



Benicia Fire Department
2018
Annual Report





Message from the Fire Chief

I am pleased to present the Benicia Fire Department's 2018 Annual Report. I am proud to share information, statistics and stories about who we are and how we demonstrate our commitment to protecting the lives, property and environment of our citizens and visitors alike. As California's oldest fire department (formed in 1847), we cherish our past as much as our future, and continue to work hard to build upon the positive reputation we have established with our community.

Though merely a snapshot, the report highlights our accomplishments, personnel, and public engagement efforts. It also provides a peak into our future and offers insight into the direction of our department.

The department is comprised of dedicated individuals who work as a team to ensure the safety and preparedness of Benicia. Whether responding to incidents, training, enforcing codes or engaging in public outreach and education, our members are committed to providing excellent services to the community.

We look forward to the future and are excited about what 2019 has in store.

Respectfully,
Josh Chadwick, Fire Chief



Leadership, Org Chart & Personnel

CHIEF OFFICERS



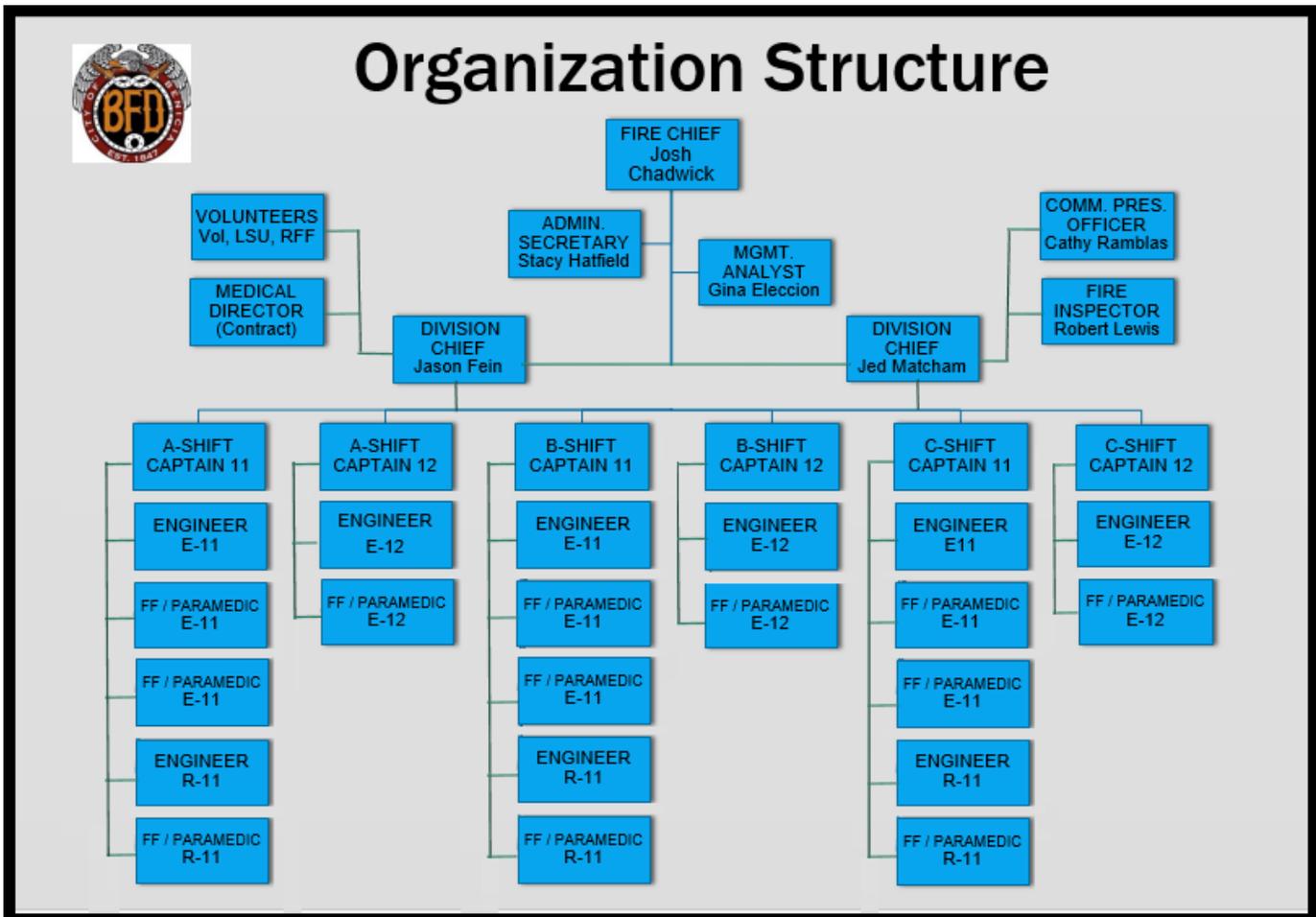
Jason Fein
Division Chief



Josh Chadwick
Fire Chief



Jed Matcham
Division Chief



Facilities

Station 12 – 601 Hastings Drive
* Built in 1983
* Interior Remodel in 2011

Fire Museum – 900 East 2nd Street
* Museum is run by Benicia Fire Department Volunteers

