



## 2007 Annual Report Statistics and Narrative

Type of incident	2007	2006
Medical	81	61
Fire	15	14
HAZMAT	0	1
Traffic Collisions	10	9
SAR	1	0
Misc	12	<i>Not separately tracked</i>
Training	41	38
FIREWATCH patrols	17	<i>Not done before 2007</i>
Total emergency responses	107	85
Total responses 177	124	

Emergency responses increased 26% 2007 over 2006.  
Total activity increased 34% 2007 over 2006.

### Noteworthy Events

2007 has been the busiest year in our history, or at least since anyone started tracking statistics some 8 – 10 years ago. This year, for the first time, we exceeded over 100 emergency calls responded to in a single year. This was a consequence (although not the only one) of the record setting summer (June – August) in which the departments responded to 40%+ more 911 calls than summer of 2006.

There were two fires of note:

- IC#2007003140 – 6/12/07. An unattended debris burn pile on the east side of the Trinity Center Airport (Swett Field) runway rekindled with a wind assist and was making a run northbound towards a row of occupied wooden hangers. The wind was 10-12 knots and flame heights were 30'+. Prompt and effective action by both departments stopped the fire well before the hangers and limited the burn area to two acres.
- IC#2007007060 – 11/29/07. A suspected interior electrical fire at the Coffee Creek Café was discovered when the fire broke through the exterior walls. Despite the start the fire had and the fact that the building was heavily involved prior to the first-in engines arrival the fire was effectively extinguished by both departments. The building was a total loss, but there was no structural collapse. Three small dogs covering in a doghouse on an exterior landing outside an unoccupied upstairs apartment were rescued unharmed.

Long-time CCVFD Board member and good friend to all of us Cheever Wright died from injuries sustained in a traffic collision on S/R 3 near East Side Rd on 12/20/2007. A memorial service for him will be held at CCVFD in Spring 2008.

Dick Hamilton retired as TCVFD Chief after 46 years of service to the community. He remains with the department and carries the title of Chief Emeritus. His record of service to the community is his legacy and will never be matched.

Dr. Glenn Koby was awarded the NorCal EMS Exemplary Performance Award for 2007 in recognition for his contributions to our communities through the fire departments. Our two departments are the only two VFDs in the entire county running ambulances. We are the only EMS providers in the north state with an MD on-staff and responding to calls.

Coffee Creek VFD now owns its own Type I pumper, which replaced an on-loan US Government engine. The engine was purchased with T-III funds. This engine fought its first major fire in the Coffee Creek Café fire on 11/29/07 and performed flawlessly. With less than 20k miles on it and only 400+ hours on the pump it can be anticipated that this engine will give reliable service for at least two decades.

Trinity Center VFD Rescue unit #1152 is now in service following the addition of a metal building situated next to TCVFD. This unit was suspended from service when the Type II (#1123) and Type III (#1134) engines were acquired, due to space limitations. Due to the extremely low mileage on this engine it was decided to keep it, retain its firefighting capability, and retrofit it as a second-up medical rescue unit. Besides the normal EMS equipment it also carries the snow sled (seasonal), stair chair and wheeled Stokes litter. This adds a considerable degree of response flexibility. If there is a concurrent medical dispatch that comes in while handling a call this unit can divert to handle. If there is a multi-casualty incident where one or both ambulances must transport patients this unit on-scene will allow EMS personnel to have the equipment to continue patient treatment. The unit will also be used as the medical support unit on wildland fire responses as it is more suitable for off-highway use than the ambulances.

The departments initiated FIREWATCH patrols this summer. After several dispatches to extinguish illegal unattended campfires that flared up the following day, and with the knowledge that the Angora Fire at Lake Tahoe was started by an illegal campfire, the decision was made to initiate patrols to interdict and extinguish these fires before they could become a danger to the community. Patrols were started in the areas contiguous to Coffee Creek and Trinity Center to find and extinguish such fires which are usually started by youthful party attendees. Since these patrols were to take place in USFS jurisdiction (which the entire area is as a FRA) the idea was vetted through several levels of USFS. The unanimous response was agreement, support and encouragement. The approach on contact with persons at such fires was intentionally low-key so that firefighters could gain their cooperation not only in extinguishing the fires but having them get the word out as to the fire danger and restrictions to reduce the incidence of such fires. Without exception all persons contacted were totally cooperative and in agreement with our efforts once they understood the potential of the situation. During these patrols approximately a dozen such fires were found and extinguished. This program will resume in 2008.

