

MID-COAST FIRE BRIGADE NEWSLETTER

August 2009

From The Chief

It doesn't seem possible that a year has passed since the "Basin Fire". Fire Season has started like a lamb this year compared to the lion we were all dealing with last year at this time. Many residents have become complacent as the threat of fire seems such a distant memory. The foggy days of June and July have not instilled the need in many of our residents to be vigilant with clearance for defensible space. I cannot stress how important it is to start working on defensible space now and not wait until a fire is near before you consider doing something. We were fortunate last year that we all had so much time to prepare. I was amazed at the amount of work so many of you did to prepare your home for the possibility of fire. I saw homes emerge from the brush that could not be seen before and marveled at the way the community pulled together to accomplish the daunting task of defensible space. So I urge you to take the time and provide for defensible space now as the next time our community if faced with fire we may have only minutes or hours instead of days to prepare.

For those of you that purchased gel to protect your home last year I am going to ask you to put up a sign at the driveway entrance that states "Gel on Site" to let incoming fire units know that they can apply the gel. We compiled a map last year showing the location of the homes that had purchased gel which was distributed to the fire apparatus in our area. With

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Labor Day Celebration

On Saturday September 5, 2009 Mid-Coast Fire Brigade will once again host the annual Labor Day B-B-Q from 1-3 p.m. at the fire station. As usual please BYOM (bring your own meat) to B-B-Q and a side dish to share with the community. The Brigade will provide the B-B-Q, the refreshments, condiments, utensils and paper plates. There are plans under way for another fantastic raffle and we will also be providing everyone with a tour of the fire station at 2 p.m., you won't want to miss this! We look forward to seeing you there.

Fire Station Progress Update

I still can't believe my eyes when I walk into the fire station. So much has been accomplished. The drywall is in, the painting completed, the upstairs bathrooms are functional, the kitchen should be completed (I am crossing my fingers) by our B-B-Q. We hope to have a work party within the next couple of weeks to put the decking on. We need to install the side deck, finish the flooring and heating to obtain occupancy. We will then need to finish the outside grading and lay down base rock and at long last we should have a final. Although we will have a final there is still much that must be done. Our next big funding project will be to pave the driveways and upper parking lot so it will be driveable in any type of weather. Currently all the driveways become

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treacherous in the winter, especially with the fire engines.

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From The Chief Continued

time to prepare well in advance of the fire the map worked well for the Basin Fire. However, we may not be as fortunate when the next fire strikes nor will we have the same apparatus, so the key is to have that information available to whichever fire unit arrives to provide structure protection and having that information at the entrance to your driveway may be the key to your home surviving a fire. Now that you have marked the entrance to your home "Gel on Site", you need to leave the gel in a location that is easily visible with the appropriate garden hoses attached and ready to go. I can only hope that our community will somehow be spared ever having to deal with a major fire, but if history is a teacher then it is only a matter of time.

Be ready, document the contents of your home with a video every year prior to fire season. Decide which valuables you will take and make a list ahead of time and don't forget your prescriptions. If you have ever spoken to fire survivors they will tell you that they grabbed items they should have left behind and forgot other valuables they wished they would have taken. If you have pets obtain the pet carriers now so you do not have to leave them behind.

Most importantly be prepared, provide 100 feet of defensible space around your home with the first 30 feet

being lean, clean and green. Have a safe summer.

Cheryl Goetz

Fire Chief

Fire Station Update Continued

This project has taken six years since the start and we honestly never thought we would see it come this far by now. They say in every tragedy good can be found and because of the Basin

Fire last year and the funding we received from the Forest Service and from CPOA (Coast Property Owners Association) as well as the generous donations we received from community members the Brigade was able to accomplish more than we dreamed.

The Brigade has spent countless hours working on the station over the years and we are extremely proud of what we have accomplished. We hope that you can attend the Labor Day B-B-Q for a pre-dedication ceremony preview and share in our communities' accomplishment.

Donations

What would a newsletter be without the annual plea for donations? So it must be said, please send in your annual donation. Although we are so close to completion we have also exhausted our funding and once again we find ourselves at a stopping point, yet this time so very close to our goal. We generally ask for a donation of \$200 per family and because of the current economy we also understand times are very tough. If you cannot

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afford the \$200 then any amount you can afford will push us to our goal of completion prior to the El Nino winter that is being predicted. You can mail your donations to: Palo Colorado Road, Carmel, CA 93923

El Nino, El Nino, El Nino

Who can forget the winter of 1998 and the torrential rains that knocked out power to the Canyon for 21 days, took trees down and deposited them on the road like matchsticks, Palo Colorado Road and Highway 1 missing in numerous places, the wait for supplies to come and to some a ride out and last but not least waiting in line and those lovely caravans home. With that being said here is what we have been told by the American Red Cross. If you do not have enough food for yourself and your pets, medical supplies or prescription medicines on hand prior to the disaster then you will have to be evacuated to an established shelter in town as supplies **will not** be flown in. This includes fuel for portable generators, tractors, vehicles or chainsaws. The Brigade does not store fuel and therefore will not be able to provide any to community members. So please be prepared if you plan on staying in the Canyon by stocking food for yourself and your pets well in advance of the winter. Top off your propane and have a couple of 5-gallon fuel cans available to run your chain-saws and generators.

Now that we have mentioned generators here are a few tips to keep you and your home safe if you are using a generator. Always turn off the

main breaker to your home prior to starting your generator. Without this vital and most important step being done a generator can feed power back to the PG&E lines. So what you say??? If the service drop to your home or the power line comes down during the storm it will now be energized and you could electrocute yourself or any emergency responders arriving to help. After shutting of the main breaker to your home then start your generator and run individual extension cords to the appliances you want to operate. Make sure the extension cords are in good condition with no bare wires or breaks in the plastic sheath of the cord. Do your best to keep the cords out of puddles and never run a generator inside your home. Carbon Monoxide poisoning is the number one silent killer of families during the winter months as families use charcoal BBQ's indoors and other fuel operated equipment. Be safe and be prepared!

Dates to Remember

September 7, 2009 - Mid-Coast Fire Brigade Annual BBQ and Celebration. 1-3 pm at the fire station site.

October 7, 2009 – The Palo Colorado Fire two year anniversary and the loss of CALFIRE Dozer Operator Matt Will who gave his life while battling the fire to save our community. Never forget.

October 31, 2009 (Saturday) – The annual trick or treat ride. Please remember the limited space available on the newer engines. Get involved by

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setting up a candy stop in the lower canyon then meeting your child at the Murray Grade, without these candy stops it's not much of a trick or treat ride and there are not many stops any longer in the lower canyon.

Mid-Coast Fire Brigade
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