



NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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County Fire Crew Program Prepares for Fire Season

Summary:

In Preparation for the upcoming 2015 fire season SBCoFD, Fire Camp 6 has two Initial Attack Hand crews staffed; Crew 6-1 "Old Cajon" and Crew 6-2 "Las Flores". These crews recently completed two weeks of "Critical Training", which is the traditional way hand crew's transition from winter staffing to fire season staffing.

The "Critical Training" is a fully immersive and physically demanding training program that attempts to simulate every aspect of life as a County Fire Hand Crew member, from daily Camp routines to complex, life threatening Wildland firefighting operations. Critical Training begins each day with a morning briefing, which included a daily, fire weather forecast discussion, a wildland safety message, called "Six minutes for Safety", and the "plan of the day". Next on each days schedule is physical training; crews workout together daily to be ready for the physical demands of the job. Individual crew members were also tested on the Camp 6 physical fitness standard which included a 1.5 mile run in 10:30, 40 push ups, 40 sit-ups, pull ups based on body weight and an NWCG "Pack Test".

Throughout the two weeks of Critical Training numerous training topics and certification classes were conducted; Wildland fire behavior, fireline construction, structure defense, fire shelter deployments, wildland fire leadership just to name a few. Each individual crew member was integrated into the fire camp life style and assigned Camp A.O.R.'s (areas of responsibilities) and how to take ownership of those responsibilities.

At the culmination of the Critical Training, both crews embarked on an "extended training day" which is a 36 hour, incident simulation in which both crews combine as a "Crew Strike Team" and must be 100% self-sufficient to simulate initial and extended attack operations. During the simulated incident the training topics covered included Incident check in and briefings, receiving division assignments, fireline construction, tree felling, night operations, base camp orientation and coordination, travel procedures and after action reviews.

County Fire's, "paid" camp crew program began in 2012 as a PCF "pick-up" crew out of FS40 (Oak Hills) and now has evolved into two, fully staffed initial attack hand crews with dedicated Fire Suppression Aides (FSA's). They now operate out of their own stand-alone fire camp called "Camp 6" located in Devore. Camp 6, Crew 6-1 and 6-2 are quickly becoming a highly reliable and credible part of the County Fire Department. These crews have taken pride in maintaining their physical and mental fitness as well as maintaining a positive attitude. Traditions are being established that will be upheld for many years to come.

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