

Fire Brigade News July 2012

Recently the Fire Brigade hosted a meeting at our firehouse with CHP, SO, USFS, State Parks, OES and CERT to discuss evacuation procedures when we have our next large fire or other type of disaster. We agreed that the CERT members would be key players in any type of event. During a fire they could assist with SO for evacuations, traffic control, resupply and many other things. Each department needed to take the message back to make sure that anyone coming down here should expect to see the CERT members in their official CERT attire and know they would be able to assist them. The CERT team is going to do training with OES and have mock evacuation drills to make sure they are prepared. At some point we will go to an area/enclave hopefully with a deputy and practice neighborhood notifications.

Some of the Brigade members went back to Hunter Liggett at the end of June for one more day of wildland fire training. This was a second time for several of them to get yet more hands on training! All did very well and the live fire experienced there really prepares them for real incidents.

I went to the quarterly BSMACC meeting recently and the attendance was not very good. There were no hot topics on the agenda; however topics come up during the meetings that it would be nice to have more community members weigh in on. The agency representatives give up about 6 hours out of their day to come down to Big Sur for these meetings and it is a unique opportunity for a Big Sur resident to address any one of them without having to drive to Salinas. The Postal service had a representative attend this meeting last week to discuss mail delivery during road closures. He wanted to have our input on where might be the best place to redirect mail during a closure. Obviously this would depend on the location of the closure but King City was discussed as an option. I would encourage everyone to sit in on these special quarterly meetings.

Another topic discussed, which often comes up, was fire, including clearing, grants, and prevention. The question was asked about where to find the regulations for clearing, road widths, brush height etc. Two great places to find this are Cal Fires web site at www.fire.ca.gov and www.firewise.org. On the Cal Fire site just type in 4291 in the search bar and that will take you to the state wide regulation requirements. We have these links on our web site as well, www.bigsurfire.org. Otherwise, July has so far been relatively quiet for us, in spite of the hordes of people pouring down here day after day.

Updateõ I guess I spoke too soon about being quiet; yesterday we were paged to respond to a vegetation fire in the area of Captain Cooper School. USFS arrived on scene first with Brigade members and our tender arriving soon after. We believe it was started as a result of an illegal camper/campfire and it burned about at 30 by 30 area. Once again we were fortunate with the weather conditions and the quick response!

As I mentioned in my article last month the Fire Brigade is in the process of reviewing and updating our ten year plan. We talked about the services the Brigade provides at our Sustainability meeting last month and if we really needed to continue to do everything we are currently responding too. The Fire Brigade Board is going meet to look at every aspect of service we provide and the costs we incur to provide them. For example, currently we respond to almost every request short of people locking themselves out of their cars. And even then if there is a child or animal in the car we will respond. We think the community is overall happy with the service(s) we provide, but felt it would be appropriate for us to do a review.

We have not been able to have a resident deputy yet this summer as we have not been able to find any housing. If anyone knows of any available place please let me know, it would now only be until Labor Day it would be needed.

Martha Karstens
Chief