

Alfalfa Fire & Rescue

Winter Newsletter AFD website: www.alfalfafiredistrict.org January 2018



Going Up!!

The new Alfalfa fire station started taking shape at the end of 2017. The 5600-square foot steel building is along Alfalfa Market Road about 1/2 mile west of the Store. It is anticipated the erection of the building will take about a month. With the addition of doors and heat it is hoped that temporary occupancy will be granted at which time apparatus can be stored inside. Having heated storage will allow firefighters to respond more efficiently to winter calls for service. Luckily the weather has cooperated to date to allow the construction to proceed. Once the septic system is installed work will also begin on a cistern to provide water to the building until such time a well can be drilled. There are plans to build a large cistern to hold water for the fire trucks. Rain water captured from the roof will feed the cistern when possible. This should save pumping from the well or having to haul water to fill the cistern.

Preliminary figures show that one inch of rain on the station roof will provide about 4000 gallons of water to the cistern.

The apparatus bays will be heated with large propane heaters. Other areas, such as bathrooms and offices, will use electric wall heaters. The building will be well insulated to help conserve energy. An emergency generator will be added later to provide power in the event of a general power failure.

A general move-in date has not yet been determined since much of the finish work for the offices and meeting rooms may rely on volunteer help and donated materials when the current allocated dollars are used. It is hope we can get the building about 80% completed on the existing money. Once the building gets to a point where occupancy is allowed the District plans to host an open house and invite the public to view their new addition to the community.

The other note of importance is that with the completion of the fire station will come an ISO rating. In short, this means the district will receive accreditation which should reflect favorably on insurance rates for most local constituents. Even though the volunteers have been providing service for over a year, the last component needed to receive an ISO rating was the addition of the fire station.

2017 Accomplishments

2017 was a busy year for the fire district. Below is a list of the highlights from the past year.

- **61 calls for service**
- **First annual AFD Community BBQ**
- **Started construction on fire station**
- **Received donated engine from Gresham Fire**
- **Received donated engine from Colton Fire**
- **Received donated EMS vehicle from Amity Fire**
- **6 firefighters passed Firefighter 1 test**
- **Purchased a water tender**
- **Hose and ladder testing completed**
- **Purchased 8 air packs for firefighters**
- **Promoted firefighter Chad LaValle to assistant Chief**
- **Signed Mutual Aid agreements with local fire departments and BLM**
- **Responded to first ever request for mutual aid to Crook County**
- **Received \$10,000 grant from State**
- **Regional radio grant from FEMA with local fire departments**
- **Outfitted firefighters with structure firefighting gear**

What's ahead for 2018?

- ISO classification (Insurance rating)
- Implement new radio system
- Begin Phase 2 of fire station
- Move into fire station
- Complete Firefighter 1 testing
- Complete driver/operator training
- 2nd annual AFD BBQ

Carbon Monoxide--The Silent Killer

Often called the invisible killer, carbon monoxide is an invisible, odorless, colorless gas created when fuels (such as gasoline, wood, coal, natural gas, propane, oil, and methane) burn incompletely. In the home, heating and cooking equipment that burn fuel can be sources of carbon monoxide.

Facts: A person can be poisoned by a small amount of CO over a longer period of time or by a large amount of CO over a shorter amount of time.

In 2010, U.S. fire departments responded to an estimated 80,100 non-fire CO incidents in which carbon monoxide was found, or an average of nine calls per hour.

- If you need to warm a vehicle, remove it from the garage immediately after starting it. Do not run a vehicle or other fueled engine or motor indoors, even if garage doors are open. Make sure the exhaust pipe of a running vehicle is not covered with snow.
- During, and after a snowstorm, make sure vents for the dryer, furnace, stove, and fireplace are clear of snow build-up.
- A generator should be used in a well-ventilated location outdoors away from windows, doors and vent openings.
- Gas or charcoal grills can produce CO – only use outside.
- Install and test CO alarms at least once a month; replace the alarm according to the manufacturer's instructions.

Chief's Corner



Fire Chief Ron Thompson

Greetings,

2017 was a very busy and productive year. Here are a few highlights.

The first item I would like to share with you is the recent promotion Firefighter Chad LaVallee to assistant chief. Chad has been with the AFD since 2016 and brings leadership, enthusiasm and experience to your fire district. Please join me in congratulating him.

Our firefighters began taking the NFPA firefighter 1 certification exams which tests all firefighters on basic structure firefighting skills such as radio use, hose pulls, ladders, breathing apparatus and firefighting. It has taken firefighters over a year of training to prepare for this certification exam.

One of the requirements to fight a fire is water. Our fire district does not have any fire hydrants so one of our top priorities was to purchase a water tender. In 2017 we were able to purchase a 3500-gallon water tender from Jefferson County for \$15,000.

In 2017 we received 2 fire engine donations. First was a 1500-gallon per minute fire engine from Gresham and the second was a 750-gallon per minute fire engine from Colton.

CALLS FOR SERVICE IN 2017

- 38 Medical/Assists
- 4 Vehicle fires
- 1 Brush fire
- 1 Structure fire
- 2 Motor Vehicle Accidents
- 2 Trailer fires
- 1 Outside building fire
- 3 Mutual Aid requests
- 9 Smoke investigations

Total calls for service – 61

Fire loss value - \$136,000

We signed two major mutual aid agreements in 2017. One was with the BLM and one was with Central Oregon Fire agencies such as Crook County Fire and Bend Fire. This agreement is very important because it allows us to receive help if needed. This summer we were able to send AFD firefighters to help fight some of the wildland fires that threatened Central Oregon.

As most of you know we began construction of the fire station. This is very exciting and we expect to be parking our fire engines in the station in a couple of months.

I would like to remind everyone to check your smoke detectors and carbon monoxide detectors. Having a working smoke detector will provide you and your family an early warning in case of a fire.

Thank you,

Ron Thompson, AFD Fire Chief

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