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Volunteers gear up at MOFD Comm-Support Rodeo

By Sora O'Doherty



Photo Sora O'Doherty

Volunteers at the 2024 MOFD Comm-Support Rodeo gather at the drone station.

25 local volunteers who support the Moraga Orinda Fire District during major events and incidents gathered for a pre-fire season exercise, called the Comm-Support Rodeo, on Saturday, April 6 at Station 41 on Moraga Way. The volunteers provide logistics and technology to help firefighters when they are in the field. Many of the volunteers

have trained with the Citizens Emergency Response Team (CERT) or are members of the Lamorinda Area Radio Interest Group.

At the event on Saturday morning, volunteers spent about 45 minutes training at each of five stations, with five minutes in between to rotate. Volunteers were able to brush up their skills, and/or learn new

skills.

At the Remote Communications Set Up station, participants set up portable communications equipment in a simulated major incident communications unit. The goal of this training is to be able to communicate via radio with fire and law enforcement agencies, local amateur radio operators, and the Lamorinda General Mo-

bile Radio System (GMRS) radios that many CERT-trained residents have.

At the Mobile Water Supply/Portable Pump Operations station volunteers learned how to set up MOFD's portable water supply trailers and to move water from a large portable tank to an engine. The exercise simulated using local lakes or swimming pools to fill fire apparatus in a disaster.

Participants filled various roles (pilot in command, qualified observer, etc.) at the UAS (Drone) Operations station. They operated the MOFD drone to capture both video and still images during a simulated fire. The images were transferred from the drone to the Incident Commander and/or Public Information Officer.

The District's Environmental Beta-Attenuation Mass Monitor (E-BAM) is a very sensitive, portable air quality monitoring device. Participants at this

station set up the unit and ensured it was reporting information to the dedicated monitoring website.

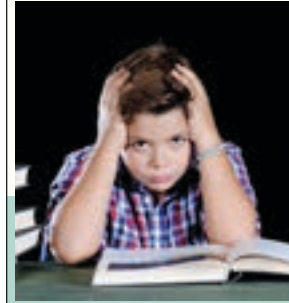
The Breathing Support unit carries much of the equipment firefighters need at a major incident. The event on Saturday provided volunteers with an opportu-

nity to review the information and equipment needed to operate the vehicle and its systems.

For additional information about volunteering to help firefighters, contact Dennis Rein, Emergency Preparedness Coordinator, at 925-698-4575 or email drein@mofd.org

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