

East Fork Fire Protection District  
For Immediate Release – EAST FORK FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT CONSIDERS  
REVISION TO ITS STANDARD OF COVER  
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Minden- the East Fork Fire Protection District recently held a public workshop on July 10, 2017 to review updates to the District's current Standard of Cover.

In 2006, the East Fork Fire Protection District, saw the first ever, governing-body approved, Ten -Year

Strategic Plan. One of the more aggressive and challenging objectives within this plan was the development of a Standards of Cover for the district. Six years later, the District's first Standards of Cover was developed internally and adopted by the District Board of Fire Commissioners. Now, four years later as part of an update to the Strategic Plan, the District has drafted a revision to its Standard of Cover.



The document describes the service area, the risks that must be protected and reduced within the jurisdiction, the capabilities, and the performance objectives and measures. This information will allow the District to identify risks in the jurisdiction, analyze and establish levels of response service to respond to those risks, and most importantly, evaluate the performance through benchmarked response times and staffing objectives. These response time goals, staffing objectives, and resource deployments will contribute to our commitment to continually improve how we deliver our services.

In revising the deployment plan, the methodology used required the assumption that it is reasonable, realistic, fiscally sound, based on factual data, contract compliant, and safe in the allocation and deployment of personnel, both career and volunteer, and the physical resources of the District.

The plan must also attempt to adhere to all related rules, regulations and requirements. Also taken into consideration are nationally adopted standards, such as those promulgated by the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), the American Heart Association (AHA), the International Association of County Managers (ICMA), and Insurance Services Offices (ISO), as examples. Using multiple standards to gauge performance can serve as an effective and well-balanced "*checks and balances*" of the entire deployment model specific to the District. While NFPA 1710's primary focus is on staffing, the American Heart Association tends to consider

response time for emergency medical services. The International Association of County Manager's standards attempt to relate service levels in the form of a ratio between the population of the area served and the number of responders available. Lastly, ISO, serves as an overall "report card" solely on fire protection services, but includes water supply and dispatching.

District Chief Tod Carlini noted that, "*equally important to the preceding is recognizing that the safety of our personnel must be a priority. A priority which can't be ignored and one which should not be compromised for the sake of meeting response time objectives. As the financial status of the District improves, staffing must be a strong consideration.*" With annual call volume increasing at a rate of 3 to 4 percent per year and given the current reality and modifications to our volunteer program, the need for additional career personnel is justified. Volunteer personnel will hopefully play a key role in the logistical needs of incidents and the District in general. The district is attempting to "re-tool" the volunteer program but faces some significant challenges, including general demographics, lack of jobs, lack of affordable housing, and competing interests of an individual's free time activities.

Carlini further went on to state that while the District has fire stations in all of the District's "communities" such as Johnson Lane, Fish Springs, Genoa, Sheridan, Topaz Lake, and Ruhstroth, those stations are not staffed and volunteer participation in most is in critical decline. The new program being pushed out at the present time hopes to see the recruitment of new volunteer personnel, but in roles which serve the logistical needs of the organization as a priority. Currently, over 500 hours of training is needed for an individual to become a certified Firefighter I and EMT Basic in Nevada. The bottom line still remains that additional staff level personnel are going to be needed, stated Chief Carlini. Balancing the financial reality of providing a competitive wage, adding additional personnel, working to retain current employees, and providing for capital equipment purchases is a huge challenge, as there is only so much funding available.

The East Fork Fire Protection District Standards of Cover has been developed to translate the general needs and objectives of the District as it relates to the allocation of resources to achieve the self-imposed standards which are drawn from several recognized sources. The proposed document is not intended to define in specific detail the finite changes that would support the standards. The document will serve as a recommended body of ideas for the administration to consider and to guide future budget development and procedural considerations and implementation.

The document was developed without the use of a consultant and was truly an in house work effort. The East Fork Professional Firefighters Association were represented by Battalion Chief Troy Valenzuela, Fire Captain Ron Santos, and Firefighter/Paramedic Adam Wennhold. Volunteer members included Dave Thomas and Bob Spellberg. Deputy Chief Dave Fogerson facilitated the effort.

Union President, Paul Azevedo, objected to the plan's definition and use of existing personnel to "cross staff" apparatus during critical periods of service demands, in particular ambulances. Over 87% of the District's call volume is ambulance related. Just over the past two days the

District had to drop personnel from Engine staffing in both North and South County areas in order to provide enough ambulances to meet the call demands. The plan does propose the use of a staffed 40 hour “*day ambulance*” to help offset the medical call volume during defined and statistically demonstrated periods of times, however, the association contract will not allow that measure until all four of the district’s fire engines are staffed with three personnel. Chief Carlini stated that is a very challenging issue and can understand the Union President’s position, in fact he supported the need to up staff the Engines due to the sharp decline in volunteers and for the safety related issues over a year ago. Deputy Chief Dave Fogerson stated that, “ *Most days we are able to manage the calls with the current staffing model, however, it seems that we are seeing more and more situations which are demanding additional ambulance capacity. The 40 hour ambulance would be a start to easing that challenge.*”

The District Board commended the group’s effort and were over all impressed with the information and the use of data.

The East Fork Fire Protection District Board of Directors will consider a final version of the document at its August 15 meeting, held at the District Office, 1694 County Road, Minden, at 1:00 PM. The meetings are public meetings and governed under the Nevada Open Meeting Law.