

ALFALFA FIRE & RESCUE

WINTER/SPRING NEWSLETTER 2019



FIRE STATION PROGRESS

A little more than a year ago we were starting our new station. Some of you came to the BBQ last summer and saw for yourselves the progress that has been made. As we moved into winter this year it was reassuring to know that our fire apparatus would be in a heated building.

Materials for these projects continue to be the biggest expense since much of the work will be done by volunteer labor. Special thanks to Nate Starr and Chad LaVallee, as well as the other firefighters, for their many hours of work on the station.

When we began, we knew it would take several years to finish the station since we are on a limited budget. While the station is important, we must also not lose sight of the fact that service to our customers is the highest priority.

Last, but not least, many thanks for very generous donations by David Call, one of our firefighters, providing the floor joists for the mezzanine and to Deschutes Concrete for the decking to help complete the floor of the mezzanine.

Calls for service

Alfalfa Fire District personnel responded to 75 calls for service during 2018. We are on track to break that record in 2019 as we have already responded to 29 calls as we end the month of March. The table below shows the comparison to previous years.

TYPES OF CALLS	2016 Apr- Dec	2017	2018	2019 Jan- Mar.
Structure Fires	1	1	2	0
Vehicle Fires	1	4	1	1
Brush Fires	3	1	6	2
RV Fires	0	2	0	0
Outside Burning Fires	0	1	0	0
Mutual Aid Fires	0	3	7	2
Smoke Investigations	3	9	3	0
Medical Aids	16	38	35	17
Motor Vehicle Accidents	0	2	10	4
Rubbish Fires	1	0	6	3
Lightning Strikes	1	0	0	0
Good Intent Calls	1	0	5	0
Outdoor Burning Complaints	6	0	0	0
TOTALS	33	61	75	29

Trends: Medical calls and motor vehicle accidents combine to make up well over half of the district responses. These numbers are consistent with other departments across the state and country. The rise in calls also shows that Alfalfa area citizens are realizing the availability of the department and are willing to call 911 when there is a need for service.



Change of Command -- On July 1, 2018, Ron Thompson officially passed the torch to Chad LaVallee as chief of the fire district. Ron was hired in March of 2016 as the first fire chief for the Alfalfa Fire District and spent countless hours and energy getting the district up and running operationally. Ron continued working behind the scenes helping Chief LaVallee until last October when he went on a well-deserved hiatus. We hope to see Ron on occasion next summer helping out when needed unless he finds his second retirement too much fun to come back! The entire district, from the Board of Directors to firefighters to community members, owe Ron a huge "thank you" for getting AFD to where we are now. We couldn't have done it without you, Ron -- thanks!!

Non-Fire Volunteers Needed

The Alfalfa Fire District would like to get some assistance with routine maintenance types of jobs. Now that we have a station there will be some landscaping tasks each year along with other occasional small projects. It is our goal to assemble a small group of people willing to serve on a call-when-needed basis to assist our firefighters and board members who already commit a lot of hours to making the fire district operate. Most jobs would be supervised by fire district personnel and would be of short duration (a few hours at a time.)

If you are interested, please send an email to volunteer@afd.org so we can get you signed up and ready to assist us when the time comes.

CHIEF'S CORNER

Hello,

As the new Fire Chief for your District, I would like to sincerely thank Ron Thompson for all the outstanding work he has done to help this department get where it is now. From the beginning, he worked tirelessly to get the department up and running, training volunteers, and obtaining the apparatus we use to serve you. He will be greatly missed, and we wish him the best in his retirement.

As we move from winter into the spring months, it is time to start thinking about spring cleanup, and defensible space. With an early wildland fire season expected, defensible space is needed to protect homes in the event of a fire. There will be several spring cleanup events we will be posting to the website, and Knott Landfill will hold days where debris can be hauled in. After last season around Central Oregon, as well as the wildfires in California, we need to be diligent in our efforts to make sure our community is safe, and in the event of a fire from State lands, that we can effectively mitigate the threat to lives and property. Fire can quickly spread from house to house and if homes maintain defensible space, it will help the AFD to quickly assess and battle the fire. If you have any questions, please see our website or contact me @ clavallee@afd.com. We would be more than happy to schedule a home consultation.

We are making and placing address signs--this better helps us find your home in an emergency. If you need an address sign, please refer to our website for more information.



Extrication Equipment

The district acquired extrication equipment in the fall of 2018. The refurbished equipment price was about a quarter of the cost of new and allows the department to get some critically needed gear for those calls where a victim may be trapped in a motor vehicle crash. Having our own gear allows us to extricate victims rather than waiting for a unit from Bend to arrive. The firefighters went through roughly 40 hours of training with the new gear.

Board member changes this year

Gary Hughes resigned his board position in May after having served since January of 2013. Gary spent a lot of energy in getting our fire station built and we would like to thank him for his years of service. David Pike was selected to replace Gary on the board.

