

Tuolumne County Fire Department

Monthly Activity Report

February 2021



Tuolumne County Fire Department

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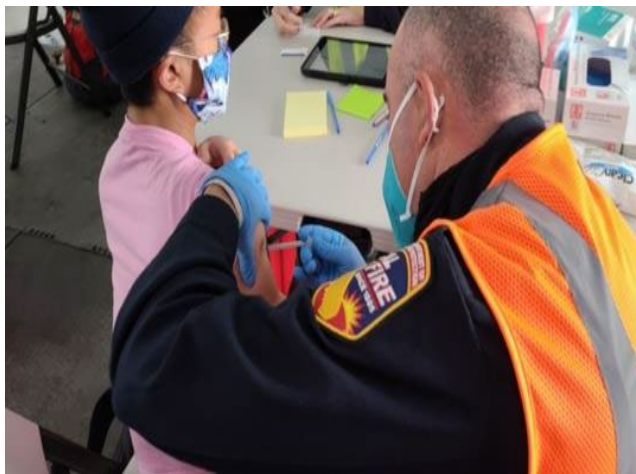
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

<u>Month in Review</u>	<u>3</u>
<u>Station Responses</u>	<u>5</u>
<u>Significant Incidents</u>	<u>7</u>
<u>Fleet</u>	<u>9</u>
<u>Prevention/Education</u>	<u>9</u>
<u>Training</u>	<u>11</u>
<u>Tuolumne County Fire Department Muster Association</u>	<u>11</u>



MONTH IN REVIEW

February 2021

It's grant season for your TCFD. This month we submitted grant applications through the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Assistance to Firefighters Grant (AFG) for mobile and handheld radios for \$356,580 and another grant through FEMA's Fire Prevention and Safety (FP&S) Grant for initiating a proactive fire code and life safety inspection program for \$330,000. Other grants we were notified of this month that we will be applying for includes the CAL FIRE Rural Fire Capacity (formerly Volunteer Fire Assistance or VFA) Grant. This grant is a 50/50 matching grant and provides up to \$20,000 in assistance to purchase specifically wildland personal protective equipment, training, or communications devices. Coming up in March will be the FEMA Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) grant and we'll be putting in for to fund increased recruitment and retention of volunteer firefighters and also in March the CAL FIRE Fire Prevention Grant to assist in fuels reduction and forest health efforts by your TCFD. We should find out if we've been awarded these grants later this summer.

We did receive some good news regarding a grant we applied for in January. On February 24th we received a call from the Sonora Area Foundation (SAF). The SAF Board approved fully funding the grant request for \$13,845.16 for three Rapid Intervention Team Pack Fast Attack Emergency Air Supply Packs for GCSD E781, TCFD E511, and TCFD E761. Combined, these three engine companies respond to over 4,000 incidents per year. These strategically located rescue devices



will be situated to respond to nearly every structure fire and dangerous air environment (hazardous materials) in the county to be used in the event of the need of a firefighter rescue. We'd like to offer our heartfelt appreciation to the Sonora Area Foundation and appreciate and recognize the tremendous support they give, to not just our fire departments, but to our community as a whole.

With the promotions mentioned in last month's report, we welcomed Engineer John Rohrabough back to TCFD Station 51 Mono Village. John took a permanent position with CAL FIRE in the Riverside Unit working in the Beaumont Schedule A program where the station was dispatched to over 3,500 incidents each year. John has a thorough knowledge of the area and brings great experience that he gained in a busy cooperative fire protection agreement in Southern California. Welcome back John!

This month, the Gathering Church members visited Station 51 Mono Village, and other stations in the area, offering uplifting spirits and support to their community firefighters. It was a kind and thoughtful gesture and much appreciated.

