Logtown Fire Safe Council

Notes of the July 13, 2013 Meeting
Station 44
6190 Quartz Drive, El Dorado, CA

Call to Order: Pat Dwyer called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

Introduction and Sign-In: Pat stated – Battalion Chief Ken Earle from Diamond Springs-El Dorado Fire Protection District will talk to us today about
1. National Fire Danger Rating System (NFDRS)
2. Scanner Protocol: deciphering the communications

Treasurer’s Report: Ken Hasse advised the Council received a $50.00 donation last month. Bank Balance is $3,934.19 and we are in good shape.

CWPP (Community Wildfire Protection Plan) Update: Pat advised the CWPP is updated every 5 years. It can be viewed on the County Fire Safe web site: http://www.edcfiresafe.org/local_firesafe_councils.htm
Among other information, it shows Areas of Risk and the Evacuation Plan specific to our area.. The Council needs to put a committee together to determine current condition of fuel breaks and whether there are any additional risks. Those interested in volunteering, please contact Pat. Ken Hasse suggested we consider printing/distributing an 8x11 Evacuation Plan Map (like Grizzly Flat did). The board will evaluate feasibility of the suggestion. Two weed abatement proposals for Highway 49 below Crystal Blvd. were sent to Cal Trans but no response/action as of today. Board will follow up with Cal Trans and add the agency to our Guest Speaker List. PG&E was complimented as it has at times picked up the ball and done “liability pruning”.

The recent break in the waterline created a loss of pressure and muddy water for some EID customers. Residents were encouraged to check the “pressure regulator” and “filters” to clear out mud/debris and level off the air pressure.

County Fire Safe Council Update: The County Council is in a “rebuild mode” having had elections last month. In order for Logtown Council to participate we are required to annually “submit” a Request and “sign” an Agreement to be part of the County Council and we have done so.

Neighborhood Coordinator Updates: Coordinators reported they continue to update the roster of residents in their respective zone. Pat shared that the roster is gaining popularity as neighbors are sharing the information from meetings and also benefiting from the “announcements/bulletins” advising of fire alerts as well as lost/ found animals and suspicious activity etc. The resident roster is a valuable tool to keep our community safe and secure. Spring Clean-up Day was also an effective source of new additions.
Hot Dog Social – Saturday, October 12: This is Logtown’s Primary Fundraiser. Nancy Hasse invited everyone to become involved and to start thinking of ideas for “baskets for auction”. The sky is the limit on your creativity. Have fun with it. The “Gourmet Dinner for 6” – so popular last year, will be making a re-appearance this year. So start saving your pennies for October and bring a basket with you for others to enjoy and help keep our community fire safe.

Public Comment/Rattler Contest: Last month’s introduction of the “Rattlesnake Contest” surfaced as residents commented on recent rattlesnake sightings. There are two categories in the contest: 1) Largest Snake and 2) Total Count. Perhaps taking a picture and/or logging the size/dates may be a good idea as we all know how competitive “fish” contests can get. Winners will be announced at the Hot Dog Social in October.

Logtown History: The County has a new museum display “Logtown A Legacy of Disappearing Places”. It is also available to view “on-line” as well. This site has information on Logtown’s history:
www.dot.ca.gov/dist3/departments/envinternet/eldorado.htm
Check it out.

Waldo Canyon Fire in Colorado. If you are interested in seeing a review of the Canyon fire please see the following website: http://www.fireadapted.org/waldo
This summary is very thought provoking and shows the importance of the 100’ clearance, clean gutters and ember screens.

Guest Speaker – Battalion Chief Ken Earle, Diamond Springs-El Dorado Fire Protection District: Topics
1) National Fire Danger Rating System (NFDRS)
2) Scanner Protocol: Deciphering the Communications

The unusual weather we have been experiencing affects fire patterns. We now are seeing “early” morning fires such as the Mosquito Fire” rather than the typical “afternoon” fire when we expect the “hottest temperature”. To help us understand fires and how they are rated – here are some of the common terms used on the fire weather channel available on your scanner.

Aspect - Geographic location of the fire. Each slope (north, south, east or west has a different type/density of vegetation and hence will affect the level of fire activity and method used to address it.

Burn Index – “Average Flame Height” means “mid flame height”. With 2-2 ½ feet fire crews can use hand crews to remove fuel. With 4 feet – usually need an engine or dozer to clear area and with 12 feet or more they may use an indirect method to attempt to control the fire. Air drops, back burns etc.
Chains – a “Land Survey Measurement Tool - one chain equals 66 feet and 80 chains equals a mile.

Dry Bulb Temperature - a thermometer to measure relative humidity

Energy Release Component (ERC) – amount of heat energy (BTU’s) being released

Fire Danger Rating Area –“Logtown” is located in a “High Danger” Rating Area with its extensive level of grass/bush. Generally West of Highway 49 we have a lot of grass/brush and East of Highway 49 there is more brush/timber.

CWR – Chance of Wetting Rain – the percentage likelihood of rain

LAL – Lightning Activity Level - Numbers 1-6 mean no chance of lightning

Scanner Reports –There is a Morning and an Afternoon Report – Best Frequency to use initially is the “Dispatch or “Local” Frequency-- El Dorado Command” which tells about the fire status. (154.43, 151.19)

For further information go to the Tactical Frequencies:
   CDF Tactical Frequency 2, 8, or 9 (151.16)

For big Incidents, check Cal Fire “Fire Command” #1 or #2 (See scanner frequencies sheet that was attached to the June meeting notes.

If you have a “Smart Phone” there is a free application: “5-0Radio Pro” which enables your smart phone to be used as a scanner.

Vacant Lots -- Fire Hazard – Existing law requires property owners to ensure 100 ft clearance around structures. There are several vacant lots within the community that have not been cleared and could endanger adjacent neighbors. El Dorado County does not have a weed abatement ordinance to force these property owners to take action. Sacramento County has such an ordinance. Best we can do locally in Logtown is to contact/ send a letter to the property owner about the “danger” and then if no action is taken write a complaint to El Dorado County. If enough complaints are registered perhaps the County will consider some form of action.

Adjournment: Meeting was adjourned at 10:30. Next meeting: August 10, 2013.

Signed:
Marilyn Olson-Petersen