



PRESS RELEASE
Moraga-Orinda Fire District

Moraga-Orinda Fire District
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MORAGA-ORINDA FIRE DISTRICT TO OFFER CRISIS MANAGEMENT BRIEFING FOR WITNESSES TO THE JUNE 5, 2010 ELECTROCUTION INCIDENT IN ORINDA.

ORINDA Recognizing that civilian witnesses to the accident resulting in the electrocution of two men in downtown Orinda last Saturday may be experiencing stress, the Moraga-Orinda Fire District is hosting a Crisis Management Briefing this Thursday night at the Orinda Community Center. The District would like to invite witnesses to the accident and their families to attend the meeting, which will start at 7:00 p.m. in the Founders Room at 28 Orinda Way in Orinda.

“We recognize that residents present at this incident witnessed a potentially disturbing accident where there was little they could do to help the victims. This was further complicated by the time it took for rescuers to take the actions necessary to safely effect a rescue,” said Fire Chief Randy Bradley. “The District would like to do what we can to help them cope with what they may be feeling”. Crisis counselors will be facilitating this meeting and available to meet with participants if they desire.

In discussing the challenge emergency responders faced when they arrived at the scene, Incident Commander Randy Trumpf said, “When we arrived there were two burn victims on an elevated platform about 50 feet above the ground with potentially energized electrical wires on the ground. The immediate area needed to be cleared to prevent electrical injury to personnel and bystanders, and we had to find a way to safely lower the victims to the ground. Ultimately, the power to the 115kv power lines still connected to the system had to be secured or rendered “safe” prior to firefighters using our truck’s basket to rescue the victims.” During the briefing emergency responders will discuss the incident and the safety procedures that were followed.

It is natural for people to feel a broad variety of emotions after witnessing an accident of this nature. Feelings of anger, confusion, guilt, sorrow and even depression are not uncommon. Over the years emergency service providers have developed a process by which witnesses and participants of significant incidents can share information; discuss what they saw and what they may be feeling and the support resources that are available to help them cope with what they may be feeling.

“By their nature, Crisis Management Briefings are most effective when participation is limited to those involved in the incident,” said Jeff Mitchel, a mental health specialist. “People are generally more comfortable discussing their feelings with those sharing the experience.” The Fire District is respectfully requesting that attendance be limited to witnesses to the incident and their immediate family members providing them emotional support.

For additional information, contact Fire Chief Randall Bradley at (925) 258-4500.