Aging equipment continues to plague the Department. Proactive fire departments plan for replacing tools and specialized equipment. Tuolumne County doesn't have the funds to be able to set aside for the planned replacement and many repairs and replacements are needed. Here, pictured below, during routine training a section of 5" water supply hose was found to be failing on engine 761 and needing immediate repair. Had this happened to the aged hose during an incident it would have severely hampered our efforts to extinguish the fire.



At the request of CAL OES, many CAL FIRE employees from around the state have been helping with the State's mass immunization sites. Fire Apparatus Engineer Josh King is one of several local CAL FIRE employees requested to assist with at the Oakland Coliseum. The US Forest Service, CAL FIRE, FEMA, National Guard and various other agencies worked together to provide drive thru and walk thru stations to immunize up to 6400 people a day. The people eligible at this time included elderly, food service workers, and teachers, with plans to expand to the general public soon.

It's never too early to start planning to make your home firesafe or to improve on what you've already done. One of our great partners in Tuolumne County is the Highway 108 Fire Safe Council. This is a fabulous group of local people dedicated to reducing wildfire threats and their devastating effects to our communities. Please check out their awesome website at [Tuolumnefiresafe.org](https://www.tuolumnefiresafe.org) and while you're there also learn how you can work with your neighbors to earn the FireWise designation and what that means.

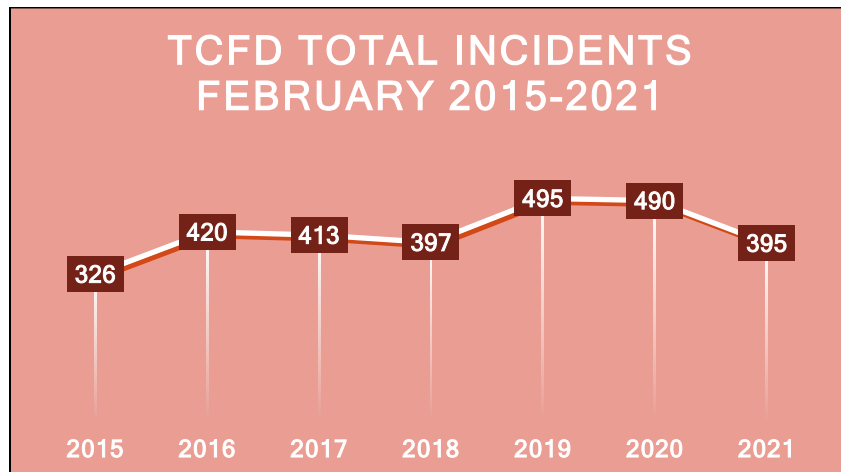
Another resource, *Wildfire Risk to Communities*, is a free, easy-to-use website with interactive maps, charts, and resources to help communities understand, explore, and reduce wildfire risk. It was created by the USDA Forest Service under the direction of Congress and is designed to help community leaders,

such as elected officials, community planners, and fire managers. This is the first time wildfire risk to communities has been mapped nationwide. Make sure you click on the [Wildfire Risk to Communities website](https://wildfirerisk.org/) link or <https://wildfirerisk.org/>.

The County of Tuolumne is recruiting volunteers to help with the County's COVID Response. If you're interested in helping with vaccine clinics or staffing the information line, please click the link below. In the future, County OES will use this sign up page for other emergency responses as needed. Please log on to www.tuolumnecounty.ca.gov/volunteer if you're able to help.



In February there were a total of 395 incidents in TCFD jurisdiction compared to 490 in 2020, and a decrease of 11% from the five-year average of 443. Of the 395 incidents this month there were 273 medical aids, 38 fires, and 84 other incidents. From January 1 to February 28, TCFD has responded to 992 incidents within our jurisdiction compared to 977 in 2020 and a five-year average of 929.



TCFD Station Responses

Station 51 Mono Village Fire Station responded to 128 incidents in the month of February including 97 medical calls (5 vehicle collisions), 17 public assists, 12 fires, 4 false alarms, and 2 other incidents. 116 incidents were within their primary response area (PRA) and 12 were not. Volunteers responded to 23 of the 128 incidents, and aid was given to 2 agencies 4 times and received by 3 agencies 5 times.

