

ConFire powers up to head off dangerous fire season ahead



Courtesy ConFire

ConFire bulldozer to work expanded schedule for fire season

By Nick Marnell

A comment from Steve Hill, public information officer for the Contra Costa County Fire Protection District, sums up

what lies ahead this summer for much of Northern California – especially Lamorinda.

“We are anticipating fire behaviors that are at least as extreme and unpredictable as

we have seen in the past two years in neighboring counties and across the state. There is every possibility – given the fuels situation and fire weather forecasts – they will be more extreme and unpredictable than in recent years,” Hill said.

The district has beefed up staffing to handle the potential wildfire onslaught in Lafayette with the scheduled August reopening of Fire Station 16 and having placed Engine Company 16 into service in April, working temporarily out of Fire Station 15 on Mt. Diablo Boulevard. The reopened Fire Station 19 in Briones heightens protection against a wildfire raging over the hills into Lamorinda.

ConFire also added two new Type 3 wildland engines to its apparatus fleet and beginning July 1, Fire Dozer 220 will commence daily service. Many recall that the ConFire

bulldozer was a key player in the containment of the July vegetation fire near Buckingham Drive in Moraga, helping prevent the fire from rolling over the hill and causing extensive property damage. The district plans to put a second fire bulldozer into service later in the season.

In addition, working in conjunction with other fire jurisdictions across the state, ConFire will pre-position firefighting resources in high risk areas ahead of predicted fire weather.

The firefighters also re-focus their own efforts for fire season. “Do not become complacent with our historical local fire problems. Tactics employed in the past may no longer be applicable to the problems faced today,” Assistant Fire Chief Chuck Stark said via internal correspondence to his suppression personnel. “Anticipate the po-

tential for extreme fire behavior throughout this fire season, and base decisions on the current conditions.”

Stark’s advice applies to the public as well, as ConFire reminds all property owners to take nothing for granted this fire season and to do their part to protect their homes and businesses. “The most important person protecting a home or business is not the firefighter that arrives on scene during the wildfire, but instead the owner who takes necessary actions well before the fire season even starts,” Hill said.

Two key mitigating actions for property owners include the creation of defensible space around their properties and the removal of unruly vegetation by the weed abatement deadline. For Lafayette, that deadline is June 16.

MOFD fire flow tax unchanged for 2019-20

By Nick Marnell

The Moraga-Orinda Fire District May 15 held its fire flow tax for fiscal year 2019-20 to \$0.06 per fire flow unit, a rate the district has not exceeded since its 1997 inception.

A fire flow tax quantifies the risk of fire to a parcel. MOFD uses a complex formula to determine the number of fire flow units allotted to a parcel, but key variables in determining the figure are parcel size, the installation of a sprinkler system and con-

struction type. In short, the more of a fire hazard a property is, the more “fire flow” – water – is needed to save it.

The history of the MOFD fire flow tax is nearly as complex as its formula.

In 1980, voters in the Moraga Fire Protection District, to make up for district revenue lost due to Proposition 13, passed a special tax “not to exceed 6.0 cents” per fire flow unit, with proceeds used to fund operations and capital needs of the district and for other expenses “deemed necessary by the Moraga Fire Protection Dis-

trict.” Twelve years later, Moraga residents voted to increase the tax to a maximum of \$0.30 per fire flow unit.

As a condition for the 1997 consolidation of MFPD and the Orinda Fire District into MOFD, Orinda voters passed a fire flow tax as well, but the 1997 ordinance said that the Orinda rate “shall not exceed 6 cents” per fire flow unit. Orinda residents never voted to increase the maximum Orinda fire flow tax, and MOFD has declined to raise the Moraga fire flow tax above the \$0.06 that

Orinda pays, let alone to \$0.30.

The failure of the district board to raise the Moraga fire flow tax adds to the inequity some Orinda residents feel about the tax burdens placed upon each municipality for services received, as Moraga residents pay 19 percent of their property tax bill to the district while Orindans pay 23 percent, according to the latest MOFD Municipal Services Review. “We don’t allocate our services based on what city it is,” Board President Steven Danziger said. “Some people just don’t

seem to understand that.”

The district projects fire flow tax revenue for 2019-20 at \$548,000 from the Orinda Service Zone and \$536,000 from the Moraga zone. Orinda resident Steve Cohn appealed unsuccessfully to the MOFD board that “if the rate for the Moraga Fire Flow Tax was increased to the statutory limit of 30 cents, this would generate an additional \$2.1 million of revenue,” which he proposed could be used for added fuel mitigation efforts.

The story behind the emergency preparedness and evacuation guide

By Nick Marnell

The idea to publish the Lamorinda Guide to Wildfire Preparedness and Evacuation, delivered to residents’ homes

in late May, arose from a trip to Napa after the 2017 firestorm that burned 245,000 acres and destroyed more than 8,000 structures in Northern California.

