario,” Lupear jokes.

The goal of these two-day training exercises is to run back-to-back scenarios that allow police teams to practice clearing and holding territory as they advance room-by-room through a building, while firefighter-paramedics mop-up casualties in their wake and corral wounded victims to a safe extraction point. As police clear an area it goes from being referred to as “Hot Zone,” to a “Warm Zone,” with the ultimate goal of eliminating all the hot zones while moving victims from warm zones to a safe extraction area out of harm’s way.

“What we’re trying to do is reduce the timeline from point of injury to point of care,” San Bernardino County Fire Captain Spencer Brumbaugh said.

During the exercise, firefighters treating ‘wounded’ volunteers, and ferrying ‘victims’ out of each room and back down the hall to safety carried compact medical bags and wear SWAT-Style helmets and Kevlar vests stuck with Velcro patches that read the word “MEDIC.”

“It was a three-quarter-of-a-million dollar investment for body armor and specialized trauma equipment.” Assistant Chief Ronald Walls of San Bernardino County Fire said. “There was always a distinct separation between the job law enforcement did and the job fire did. The old way (before Columbine, Sandy Hook, et al.) Police would go in and fire would’ve waited behind and gone in after. In today’s world and active shooter is trying to kill as many people as possible so we don’t have the luxury of waiting.”

Present at the Tuesday morning exercise were fire crews from San Bernardino County Stations 26, 92, 94, and 96 (Stations 91 and 25 took place in the training exercise held on Monday morning) and Sheriff Deputies from the San Bernardino County Twin Peaks Station.

“Fire is learning how to enter into the police’s environment and police are learning to use first aid and take care of themselves,” Assistant Chief Walls said.

After running through the 8:00 a.m. scenario, fire and police teams convened beneath an E-Z-Up labeled with the Twin Peak’s Sheriff’s Logo and discussed what needed improvement. San Bernardino County Battalion Chief Steve Tracy critiqued different logistical elements and troubleshoot solutions with the emergency teams and law enforcement to develop a plan to quickly extract wounded to area hospitals. Tracy explained that the fastest way to get wounded out of harm’s way in the mountains is to call in air support and noted that emergency crews have access to up to eight helicopters in the immediate area who could help medevac wounded to area hospitals.

Before running the next scenario, everyone ate breakfast burritos provided by the firemen and then got back to work.

After teams ran through the last scenario of the morning Captain Brumbaugh addressed the group of firefighters present for the final debriefing of the exercise.

“Twenty-six kids died in Sandy Hook because fire crews were afraid to go inside and get shot,” Brumbaugh said. He then gestured to the Sheriff Deputies assembled standing nearby and added, “They’re your hoseline. We wouldn’t put you into a burning building without a hose. This guy with a gun who’s trained how to use it walking in front of you - he’s your hose.”

Currently, Fireteams conduct about a dozen active shooter drills throughout the county each year, but starting next year Twin Peaks Sheriffs and San Bernardino Fire would like that number to increase to at least one active-shooter training exercise a quarter so that mountain community first-responders are always well-prepared if the truly unspeakable occurs.

http://www.mountain-news.com/news/article_f4e46e50-0c7e-11ea-b1c4-e78e97fc828c.html