Station 76 Jamestown Fire Station responded to 123 incidents. Of those 123 incidents, there were 86 medical aids (10 vehicle collisions with one extrication), 16 public assists, 3 false alarms, 11 fires, and 7 other incidents. Of the 123 incidents, 115 were within their PRA and 8 were not. Volunteers

responded to no incidents. Automatic aid was given to 1 agency 6 times and received from 1 agency 5 times.

Twain Harte, Groveland, and Blanchard CAL FIRE Stations are funded to respond in the winter months through the agreement with Tuolumne County. This month, Twain Harte responded to 49 incidents including 30 medical aids (6 vehicle collisions), 6 public assists, 6 fires, 4 false alarms, and 2 other incidents. 44 calls were within their primary response area and 5 were not. Volunteers responded to 13 incidents. Automatic aid was given to 1 agency once and received from 4 agencies 9 times.



Tuolumne County Fire Department Station Incident Responses

February 2021

Mono Village Station 51 (6 career / 6 volunteers) 138 incidents
 Ponderosa Hills Station 53 (1 volunteer) 6 incidents
 Long Barn Station 54 (0 volunteers) 11 incidents absorbed by other stations
 Pinecrest Station 55 (7 volunteers) 11 incidents
 Mono Vista Station 56 (6 volunteers) 71 incidents
 Crystal Falls Station 57 (0 Volunteers) incidents absorbed by other stations
 Cedar Ridge Station 58 (12 volunteers) 10 incidents
 Chinese Camp Station 61 (1 volunteer) 24 incidents
 Smith Station Station 63 (0 Volunteers) incidents absorbed by other stations
 Don Pedro Station 64 (3 volunteers) 8 incidents
 Jamestown Station 76 (5 career / 1 volunteer) 126 incidents
 Columbia College Station 79 (6 student firefighters) 47 incidents
 Blanchard CAL FIRE Station (Amador) – 28 incidents
 Twain Harte CAL FIRE Station (Amador) – 50 incidents
 Groveland CAL FIRE Station (Amador) – 35 incidents
 Standard CAL FIRE Station – 41 incidents

Incident totals include incidents that the fire station was dispatched to, and may have been automatic aid to other agencies through the Tuolumne County Automatic Aid Agreement

Total station responses (some to the same incident depending on type of call) for the month included 5 for vegetation fire, 32 for structure fire, 71 for other fires, 366 for medical aids, 18 for hazardous

situations, and 104 others for a total of 596 station responses to 395 total incidents for the month of February. An example where multiple engines could be counted for the same incident is a CPR incident when two engines are sent would count as one incident, but two station responses. This total of 596 is a good reminder of how much the equipment is used and the importance of a properly funded and maintained fleet.

Significant Incidents

February 1, 2021 – Vehicle Fire, Camp Hope

Firefighters arrived to find a passenger vehicle on its side with the engine compartment involved. Firefighters quickly extinguished the fire. The cause is under investigation.



February 2, 2021 – Vehicle Collision, O'Byrne's Ferry Road

Fire crews responded to a single vehicle approximately 40 feet over the bank on O'Byrne's Ferry Road near Old O'Byrne's Ferry Road. The single patient had significant injuries and had to be hiked out to be transferred to the ambulance crew for transport to a valley trauma center.

February 4, 2021 – Structure Fire, Jenness Park

On arrival crews found a working fire in an unoccupied home with 25% involvement. Within an hour the fire was contained and determined to be caused by a propane gas explosion.



February 9, 2021 – Vehicle Collision/Multi-Casualty Incident, Highway 108 x Sierra Rock Road

Firefighters responded to reports of a multi-vehicle accident. Crews arrived and began triaging and treating patients and another engine was assigned the Jamestown Landing Zone (LZ) on High School Road. Two air ambulances were landed at the LZ, both air ambulances transported one patient.