Station 11 – 150 Military West
* Built in 1998 with FEMA funds (post Loma Prieta Earthquake)
* Serves as City's Primary Emergency Operations Center (EOC)

Benicia Community Park
Benicia State Recreation Area
Benicia
680
780

POPULATION:

28,174

JURISDICTION:

15.7 Square Miles

Agriculture – 26%

Commercial/Industrial – 47%

Residential – 27%

Housing Units – 11,432

Regional Parks – 577 Acres

Commercial/Industrial – 7,000,000 Sq. Ft. of Space



Fleet

The Benicia Fire Department maintains a diverse fleet of apparatus. Apparatus are staffed and respond based on the mission and location of incidents.

Type 1 Engines are designed and used as the primary work platform for firefighters in our community. They are designed to deliver personnel and equipment to virtually any in-city emergency, including fires, traffic accidents, and medical emergencies.

The **Rescue** is built to augment service delivery - specifically in structure fire, vehicle accident, and technical rescue categories. This vehicle is also capable of handling medical emergency requests. Another mission specific vehicle in the Fire Department fleet is the Inflatable Rescue Boat, or **IRB 11**. Acquired through a grant, this vehicle enables specially trained firefighters a platform to engage in water rescue incidents along the Benicia coastline.

With the growing risk of urban interface fires, we operate vehicles specifically designed for off road and wildland environments. **Type 3**, or Brush Units, are 4x4 vehicles which are cross staffed with existing personnel and respond when fires are reported in the wildland urban interface areas.

New in Service in 2018



Brush 11
Smeal Type 3 - 750 GPM
Water Capacity – 500 gallons



Truck 11
Smeal 105' Aerial Ladder
2000 GPM
Water Capacity – 480 gallons



Brush 12
Smeal Type 3 - 750 GPM
Water Capacity – 500 gallons

Additional Apparatus in Service



Engine 11



Rescue 11



Engine 12



IRB11 – Rescue Boat



OES 401 Engine



Water Tender 11

Mutual Aid

Supporting Communities Across the State During Wildfire Season

2018 was another destructive wildfire season. Our firefighters were deployed to 12 fires throughout the state for several weeks at a time. The deployment of our crews creates overtime costs that are reimbursed through the California Fire Assistance Agreement.



Special Teams

Urban Search & Rescue

The **USAR Team** members are trained and certified in trench rescue, confined space rescue, high and low angle rescue, rescue systems.

Seven members from Benicia Fire are on the County USAR Team. Members of the USAR team provided assistance during the Camp Fire in Butte County.



Hazardous Materials

All fire personnel are trained to recognize and isolate a hazardous material incident, placing the safety of the public and emergency responders as the foremost priority.

The department has three additional firefighters who are trained as Hazmat Technician Specialists and respond as members of the Solano County **HazMat Team**.



Water Rescue

Due to the city's location along the **Carquinez Straits**, the potential shoreline response area is more than 25 miles.

Our **Water Rescue Program** includes equipment and training that gives us a greater ability to respond to water-related incidents.



