



FIRE CHIEF'S REPORT

Date: November 16, 2020

To: Board of Directors

From: Michael S. Schwartz, Fire Chief

The western Pacific region has entered into a winter weather pattern bringing timely snow to the Lake Tahoe Basin. As a result of receiving this much-needed precipitation, local fire restrictions for the North Tahoe Fire and Meeks Bay Fire Protection Districts have been reduced by the Fire Chief to allow the use of firepits and charcoal barbecues. CAL FIRE has lifted their burn permit suspension that was in place in Placer and El Dorado counties, and residential door yard burning is now allowed with a valid permit. The USFS Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit has maintained enhanced fire restrictions through the end of the month.

Residents and visitors should expect to see smoke in the region as fire managers begin much needed prescribed fire operations. Regional prescribed fire and forest fuels activity is coordinated by the [Tahoe Fire and Fuels Team](#). Smoke-sensitive individuals are provided advanced notice, and all activities are listed on their daily press releases. We will continue to message out information on prescriptive activities through our social media, mainstream media outlets, and our roadside message boards.

This time of year we often experience an increase of structure fires as people fire up their heating appliances. The District recommends that homeowners have their appliances checked regularly, chimneys cleaned at least annually, and all vents remain unobstructed. It is also wise to inspect any heat tape before activation. As a reminder, check and change batteries on your smoke and CO detectors!

We completed our 2020 Captains testing on November 10. All the candidates performed admirably. We had a great deal of local support with outside evaluators who were impressed by the quality of company officer candidates testing. All five candidates passed. Next steps, the promotional list will be certified and then Fire Chief interviews will be scheduled. Currently, the District has one Captain position vacancy, after which the list may remain in effect for up to two years.

Our three new recruits are in their sixth week of academy, and they are all doing well. Graduation is scheduled for January 23, 2021 at which time they will be assigned to a shift.

It's apparent when you review our monthly response report that demand for services continues to increase. October is normally one of our slower months. However, this year we saw an increase of 73 calls over last year, making it nearly on pace with September. This is partially due to our transfer month rotation, but likely is reflective of an increase in our full-time resident population, and week on week the local lodging barometer also shows increased visitation.

The coronavirus bottom line: As Thanksgiving approaches, California is racking up a series of grim statistics. On Thursday, it became the second state to surpass 1 million coronavirus cases — the same day it recorded more new infections than all but nine other days of the pandemic. On Friday, top state public health officials said California's weekly positive case rate is up 47%, the fastest rate of increase since the pandemic began. Hospitalizations have shot up 51% and intensive-care admissions 43% in the last two weeks, CalMatters' tracker shows. The rates are similar to those that forced California into a second lockdown this summer. Heading into the Fourth of July weekend, the Golden State's positive case rate was up 37%, hospitalizations 56%, and ICUs 49%. Most counties have now regressed into the most restrictive purple tier, (a category that now contains more than half the state's population and prohibits restaurants, gyms, movie theaters, and places of worship from operating indoors). Additional counties are teetering on the edge of more restrictive tiers, and some — including San Francisco — preemptively shut down indoor dining. Others, including [Placer County](#), refuse to enforce the tighter restrictions-CalMatters.

District facilities remain closed to public visitors. We are allowing small, business-essential meetings and trainings following current directives and guidelines. The staff has been diligent in maintaining face coverings when in common areas or in public. Our operations folks are always in appropriate PPE for the call type (Fire, EMS, HazGas, Rescue, Other). The Districts have been able to maintain adequate PPE and supplies. Disincentive systems, including UV and foggers, are being utilized in our ambulances. COVID-19 cases in both states, and all our local-serviced counties, continue to rise as do hospitalizations locally and regionally. This scale of increased illness does translate into our services; our crews have been responding to an increase in COVID-like illness and interfacility transfers, both of which potentially put our first responders at greater risk.



North Tahoe and Meeks Bay Fire Protection Districts



Memorandum

#20-83

To: All Personnel

From: Michael Schwartz, Fire Chief

Re: Completion of Probation - FPO I Talina Sky

Date: October 22, 2020

Congratulations to Fire Prevention Officer I Talina Sky for passing probation! On October 7, 2020, Talina successfully met the District's requirements for completion of her probationary period.

Please join me in congratulating Fire Prevention Officer I Talina Sky on this accomplishment and her ongoing contributions to the success of the District.



North Tahoe and Meeks Bay Fire Protection Districts



MEMORANDUM

#20 – 84

To: All Personnel

From: Michael Schwartz, Fire Chief

Re: Retirement of Captain Curtis Mulkey

Date: November 2, 2020

Captain Curtis Mulkey has informed the District of his intent to retire at the end of his November 2, 2020 shift. Curtis started as a part-time Apprentice Firefighter/EMT with North Tahoe Fire on November 3, 2008. He then went to seasonal status in December 2008. On April 27, 2009, Curtis was offered and accepted a full-time Firefighter/EMT position with Meeks Bay Fire. He worked as a Driver/Operator and Lieutenant there. He became a North Tahoe Fire employee again on December 28, 2015 because of the contract for staffing the Meeks Bay Fire Station. When he came over to North Tahoe Fire, he was reclassified from Lieutenant to Captain.

Curtis was a Fire Investigator II through the CSFM. He held the collateral duty as a hazardous material specialist. Curtis's dedication and commitment to our District was strong and made a difference in keeping our community safe.

Please join me in congratulating Curtis on an excellent career with the District and wish him all the best in his retirement.



North Tahoe and Meeks Bay Fire Protection Districts



MEMORANDUM

#20 – 85

To: All Personnel

From: Michael Schwartz, Fire Chief

Re: 2020 Captains List

Date: November 12, 2020

I would like to personally thank all the candidates for their interest and participation in the recent promotional examination process for Captain. All candidates put forth a significant effort into preparing for and participating within this process, and hopefully gained some insight into the position.

Please join me in congratulating the five candidates who successfully completed this process with rankings as follows:

1. Jeremiah Meadows
2. John Farrell
3. Dave Telfer
4. Clyde Rust
5. Scott Worl

In accordance with District Rules and Regulations, Section 9 Employment Lists, and following the District's November 9 and 10, 2020 Captains testing process, the Fire Chief has certified the 2020 Captain Promotion List in order of final grade. Employment lists may remain in effect for a period of two (2) years from the date of their certification and may be extended at the discretion of the Fire Chief.

In accordance with the Staffing and Overtime policy and District Rules and Regulations, successful candidates are now eligible to Work-Out-of-Class (with the initiation of a task book). We look forward to working with all the candidates who applied for this opportunity, mentoring each one as they progress in their careers.