

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
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East Contra Costa Fire Protection District



“ECCFPD Improving Transparency Education and Outreach Communications”

ECCFPD Fire Chief Brian Helmick

Brentwood- For those who I have not yet had the opportunity to meet or hold a discussion with, my name is Brian Helmick and I am the new Fire Chief of the East Contra Costa Fire Protection District (ECCFPD). In my first two months as Fire Chief of ECCFPD, I have met with elected officials, residents, community organizations and a variety of other community stakeholders regarding the state of our Fire District.

I will be the first to admit there are a lot of opinions and confusion throughout the District’s boundaries as to the state of the District and how the District should begin to address the District’s current complex situation. Different opinions are expected, but the confusion is a shortfall of the Fire District not providing the community with the information it needs to develop educated opinions about our District.

There is no doubt the District has been challenged in providing abundant community outreach due to staffing levels and funding challenges. Sadly, the current debate about the Fire District has veered off course causing more confusion. This shortfall has been recognized by the District and is being addressed as quickly as possible.

As the District works to build a solid sustainable foundation, I plan to release several notices highlighting aspects of the Fire District. These notices are intended to inform the community by highlighting the realities that the District will be facing as we continue to build a solid foundation.

I believe in complete transparency. I believe in strong communications, sharing of ideas, constructive debates that make the organization stronger, and providing information as soon as possible after request(s). It is my hope over time the community will better understand the current struggles and challenges that constrict the District’s administration / emergency operations, financial position, staff retention, and service level adequacy, compared to national standards and other fire districts within Contra Costa County.

As a kickoff to this effort, the District re-created and built a new website www.eccfpd.org. The website now provides greater ease of use along with the ability to stream and watch videos of our District Board meetings (usually the first Monday of each month). The District will also provide information that is relevant to our community service.

In addition to rebuilding the District's new website, the District has formed an internal team (ECCFPD Public Information Officers Committee) consisting of firefighters who will work to increase the number of informative social media posts on the District's Facebook, Instagram, YouTube and Twitter Pages to provide timely information concerning the District. Meanwhile, our Battalion Chiefs have been given more responsibility for District communications so the community quickly receives information regarding major emergencies.

It is my hope and goal, that through improved leadership on my part, the District can begin to assist in the process to have a well engaged and well informed community. By doing this we will all begin to clearly understand the District's challenges and can better support ECCFPD. Supporting the District is critical because ECCFPD provides essential lifesaving services and is a vital community organization.

I encourage and recommend that all of ECCFPD's citizens and business owners become engaged with and educated about ECCFPD's current service level restrictions and organizational challenges. This can be accomplished by becoming familiar with ECCFPD's: website, Master Plan, social media channels and attending District meetings. The District hosts monthly Board Meetings that can be streamed (usually at 6:30 pm on the first Monday of each month), Finance meetings (usually the second Monday at 3:00pm) and Public Education and Outreach Meetings (usually on the third Monday of each month at 7:00pm). All past and upcoming meeting agendas are available on the District's new website.

Please visit the District's website www.eccfpd.org, Facebook (East Contra Costa Fire Protection District), Instagram (@east_contra_costa_fire), YouTube (East Contra Costa Fire Protection District) and Twitter (in process) pages for more information on the Fire District.

I thank you in advance for your continued support, as ECCFPD is your Fire Department.

ABOUT THE EAST CONTRA COSTA FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT:

The East Contra Costa Fire Protection District (ECCFPD) is a rural funded fire district that protects approximately 249 square miles and over 114,000 residents. The district provides firefighting personnel and emergency medical services (basic life support) to the residents and businesses of the City of Brentwood, and Oakley, and to the Township of Discovery Bay, Bethel Island, Knightsen, Byron, Marsh Creek, and Morgan Territory.

As of July 1, 2017, ECCFPD has three (3) fire stations staffed by three (3) firefighters, for a total district staffing of nine (9) firefighters per day. The district responds to over 6,900 calls a year that depend on approximately 9,000 fire engine responses. ECCFPD's Master Plan, calls for nine (9) stations to adequately provide coverage to the District's citizens and businesses.