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## Top Priority for New ConFire Facilities Manager: Station 16

By Nick Marnell



Wendy Riley Photo Nick Marnell

The Contra Costa County Fire Protection District recently hired a new facilities manager, Wendy Riley, whose to-do list leads off with Lafayette's fire station 16.

Fire Chief Jeff Carman immediately assigned Riley the proposed reconstruction of the station, which has been closed nearly four years. "She understands the importance of this facility and has made it a top priority," said the chief.

The district received additional reports from a contractor and an engineer which Carman said make him even more optimistic that ConFire can stick to its original plan of renovating the station instead of tearing it down and completely rebuilding it.

Riley, a mother of three who joined ConFire in September, is in charge of not only the fire stations, but of all of the district infrastructure, including the dispatch center, the administration center and the training center.

She quickly experienced the singularities of her new industry. "Coming from the private side to the fire district there were some things I had to learn that are a little bit different," said Riley. "I'm seeing all these names on a list and I see 'PM' after their names and I'm saying, 'We sure have a lot of

project managers here.'" No, they told her. Those are paramedics.

Her mission is to reduce the stress on the firefighters, whose jobs she said are already stressful enough. "You don't want to have to worry when you come back from trying to save someone's life," said Riley. "That it's too cold in their dorms, or that the lighting is not working properly. Or worry about pest control." She did a ride-along to get the feel for the firefighters' daily routine.

"Three back-to-back medical calls," she said. "Go out, ride back, go back out again, non-stop. I never even had time for lunch. They were going to have to do a medical call on me."

Riley mentioned no problems with the other two Lafayette stations, but she did say that the station 15 and 17 building exteriors will be painted this spring. "Standard colors, bright red doors on a beige building backdrop."

The passion for and pride in her job exude within seconds of meeting her. "I'm assisting the men and women who are assisting the community," said Riley. "It's like I'm doing my community service every day."

"Wendy has really helped our entire facilities division move ahead quicker and more efficiently, and fire station 16 is no exception," said Carman.

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[back](#)

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