



**Press Release- East Contra Costa Fire Protection District:
Message from the Interim Fire Chief**

Brentwood – At the May 1, 2017, East Contra Costa Fire Protection District's Board of Directors Meeting (ECCFPD), the ECCFPD Board reaffirmed the closure of Station 94 in Knightsen on June 30, 2017. Since May of 2015, the Knightsen station has been operating on a temporary basis with joint funding provided through a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Fire District, the County, and the cities of Brentwood and Oakley.

The current MOU provided temporary funding from May 1, 2015 through June 30, 2017. Both the cities of Brentwood and Oakley attempted to obtain permanent funding for additional fire stations through tax measures on the November 2016 ballot. These measures failed.

A recent effort by the City of Brentwood, in conjunction with the County, the City of Oakley and the Fire District was unsuccessful in obtaining sufficient additional funding to retain staff and continue operation of the District's 4th station. The Fire District sincerely extends its thanks on behalf of itself and the public to the agencies and their representatives who participated in this effort.

The closure of the station is driven primarily by the loss of staff in anticipation of the end of temporary funding. Currently the District has available only 32 of the 36 fire suppression personnel required to operate four stations. The available staff is expected to drop to 29 or 30 over the next few months. By June 30, 2017, the required staffing for four stations will be unsustainable and unsafe for firefighter personnel and ultimately the public.

The District looks forward to working with all stakeholders once the District has transitioned to a three station operation and has reassessed its current situation. Over the next 3-4 months District staff and the Board of Directors will begin an assessment of the District's current funding and service levels with a focus on the District's critical retention challenges.

Since 2012, the District has lost 31 firefighters and only 5 have been from retirement. The primary loss of firefighters is due to: the lack of secured long term funding; the lack of job security for firefighters, and District pay and benefits substantially lower than other Fire Departments throughout the Area.

On July 1, 2017, the District will transition to operating with 3 stations and will assign all remaining additional firefighters, as available, to the 3 remaining District stations located in Brentwood, Oakley and Discovery Bay. The District plans to retain the CALFIRE Amador contract to Staff the Sunshine Station outside of fire season. There are no layoffs planned and the District hopes to retain all remaining staff on a permanent basis.

Following the Board's approval of the Fiscal Year 2017-2018 budget in September, the District plans to lead a new collaborative effort with the community, the County, the Cities of Brentwood and Oakley, and Local 1230. The goal will be to fully explain the District's situation and to receive input on the development of a District strategic plan to achieve the level of service and funding identified in the June 2016 CityGate "Deployment Performance and Headquarters Staffing Adequacy Study".

On behalf of the ECCFPD, we thank the community, the cities of Brentwood and Oakley, and County officials for continuing to support the Fire District and its Members as we transition through these challenging times.