



PRESSRELEASE

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For Immediate Release

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Growing and Changing with our Community's

A new look for its Fire Apparatus

New Firefighters and Full Staffing

New Safer and Smaller Fire Apparatus

New Resilient and More Efficient Fire Stations

The Menlo Park Fire Protection District is growing with the communities it protects and serves. The Fire District provides essential fire and emergency services to its areas in the Town of Atherton, Cities of East Palo Alto and Menlo Park, Unincorporated areas of San Mateo County (North Fair Oaks, Sequoia Tract, West Menlo Park, Menlo Oaks) and on contract to the SLAC National Accelerator and Laboratories.

The Fire District is in the midst of a building boom that has dramatically changed its residential and commercial inventory types, heights and size, overall population, area density, emergency response patterns, threat profile and emergency call volume.

For the first time in 5 years, the Fire District is fully staffed with 94 front line Firefighters, Engineers and Captains. On the request of Fire Chief Schapelhouman, the elected Fire Board recently authorized increasing that number of front line first responders to 97, in-order to compensate for retirements and the potential that probationary firefighters may not pass the grueling one year testing process.



In the last five years, 36 new Firefighters have been hired with these 12 currently on probation. From left to right Sam Pacholuk, Tyler Brandt, Robert Goodman, Jens Schneyder, Mike Wegener, Paul Kaufman, Dave Magnan, Phil Mingus, Chase Prichard, Eric Anenson, Ryle Fitzgerald and Nathan Cipres. Eight of twelve are Paramedics. **(See photo – Credit Peter Mootz Fire Photographer)**

A recent September 15 testing process brought in 258 new candidates for three to six potential job openings next year in 2019. 163 candidates passed the exam, 42 of those scored high enough to move on to peer interview panels and 20 of those top finalists are currently being interviewed by the Fire Chief for final ranking and conditional job opportunities. **(See photo below – Credit Menlo Fire)**



Currently, 52 of its 97 front line personnel are also Paramedics. The number of medical emergencies, vehicle accidents and other emergencies requiring a field Paramedic continues to increase yearly. The District also supports a Tactical Medical Program involved with Law

Enforcement, Wildland Fire Line Medics and Urban Search and Rescue Medics who respond to Disasters all over the Nation.

In the last several years, the Fire District has started to replace its aging fleet of Fire Engines and Ladder Trucks with not only newer units, but with safer better thought out fully enclosed crew cabs that have front and side air bag systems to better protect the Firefighters.

Pictured below – From left to right Captain Ehren MacDonald, Engineer Jason Puccinelli and Paramedic/Engineer James Lennon take delivery of one of the Fire Districts new 2018 Pierce Arrow XT Fire Engines at Station 2 on September 4th. **(Photo Credit Menlo Fire)**



The removal of equipment in the crew cab space like axes and air packs that could injure or kill Firefighters, if the apparatus was involved in an accident and those items were to break free, have been placed in better organized equipment compartments.

The Fire District has also been purchasing smaller crew cab style utility trucks that are staffed by two personnel. While they carry less equipment than the Engines, they can be used off road and to pump and roll for grass fires. They also carry cordless battery operated auto extrication equipment and Drones that can be used for a variety of emergencies.

Pictured below – Captain Paramedic Rich Villa (Left) and Engineer Eric Bunzel check the equipment on Rescue Two. The smaller two person unit concept was brought back in January of 2017 after over two decades of being shelved in favor of a County wide Fire Engine First Response System model. **(Photo Credit Menlo Fire)**



The Fire District also decided to adopt a new look, since its entire fleet of emergency apparatus is scheduled to be completely replaced by 2020. All new apparatus is painted a deeper red and the traditional white trim has been replaced with a gunmetal gray to create a more attractive and elegant piece of emergency equipment that is finished off with an American Flag in its grill and a traditional individualized signature brass bell.

Pictured below – The Fire District’s new (left to right) Rescue 2, Engine 2, Truck 2, Heavy Rescue, Engine 6 and Battalion 1 staffed by Captain Jeff Hendrix, Engineer Joey Quadt, Engineer/Medic Darrel Payne, Battalion Chief Chris Pimentel, Engineer/Medic Anthony Morales, \Captain Roy Trester, Captain Ken Babcock, Engineer/Medic Scott Johnson, Firefighter/Medic Samuel Pacholuk (**Photo Credit Peter Mootz Fire Photographer**)



Pictured below Left to Right - Engineer Tony Ciardella, Engineer Paramedic Kevin White and Captain Seth Johnson transfer the Engine Bell to the new 2018 Pierce Arrow XT Fire Engine put in service at Fire Station 6 on September 4. **(Photo Credit Menlo Fire)**



The Fire Station 6 rebuild, modernization and resilience project located in Downtown Menlo Park is scheduled to be completed by the end of 2018. The neighbors and community will be invited to a dedication ceremony and open house when that occurs.

The Fire District has modernized and rebuilt two of its seven Fire Stations. A ten year effort that started before the worldwide economic collapse. Fire Station 2 in East Palo Alto was completely rebuilt and opened two years ago in 2016.

Last year, the Fire District strategically acquired property next to three more of its Fire Stations (1, 3 and 4). The Fire District is currently starting the planning process to replace Fire Station 4 located at the corner of Alameda de las Pulgas and Valparaiso Avenue which was built in 1947.

Pictured below – Fire Station 2 was constructed above the 500 year flood plain, is seismically

reinforced and has a backup power generator with an independent fuel supply that can also be used to fuel the apparatus. **(Photo Credit Menlo Fire)**



At Fire Station 1, on Middlefield Road, the District is planning to modernize and enhance its 63 year old Training facility and Tower assisted by the acquisition of one acre of open land from Saint Patrick's Seminary.

Pictured below – Fire Station 1's wood Training Tower is attached to the Station which limits its usefulness. A new separate Multi-story Simulation Facility and Tower is being designed to be completely independent of the Fire Station. **(Photo Credit Menlo Fire)**



In January of 2019, the Fire District will put a second Aerial Ladder Truck in service at Fire Station 2 in East Palo Alto. With that accomplished, the Fire District will have doubling the number of Firefighters and Apparatus on the Eastern side of Highway 101 (Belle Haven, Menlo M2 (Facebook) and East Palo Alto) in just four years needed to deal with development, growth and traffic congestion.

Fire Chief Schapelhouman said “what we are seeing now is the agencies ability to effectively combine and execute on years of planning to build new, modern, resilient facilities, plan and build new modern and safer Fire Apparatus and grow and replace our workforce to prepare for not only today’s needs, but tomorrows demands”.

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