As Duncan Seibert, pro-

gram manager of the Lamorinda Community Emergency Response Team and chair of the Lafayette Emergency Preparedness Commission, worked shelters in and around the North Bay city, he

saw that fire victims came to the shelters with nothing. “When the fire approached their back door, people had 15 seconds to get away,” Seibert said. They arrived with no identification, no credit cards, no possessions whatsoever. The horrifying situations that Seibert saw at the shelters moved him to do something to help people better prepare for an emergency.

Thus arose the concept for the Wildfire Preparedness and Evacuation guide, pub-

lished by the Lafayette Emergency Preparedness Commission. The booklet cost \$10,000 to produce and was mailed to 27,500 Lamorinda addresses, with 7,500 copies distributed to public safety agencies.

The booklet not only covers emergency preparation but also provides evacuation information, highlighting one of the most elegant public warning systems in the United States.

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Fire District Public Meetings

Moraga-Orinda Fire District
Board of Directors
Wednesday, June 19, 7 p.m.
Go to the website for meeting location, times and agendas.
Visit www.mofd.org



ConFire

Board of Directors
Tuesday, July 9, 1:30 p.m.
Board Chamber Room 107,
Administration Building
651 Pine St., Martinez.
For meeting times and agendas, visit www.cccfpd.org



Public Safety

Emergency response:

Emergency: 24 Hours 911
Police Dispatch: 24 Hours
925-284-5010

Nixle: Text your zip code to 888777 or go to www.nixle.com

Lafayette Police Department:

3471 Mt. Diablo Blvd.
925-283-3680
Chief of Police, Ben Alldritt
925-299-3221
Police Department Tip Line
94549Tip@gmail.com
Police Department Traffic Issues
94549Traffic@gmail.com

Moraga Police Department:

329 Rheem Blvd.,
925-888-7055
Chief of Police, Jon King
ext. 7049

Orinda Police Department:

22 Orinda Way
925-254-6820
Chief of Police, Mark Nagel
925-254-6820
Orindatip@cityoforinda.org

Lafayette Police Department Incident Summary Report

May 5 - May 18

Alarms 50
911 Calls (includes hang-ups) 8
Traffic 138
Suspicious Circumstances 8
Suspicious Subject 22
Suspicious Vehicle 13
Service to Citizen 47
Patrol Req./Security Check 47
Vacation House Check 8
Supplemental Report 17
School Assembly Check 29
Welfare Check 19+

Vehicle violations

Auto Burglary 3500 Block Plaza Way Police Department
3300 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd. Pleasant Hill Rd./Park Ln.
3500 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd. (4)
DUI Misd
Olympic Blvd./Reliez Station Rd.
Hit And Run Misdemeanor
Reliez Station Rd./Olympic Blvd.
1200 Block Upper Happy Valley Rd.
Police Department
3600 Block Deerhill Rd.
Brook St./East St.

4100 Block Leach Rd.
Petty Theft From Vehicle
3800 Block Happy Valley Rd.
Deer Hill Rd./Sierra Vista Way
3400 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.

Reckless Driving
Police Department
Mt. Diablo Blvd./Carol Ln.
900 Block Condit Rd.
Mt. Diablo Blvd./Acalanes Rd.

Vehicle Theft
1200 Block Rose Ln.

Other criminal activity

Counterfeit
Mt. Diablo Blvd./Pleasant Hill Rd.
Forgery
Sr 24 At Fish Ranch Rd.

Grand Theft
900 Block Hawthorn Dr.
Oak Hill Rd./Eb Sr 24

Identity Theft
3400 Block Springhill Rd.
3600 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.
3500 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.
700 Block Old Jonas Hill Rd.

Panhandling
3500 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.
Quandt Rd./Hillview Ln.

Petty Theft
1200 Block Dunsyre Dr.
Quandt Rd./Candy Ct.
3300 Block N Lucille Ln.

Shoplift
3600 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.
Wb24/Acalanes
4000 Block Fiora Pl.
1100 Block Martino Rd.
Reliez Station Rd./Beechwood Dr.

Violation Custody Order
Moraga Rd./Silver Springs Rd.

Nuisance to the Community

Disturbance-Domestic
3300 Block Ridge Rd.

Disturbance-Fight
3400 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.

Disturbing The Peace
Mt. Diablo Blvd./Carol Ln.
Deerhill/Whole Foods
Mt. Diablo Blvd./Acalanes Rd.

Drunk In Public
3400 Block Golden Gate Way
3600 Block Deerhill Rd.

Harassment
Pleasant Hill Rd./Old Tunnel Rd.

Intoxicated Subject
1000 Block Circle Creek Ln.

Loud Noise
900 Block Risa Rd.
3200 Block Mt. Diablo Ct. (2)
Police Department

Public Assembly Check
500 Block Glenside Dr.
900 Block Risa Rd.

Public Nuisance
900 Block Moraga Rd.
Brook St./East St.
Saranap Ave./Old Tunnel Rd.
Withers Ave./Taylor Blvd.
500 Block Merriewood
Upper Happy Valley Rd./Los Arabis Dr.

Vandalism
3500 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.
900 Block Risa Rd.
3600 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.
100 Block Lafayette Circle

Other

Animal Cruelty
1000 Block Buchan Dr.