February 10, 2021 – Medical Aid/Rescue, Pinecrest Lake

Firefighters responded to a possible medical aid involving three adults stranded at the back of Pinecrest Lake. Two Volunteer Firefighters hiked nearly an hour with snow shoes and arrived at the scene, assessed the patients who had been hiking in the snow for 7 hours without proper winter gear and suffering exhaustion and weather-related injuries. Firefighters wrapped the patients in emergency blankets and provided food and water. Additional resources arrived and assisted with more water and additional warming measures including heat packs and starting a fire. TCSO SAR units arrived,

provided needed gear, clothing and water to victims. Just around midnight, all patients and responders were back at the pier and met the waiting ambulance.

February 16, 2021 – Vehicle Fire, Alley Drive

Firefighters arrived at scene to find a passenger vehicle with an engine compartment fire. The vehicle was parked in the driveway and the home was an immediate exposure. Firefighters quickly extinguished the vehicle with no extension or damage to the home.



February 16, 2021 – Medical Aid/Rescue, Pinecrest Lake

For the second time in as many weekends, firefighters and SAR rescued stranded hikers. The couple had been hiking around the lake for four hours, with one falling into the water. As it got dark, cold and exhausted, and still out on the other side of the lake, they found some shelter at a cabin and called for help. Volunteer Firefighters hiked an hour and a half out to their location with extra clothes, snow shoes, and warming devices and awaited SAR to assist in transport. After arrival of SAR and a thorough evaluation, crews walked the couple out (wearing the snowshoes and dry clothes) to a waiting ambulance. After evaluation by paramedics and warming up in the back of the ambulance, the pair was released with no medical issues.

February 17, 2021 – Structure Fire, Corte Del Cielo

Firefighters arrived to smoke showing from the residence. Firefighters found fire in a wall and quickly extinguished the fire to prevent further damage. Thorough overhaul and a piece of specialized equipment called a Thermal Imager, which detects heat through smoke and construction materials, was used to ensure there was no hidden fire. Red Cross was contacted to support the family due to significant damage within the residence.

February 20, 2021 – Structure Fire, Highway 108 x Harvard Mine Road

Upon arrival of this early morning fire, firefighters arrived to find a 10'x10' shed on fire with an exposure to an RV. Crews were able to get the fire under control within minutes to prevent spread.



February 23, 2021 – Structure Fire, Alpine Avenue

Firefighters responded in the early morning to assist the City of Sonora with a structure fire located on Alpine Avenue. Units arrived at scene to find smoke showing from an attached garage. The 200'

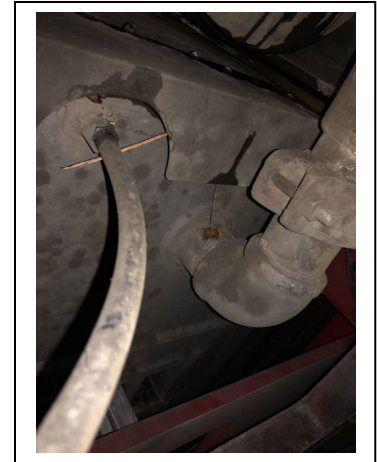
driveway hand-lay was needed to access the fire due to the steepness of the driveway. The fire was quickly contained to the garage with minimal smoke damage inside the home.

February 25, 2021 – Debris Fire, Camp Hope

Firefighters were dispatched to a report of an unknown type fire in Camp Hope. Crews arrived at scene minutes later to discover a 5'x 5' tent with a mattress on fire inside of it. Crews were able to extinguish the fire before it could extend into neighboring camp sites.