Also stepping down in December after 5 years of dedicated service was Rowan Hollitz, who served as our Treasurer. He has been replaced by Ole Olsen who has been actively assisting Rowan for the past year as Financial Assistant.

Again, we would like to welcome both David and Ole to the board while thanking Gary and Rowan for their many hours of time and energy getting AFD established.

Radio Installation

New radios purchased under a FEMA grant were installed in late 2018. AFD combined with many other fire districts in central Oregon to upgrade the emergency communication system. This will give all participating agencies better communications while working together on incidents and will feature state-of-the-art electronics that replaces many of the hand-me-downs the district started with. The district's share of the grant was 10% of what this project would have normally cost. AFD continues to look for grant opportunities to better leverage our tax revenue.

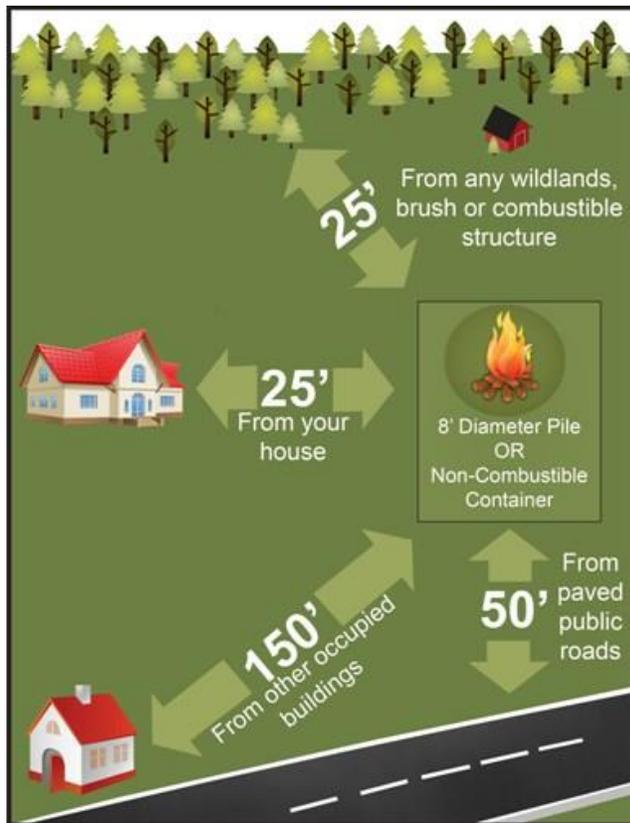
Medic Unit



In late 2018 the LaPine Fire Department donated a used 2006 medic vehicle to AFD. After a new engine was installed the unit was put into service. It is being used to carry more of our medical and extrication gear and will be the primary response unit for vehicle accidents and medical calls. While it resembles an ambulance, we want to be clear that AFD will not be doing any patient transports. We assist with medical situations until Bend Fire arrives to do the transport to a medical facility.

The district continues to evaluate its apparatus and looks for opportunities to upgrade our vehicles to help minimize repair expenses and improve reliability. Some of the older units were donated to us when we first organized and have served their intended purpose.

Burn Permit Safety



If you are planning to burn during open burning season, please take note of these requirements so you can complete your task safely. Certain types of burning in the Alfalfa Fire District require a burn permit. Check at www.alfalfafiredistrict.org to see if a permit is required for your type of burn. Burn Permit forms are available on the website.

Looking ahead to 2019

The Alfalfa Fire District attempts to look ahead with long-range plans but also makes shorter term plans for the coming year. Below is a glimpse at some of the goals for 2019:

- Move from temporary to permanent occupancy status for the fire station.
- Complete the finish work on the administrative side of the fire station.
- Complete a Comprehensive Plan (long-range) by the end of 2019.
- Hold an annual BBQ and Open House for the community at the fire station.
- Submit several grants to leverage the district dollars for needed equipment and training.
- Integrate the new radio system to better communicate with 911 and our partners.
- Evaluate current apparatus and plan to replace outdated equipment as budgets allow.
- Seek ways to improve fire prevention methods within the community to reduce unnecessary fire risks.
- Continue to seek interested volunteers for both firefighting and non-firefighting duties.
- Continue to assist property owners to put up green and white address signs for quicker identification when an emergency arises.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President, Bob Kathman (541-760-0216) bkathman@afdistr.org; Vice President, Nate Starr (541-480-2913) nstarr@afdistr.org; Secretary, Carolyn Chase (541-312-2600) cchase@afdistr.org; Treasurer, Ole Olsen (541-389-7926) oolsen@afdistr.org; Director, David Pike (541-318-1953) dpike@afdistr.org

Fire Chief

Chad LaVallee (503-910-6129) clavallee@afdistr.org;

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