

# East Fork Fire Protection District

## OFFICIAL PRESS RELEASE

Contact: Tod F. Carlini, District Fire Chief  
775-782-9048  
March 18, 2020

### **East Fork Fire Protection District's COVID-19 Response and Preparations**

Minden – The East Fork Fire Protection District is on the front line of response to the COVID-19 pandemic impacting the nation, State of Nevada, and the local area. The Fire Protection District provides emergency fire and medical services to 96% of Douglas County and to over 50,000 residents and visitors.

District Chief Tod Carlini, who also serves as Douglas County's Emergency Manager, said that the COVID-19 event has become much more challenging to address because the dynamics of the events are ever changing at a rapid pace. *"We are constantly having to make adjustments in our response and preparations."* The majority of the incident management responsibilities are vested with Carson City Health and Human Services, who provide public health service to what is known as the Quad County area, composed of Lyon, Storey, Carson City, and Douglas Counties. *"The incident management team assembled for this event is doing an incredible job, managing a multitude of issues, many of which develop and change by the hour."*

Locally, East Fork Fire Protection District has established several policies and has taken some immediate actions to assist with local issues.

The District has secured all of its staffed stations from public access and has eliminated all public use of their volunteer stations. The stations must be maintained for their primary responsibilities of housing response personnel and equipment. There are no exceptions.

The District Office, located at 1694 County Road, will still be conducting business during regular hours, however, the facility will not be open to the public. The District Office will, effective at 8:00 AM on Thursday, March 19, 2020, secure its office doors to the public. Persons with business at the District Office must call for an appointment at 775-782-9040. The District's Fire Prevention and Inspection Division will still be accepting and performing plan reviews, however, plan submittals shall be by drop-off during the hours of 9 AM and 4 PM, Monday through Friday. A bin will be provided outside of the main office doors to deposit your plans and method of payment. Please ensure all checks are in an envelope and secured to the plans. Credit card payments shall be made by phone and review time shall not begin until payment is received. Plans will not be left in the bin for any length of time, but will be collected by District staff immediately upon observed drop-off, with no public contact, during the above hours. Appointments with District staff shall be by phone only at this time and may be arranged through the main office at (775) 782-9040.

The District is recommending that persons should first contact the COVID HOT LINE at 775-283-4789. If you request emergency medical services via Douglas County 911, and District Firefighter/Medics arrive at your location, you may see them wearing additional personal protective equipment including gloves, eye protection or a face shield, an N-95 respirator mask and a gown. They may ask you, the patient, to wear a mask as well. It's important to understand that because COVID-19 is airborne, simple surgical masks do not prevent the spread of coronavirus. However, a simple surgical mask will minimize or reduce some of the spread of germs, particularly in confined spaces where firefighter/medics are providing patient care (such as in an ambulance patient compartment). Family members will not be permitted to ride in the ambulance during a transport. Per East Fork's standard operating procedures, ambulances and other equipment as are decontaminated after every patient transport using a specific disinfectant.

The District is also working closely with area hospitals, long term care facilities, and other medical providers to better coordinate efforts.

East Fork employees received correspondence today regarding the District's position on administrative leave due to school closures and direction regarding the security of stations, apparatus, and health and safety precautions.

The District Board did hold its monthly meeting yesterday and approved its Tentative Budget and Capital Improvement Plan for the upcoming fiscal year. Under State statute, all local government entities have certain deadlines regarding budget submissions. It is uncertain at this time whether future District Board meetings will be held. The District Board holds its regular meetings on the third Tuesday of each month.

*Chief Carlini stated, "From the onset of this situation, our foremost concern has been protecting our employees and the citizens and visitors of the District while still providing the essential mission critical services in our charge. This is a serious public health emergency and I encourage everyone to follow the guidance from the CDC, State, and local officials. We understand that this a difficult time, which is why we all need to work together."*