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## ConFire experiments with four-person truck crews

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The Contra Costa County Fire Protection District increased staffing on three of its five truck companies from three to four personnel starting July 13 thanks to a three-year federal staffing grant. The experimental program began after the 16 firefighters who graduated from Academy 53 completed their orientation tours as an extra person with various district engine companies, including the three companies in Lafayette.

"We will use the three years to evaluate the efficiency of having that extra person on a truck," said Chuck Stark, Assistant Fire Chief, Operations Division.

Stark explained that at a small residential fire, with a four-person truck crew, two firefighters could cut a hole in a roof while the other two could go inside the structure for search and rescue. "You can get two jobs out of one truck as opposed to just one," Stark said. Industry best practices dictate that each of those two jobs requires two suppression personnel.

ConFire provides automatic aid to six neighboring fire agencies, including the Moraga-Orinda Fire District.

"Each of these agencies would also benefit from this enhanced staffing as well. This brings further benefits to these surrounding agencies and the communities they protect," the district said in its Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response grant application.

Truck companies in Antioch, Concord and Pittsburg, the busiest truck companies in the district, will add the fourth crew member, with truck companies in Martinez and Walnut Creek - the closest truck company to Lamorinda - continuing with three-person crews.

"It is our ultimate goal to show all stakeholders that these staffing levels are essential to our abilities to protect our community safely and efficiently," the district said. "This project provides the basis for a potential expansion of the fourth firefighter to many more of our engine and truck companies."

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