H&S Violation
1000 Block Dewing Ave.

Indecent Exposure
Reliez Station Rd./Olympic Blvd.

Ordinance Violation
4000 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.
4000 Block Happy Valley Rd.

Trespass
Lafayette Cr./Hough Ave.
Oak Hill Rd./Mt. Diablo Blvd.

Unwanted Guest
Police Department
1St St./Mt. Diablo Blvd.

Moraga Police Department Incident Summary Report

May 21 - June 2

Alarms 17
911 Calls (includes hang-ups) 5
Traffic 51
Suspicious Circumstances 12
Suspicious Subject 10
Suspicious Vehicle 10
Service to Citizen 49
Patrol Req./Security Check 33
Supplemental Report 7
Vacation House Check 0
Welfare Check 4

Vehicle violations

Auto Burglary
10 Block La Salle Dr.

Excessive Speed
Donald Dr./Moraga Rd.
Moraga Way/St. Andrews Dr. (2)
Lucas Dr./Moraga Rd.

Home Goods
Rheem Blvd./Moraga Rd.
Corliss Dr./Moraga Rd.

Country Club Dr./School St.
Moraga Commons
Country Club Dr./St. Andrews Dd.
Rheem Blvd./Fernwood Dr.
Moraga Way/Ivy Dr.
Moraga Way/Camino Ricardo

Hit And Run Misdemeanor
2000 Block Ascot Dr.

Reckless Driving
Moraga Country Club
St. Marys Rd./Moraga Rd.
Canyon Rd./Moraga Rd.
Rheem Blvd./Fernwood Dr.
300 Block Moraga Rd.

Tc - Property Damage
300 Block Rheem Blvd.

Vehicle Theft
20 Block Sea Pines

Other criminal activity

Identity Theft
10 Block Wandel Dr.

Panhandling
Safeway

Petty Theft
Safeway
100 Block Alta Mesa Ct.

Robbery Armed
400 Block Moraga Rd.

Nuisance to the Community

Disturbing The Peace
Joaquin Moraga Int. School

Starbucks
Loud Music
60 Block Miramonte Dr.

Loud Party
Draeger Dr./Turk Dr.
1700 Block School St.

Public Assembly Check
Safeway
Rheem Valley Shopping Center (4)

Public Nuisance
30 Block Carr Dr.

Vandalism
3900 Block Paseo Grande

Other

Accident Property
Fernwood Dr./Rheem Blvd.
10 Block Bal Tusrol
Donald Dr./Moraga Rd.

Corporal Injury Spouse
300 Block Corte Gabriel

Ordinance Violation
Country Club Dr./St. Andrews Dr.

Orinda Police Department Incident Summary Report

May 19 - June 1

Alarms 49
911 Calls (includes hang-ups) 5
Traffic 47
Suspicious Circumstances 7
Suspicious Subject 9
Suspicious Vehicle 6
Service to Citizen 45
Patrol Req./Security Check 12
Vacation House Check 6
Supplemental Report 10
Welfare Check 5

Vehicle violations

Auto Burglary
Wells Fargo
60 Block Moraga Way
200 Block Overhill Rd.
Safeway

Grand Theft From Vehicle
60 Block Rheem Blvd.
100 Block Las Vegas Rd.

Reckless Driving

Miramonte High School
Claremont Ave./Camino Pablo
Moraga Way/Brookwood Rd.
San Pablo Dam Rd./Bear Creek Rd.
Moraga Way/Glorietta Blvd.

Road Rage Inc
El Toyonal/Loma Vista Dr.

Tc - Property Damage
Camino Pablo/Monte Vista Rd.
Moraga Way/Ivy Dr.
Miner Rd./Camino Pablo

Vehicle Theft
Camino Pablo/Wildcat Canyon
4200 Block El Nido Ranch Rd.

Other criminal activity

Burglary
20 Block Tara Rd.
20 Block Orinda Way

Commercial Burglary
Cvs
Beverages And More
Corporal Injury Spouse
Camino Pablo/Moraga Way

Grand Theft
100 Block Camino Pablo
20 Block Camino Don Miguel (2)
60 Block Via Floreado

Identity Theft
30 Block Las Cascadas Rd.

Other Felony
50 Block Tara Rd.

Petty Theft
10 Block Theatre Sq 106

Residential Burglary
10 Block De Soto Ct.
40 Block Robert Rd.

Robbery
Police Department

Shoplift
Rite Aid
Warrant Arrest
Safeway
Camino Pablo/Wb Sr 24
Chevron

Nuisance to the Community

Disturbance-Domestic
Safeway

Loud Music
100 Block Crest View Dr.
10 Block Martha Rd.

Loud Noise
70 Block Meadow View Rd.
Camino Pablo/Claremont Ave.

Loud Party
60 Block Brookwood Rd.
Public Assembly Check
Cvs

Other
AAccident Property
50 Block Overhill Rd.

Failure To Obey
Camino Pablo/Wildcat Canyon

School Assembly Check
Miramonte High School

Vandalism
60 Block Moraga Way Ordinance

Violation
100 Block Las Vegas Rd.