Fleet

During daily inspection Engine 761 (E761) was discovered to have a leaking water pipe caused from rust due to its age. Major tank repairs like this that are needed to keep the engine in service are sent to outside vendor out of the county at an increased cost and impact to an already meager budget. The crews will be responding in our reserve Engine 901 until E761 is repaired. E901 is a 2008 Ferrara Type 1 pumper with approximately 176,000 miles on it.



Other repairs and services that kept our mechanic busy through the month included: E511 compartment door latch repaired; 90 day preventative maintenance service on E511 and repairs made to bent compartment door opener; E901 air system not working properly found bad pressure module; E901

electric short found causing engine light to activate; Replaced seat belt in Pinecrest E552; 90 day inspections on all TCFD equipment; E512 found bad carburetor, trying to find parts (parts are very difficult to find due to the age (parts are hard to find for this 1993 pumper).



Prevention/Education

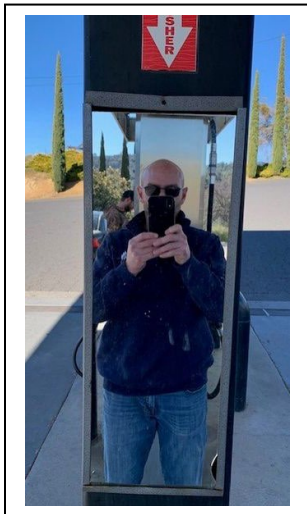
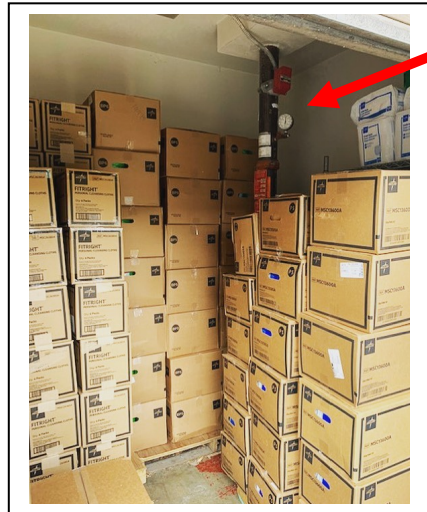
February 5, 2021 – Fire Inspection, Group I-2 Residential Care Facility

The fire sprinkler riser is the control center for the entire fire sprinkler system playing a critical role in a building's fire protection. Clearance around the fire riser is required by the Fire Code to allow for immediate access to valves and gauges on the riser. Storage of non-fire protection equipment is prohibited near the riser to allow fire personnel maneuverability in this room during critical moments when seconds count during an emergency. This picture is from this week of an elderly residential care

facility. Annual fire inspections are vital for the safety of our community by ensuring businesses are in compliance with the fire code and allow our fire inspectors the opportunity to provide education and outreach to business owners and employees.

February 9, 2021 – Fire Inspection, Haz-Mat Tank

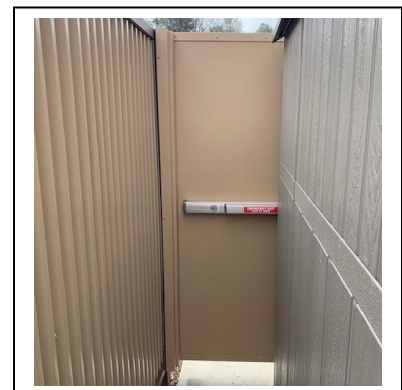
Fire extinguisher cabinets are used to protect fire extinguishers from the weather, accidental damage, unintended movement, or falling. Recently during a mandated inspection, a local business replaced the door glass with a mirrored glass. Tempered and acrylic glass are the common protective glass used for extinguisher cabinets.



Tempered glass, when shattered, will break into small pebbles like pieces instead of shards of glass. A mirror, as pictured here, for a replacement extinguisher cabinet covering is not allowed by Fire Code. The extinguisher can't be seen behind the reflective mirror which could easily confuse someone in an emergency. Plus, the mirror, if broken to gain access to the extinguisher, could easily injure a person. Always adhere to the California Fire Code in determining replacement parts for your fire safety systems. Don't hesitate to email us at fire@co.tuolumne.ca.us if you have questions about the requirements of the fire code for your business. Let us help you keep the public, your employees, and your investment safe from preventable losses.

