



FIRE AND EMERGENCY RESPONSE

The CAL FIRE Mission

The California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) serves and safeguards the people and protects the property and resources of California.

People to Meet the Challenge

CAL FIRE is known for its extraordinary response to emergencies and is always ready to respond, whether to wildland fires, structure fires, automobile accidents, medical aids, swift water rescues, civil disturbances, lost hikers, hazardous material spills, train wrecks, floods, earthquakes, or terrorist attacks. CAL FIRE responds to over 500,000 emergencies each year including more than 8,400 wildland fires that have burned an average of 1.4 million acres over the last 5 years. Department personnel and equipment are a familiar sight throughout the state with responsibility for protecting 31 million acres of California's privately owned wildlands, as well as providing some type of emergency service under cooperative agreements with 115 counties, cities and districts. The heart of CAL FIRE's emergency response capability is a force of over 9,600 full-time and seasonal firefighting professionals, foresters, and administrative employees; 3,000 California National Guard members, California Conservation Corps members, inmates, and wards that currently staff 222 fire crews.



Fire and Resource Assessment Program (FRAP)

Current information on the supply, availability and condition of California's forest and rangeland resources is needed to develop appropriate policies to ensure the health and productivity of these wildlands. The FRAP unit identifies emerging resource issues on wildlands; analyzes the results of different types of land use and management on wildland conditions; and reviews and evaluates policies by federal, state and local agencies as they relate to wildland protection. FRAP also identifies and analyzes policy options for the Board of Forestry and Fire Protection through demographic and other types of data, including information on vegetation, wildlife, soils, watersheds, and fire behavior.

Preventing Fires to Keep You Safe

The programs of the CAL FIRE Office of the State Fire Marshal (OSFM) are geared toward providing fire safety where people live, work and congregate. OSFM staff develop, interpret and enforce fire safety codes and laws covering state-owned and occupied buildings, fire extinguishers, fireworks, flame retardant chemicals, hazardous liquid pipelines, building materials, power lines, railroads, film industry activities, laboratory accreditation, and vapor recovery systems.

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Equipment to do the Job

CAL FIRE operates nearly 1,000 state and local government owned fire engines, rescue squads, paramedic units, hazmat units, aerial ladder trucks, bulldozers, mobile communication centers, and mobile kitchen units. The Department funds, via contract, additional engines, and bulldozers used in six counties; Kern, Los Angeles, Marin, Orange, Santa Barbara, and Ventura. From the air, CAL FIRE operates 23 1,200 gallon airtankers, 12 helicopters, and 17 air tactical planes.



The Highest Standards of Training

The OSFM State Fire Training and CAL FIRE Academy programs provide training, education and certification programs to the California Fire Service. Through training exercises and classroom courses, every California firefighter is exposed to training standards that have been approved by CAL FIRE and the OSFM, each among the best institutions in the nation for fire training education. Offering more than 1,000 classes annually, State Fire Training programs reach more than 53,000 students each year and have issued certifications to members of the more than 900 California fire departments, including CAL FIRE. Each year, more than 2,000 CAL FIRE personnel attend the CAL FIRE Training Centers in Lone and Riverside, participating in courses ranging from basic fire control and arson investigation to leadership development and forest practice enforcement.



Facilities Throughout the State

CAL FIRE is divided into two regions with 21 administrative units statewide. Within these units, there are 812 fire stations (237 state and 575 local government). CAL FIRE, in collaboration with the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, is authorized to operate 30 conservation camps and five training centers located throughout the state. CAL FIRE also staffs 14 air attack bases, 10 helitack bases, and 1 CAL FIRE/San Diego County Sheriff helitack base throughout the state.

Cooperation Among Agencies

In a state as large and populated as California, cooperative efforts via contracts and agreements between state, federal, and local agencies are essential to respond to emergencies like wildland and structure fires, floods, earthquakes, hazardous material spills, and medical emergencies. The CAL FIRE cooperative fire protection program staff coordinates those agreements and contracts. Because of these types of cooperative efforts, fire engines and crews from many different agencies may respond to the scene of an emergency.

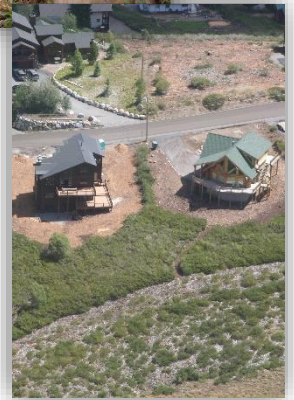


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Learning to Live with Fire

Reducing the risk of large wildfires, the costs of fighting wildfires, and loss of property and natural resources are the goals of CAL FIRE's fire prevention and planning programs. Driven by the California Fire Plan, developed by the Board of Forestry and Fire Protection and CAL FIRE more than six years ago as a proactive approach to meet those goals, the department continues to be a leader in emphasizing community involvement and developing and implementing pre-fire management solutions. Pre-fire management activities include fuel breaks, fire safe landscaping, forest health treatment, removal of hazardous vegetation, inspections for fire safe clearance around homes, and post fire structure assessments. Educating communities and homeowners on fire safety is a statewide effort led by CAL FIRE's communications program. The program provides fire safety information via television, radio, print, the internet and social media. The CAL FIRE Volunteers in Prevention (VIP) Program includes more than 600 citizen volunteers throughout the state. These VIPs donate their time, under the supervision of CAL FIRE, to teach children and adults basic fire and life safety. Most CAL FIRE units have established local fire safe councils to bring together citizens, local fire agencies, local governments, and other groups affected by wildfire such as insurance companies. The challenge of living in a fire prone state such as California is everyone's responsibility.



Enforcing Laws

To enforce state fire and forest laws, CAL FIRE's Law Enforcement Program staff are trained and certified in accordance with California Peace Officer Standardized Training (POST). CAL FIRE investigators determine wildland fire causes, interview witnesses, issue citations and set up surveillance operations. Additionally, law enforcement staff provide assistance when requested by local fire and law enforcement agencies in arson, bomb, fireworks, and fire extinguisher investigations, as well as disposal of explosives. OSFM Arson and Bomb Specialists provide fire and bomb investigation services to state-owned facilities and assist local government fire and law agencies. Department investigators have a very successful conviction rate.

