



MI-WUK SUGAR PINE FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT

"Providing Quality Emergency Response And Fire Protection For The Public"

July 28, 2016

Press release

For Immediate release

Fire Safety and Prevention Paramount at this time.

Mi-Wuk Sugar Pine Fire Protection District Chief Larry Crabtree would like to remind the community that fire safety and prevention are paramount at this time.

The combination of drought, warmer temperatures, high winds and an excess of dried vegetation in forests and grasslands has made fire seasons progressively worse over the past 50 years.

While none of the local county fire departments have sent resources out of county many are at minimum staffing levels.

CALFIRE fire stations in Twain Harte, Standard, Groveland, and Blanchard have seen a minimum 50% reduction in staffing with resources on strike teams to both Monterey and Los Angeles fires.

According to CALFIRE Tuolumne-Calaveras Unit spokeswoman Melinda Shoff 52% of the unit's engines, 60% of its hand crews and 50% of the bulldozers are outside the unit on assignments.

Response to local fires can potentially deplete local fire departments on minimum staffing and CALFIRE resources during a draw down.

However, Tuolumne-Calaveras Chief Josh White has been reported as ordering all personnel from the rank of firefighter to battalion chief to be held on duty to staff available engines.

Sierra Conservation Center (SCC) Prison Fire Camps have sent 62 crews, 786 inmates and 91 California Department of Corrections staff to both the Sand Fire in Los Angeles and the Sabranes Fire in Monterey.

Letter Reference or Title

July 28, 2016

Page 2 of 2

According to SCC Captain (A) Camp Liaison Robert Kelsey, “Baseline Fire Camp still has full coverage. As crews get dispatched from fire camps, depleting a region’s resources, other camps do what is called a cover assignment,” said Kelsey, essentially inmates from camps with full crews will send crews to cover camps who have been deployed.

Fire safety in the home begins with you. Replace smoke alarms every ten years, place fire extinguishers within reach on every level of your home, install carbon monoxide alarms on each floor near bedrooms, and create an escape plan with your family.

Fire safety around your property consists of cleaning dried vegetation and debris from around your home, remove flammable materials (stacked wood, propane) at least 30 feet from your home, prune trees so lowest branches are 6 to 10 feet from the ground, and remember to create and maintain a defensible space around your home.

For more tips on property protection and defensible space visit www.readyforwildfire.org