February 11, 2021 – Fire Inspection, Group E Juvenile Day Care Facility

During a mandated inspection inspectors found that an emergency exit was partially blocked. Fire and building codes are designed with the age of occupants and type of occupancy in mind to determine size of exits, lighting, and exit hardware. Any blockage of emergency escape routes hampers the ability of the occupants to escape to safety in a fire or other emergency. Access to a public way, (a general area open to the public) is provided by the exit discharge, (Exit Door) and is required to be direct and unobstructed. This is also required on the outside of a building that is not open to the public way, such as a large fenced in area. An enclosed space of 50 feet or less from a building needs to have direct and unobstructed access to a public way. The Exit Door in this area cannot be blocked or partially blocked which would decrease the exit capacity of the door during an emergency. Fire Inspectors work with business owners to ensure timely education on and compliance of violations of fire code and have scheduled a follow up review in the near future.



February 26, 2021 – Fire Inspection, Group I-2 Residential Care Facility

Fire Inspectors conducted a mandatory inspection on a residential care facility with nearly 100 mobility impaired seniors. Inspectors found a few violations of the fire code, including one where the resident created a severe fire load and fire hazard in a room that threatens the safety of the other occupants of the care facility. The California Fire Code states, *“Combustible waste material creating a fire hazard shall not be allowed to accumulate in buildings, structures, or premises.”* This part of the case was referred to a local ombudsman for assistance and a reinspection will occur in the in the coming weeks.



Our Fire Investigators/Inspectors were able to complete 32 construction plans reviews twenty-seven fire inspections including:

- 1 Group A, Assembly Occupancy
- 5 Group E, Educational Occupancies
- 2 Group I-2, Hospital/Elderly Care Facilities
- 5 Group R-1 & R-2, Residential (Hotel, Motel, Apartments)
- 12 Haz-Mat Tank Inspections
- 2 Re-inspections

TCFD Fire Inspectors are members of the California Conference of Arson Investigators and virtually attended their annual spring conference this month where they were updated on current and pending laws and codes and proposed changes, as well as staying abreast in trends in arson investigation and cause determination.

Social media continues to provide a great opportunity to spread the fire prevention/education message and keep the community informed on events occurring within County Fire's jurisdiction. If you haven't already, follow us:

 Facebook Tuolumne County Fire Department (3,499 followers)

 | Instagram [tuolumnecountyfire](#) (1,865 followers)

 [@tuolumnecofire](#) (918 followers)

Training

The New Volunteer Fire Academy continues following COVID restrictions. All the students passed Emergency Medical Responder training with flying colors and a special thanks goes out to Jackie and Tuolumne County Ambulance for providing the training. We tested and approved two new Driver

Operators at TCFD Station 55 Pinecrest. With the release of the stay at home orders, we were able to hold our first Category 2 of the new year. Category 2 training is multi-company training; it was great to have everyone together. Training put on State Fire Marshal certified Driver/Operator 1A and 1B with students from throughout Tuolumne and Calaveras County agencies. TCFD had three volunteers attend the two-week course.

Tuolumne County Fire Department Muster Association

The TCFD Muster Association is a benevolent non-profit organization that receives donations to support the firefighters of the TCFD in need and supports firefighters in obtaining additional training. The TCFD Muster Association is proud to offer "We Support TCFD" t-shirts in children's and adult sizes and Tuolumne Co. FD Richardson snapback hats for a donation. Children's shirts have been reduced to \$10 and adult sizes are \$15. Hats are \$20 and both items are pictured below and can be ordered from TCFDMuster@gmail.com or by calling 209-533-5118.