Both departments have a store of smoke detectors and fire extinguishers, and it is to everyone's benefit to have these distributed as widely as possible throughout the community. To this end the principals of each of the elementary schools were contacted to make arrangements for the fire departments to distribute these items free of charge to families via the schools. On 12/14/07, 25 fire extinguishers and smoke detectors were distributed to the families of Coffee Creek Elementary School students. On 12/19/07, 27 fire extinguishers and smoke detectors were distributed to families of Trinity Center Elementary School students. Each of the distributions was done in conjunction with the schools Christmas Pageants as that is when the families would be present. This is a positive and effective program of public outreach.

## **Conclusion**

From the standpoint of the leader, volunteer organizations are the most challenging to lead. This is because there is no economic incentive to hold persons to the organization. Thus the incentive must come from within the individual. Volunteer emergency service organizations are also more complex because of the following factors:

1. The work is oftentimes dangerous, but usually not in any heroic way. There is no glory in being exposed to hepatitis or HIV, or being kicked in the head by a deranged patient whose life you are trying to save.
2. Fire/EMS requires extensive training, drilling and certification so there is much work beyond just responding to calls.
3. Because fire/EMS is a 24/7 operation, calls come in at any hour and must be responded to.
4. Self-discipline is necessary. Among other regulations we have an eight hour bottle to throttle rule which means either one does not drink or one does not respond.
5. There is no tangible reward we have to give our volunteers. In order to derive something of value from the sacrifices necessary to do this job over a sustained period of time the individual must be able to feel that he/she is a value to their department and to their community through their efforts. Positive reinforcement is necessary. Any sort of negative sanctions will drive people away, and once that happens they will not be back.

Everything we do in fire/EMS is predicated on the concept of teamwork. Teamwork is the key to successful operations as well as long-term organizational stability and harmony. Of all the qualities we look for in a potential member, the ability to get along with others is the most critical.

The keys to the success of the unified efforts of the Coffee Creek and Trinity Center Volunteer Fire Departments have been outstanding attitudes of cooperation, teamwork, dedication to delivering the best possible emergency service to our communities, loyalty, and respect for fellow team members.

This past year has been both trying for and challenging to fire department personnel. Besides the increased call volume, there were two medical calls in which the patient was deranged by illness to the point where EMS personnel were assaulted. Neither call was dispatched as a hazardous situation call. There were several calls involving a drunk and belligerent individual who has a prior conviction for terroristic threats against EMS personnel.

There was one 911 hang-up call on which fire/EMS was dispatched which turned out to be a domestic dispute. Fortunately this was a verbal dispute only with no violence. However such calls are frequently violent and fire/EMS personnel are placed in a hazardous situation because they are first on-scene. Personnel have been trained on the proper tactical approaches to 911 hang-up calls with the thought that such calls may turn out to be violent.

Without doubt one of the most tragic situations a firefighter/EMS volunteer can be called upon to handle is the traumatic death of a local community member who is also a good friend. CCVFD-TCVFD volunteers had to handle one such call and did so with commendable professionalism and presence of mind. Only the callous or ignorant would believe there is no emotional toll to be paid from handling such calls. That the volunteers endure this and continue to respond, knowing full well the next call might be exactly the same, speaks beyond words to the dedication and strength of character of this team.

The north lake community is blessed far beyond what most may ever realize to have volunteers of this skill, integrity and commitment serving.

As the Chief I am privileged to have such an outstanding group of men and women with whom to work. Watching their training and teamwork pay off in critical incidents is the reward for the leader. It is indeed these troops who make it all worth while.

Roger Chatterton  
Chief  
Coffee Creek Volunteer Fire Department  
Trinity Center Volunteer Fire Department