Fire Investigation Unit

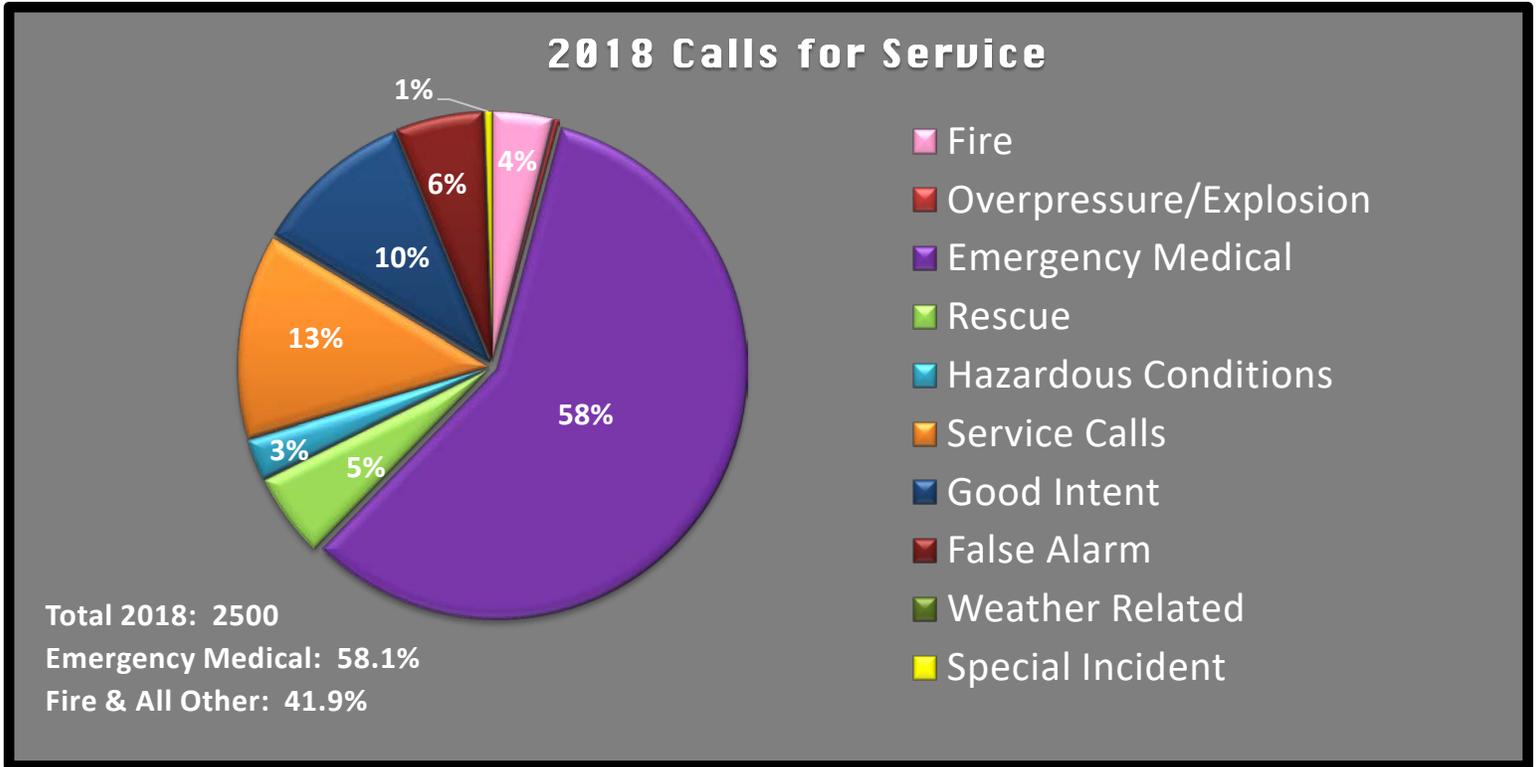
The Solano County **Fire Investigation Unit** brings together representatives of fire and law enforcement to provide fire, arson, and explosion investigation expertise to the communities in Solano County. Benicia Fire has four members on the FIU Team.

The goal is to provide agencies with adequate knowledge to determine the origin and cause of fires. We work to ensure the prosecution of arson and fire-related cases.



Services & Response

The Benicia Fire Department is an “all risk” agency providing services in the areas of **fire prevention** and **suppression, advanced emergency medical services, technical rescue** and **hazardous materials incident response**. These services are provided by a dedicated staff operating from three staffed companies out of two fire stations.



Service Calls:

Include water problems, persons in distress, animal issues, and lock outs

Good Intent:

Include calls reported as smoke or fire that turned out to be minor (e.g. neighbor BBQing or steam thought to be smoke)

Special Incident:

Include citizen complaints about various issues

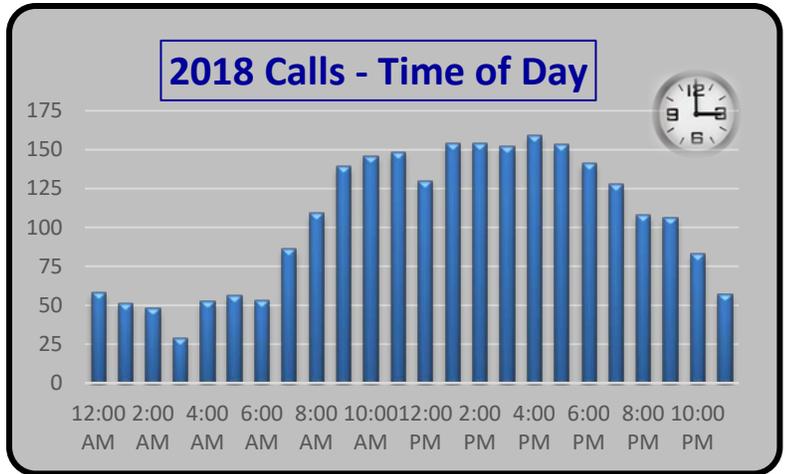
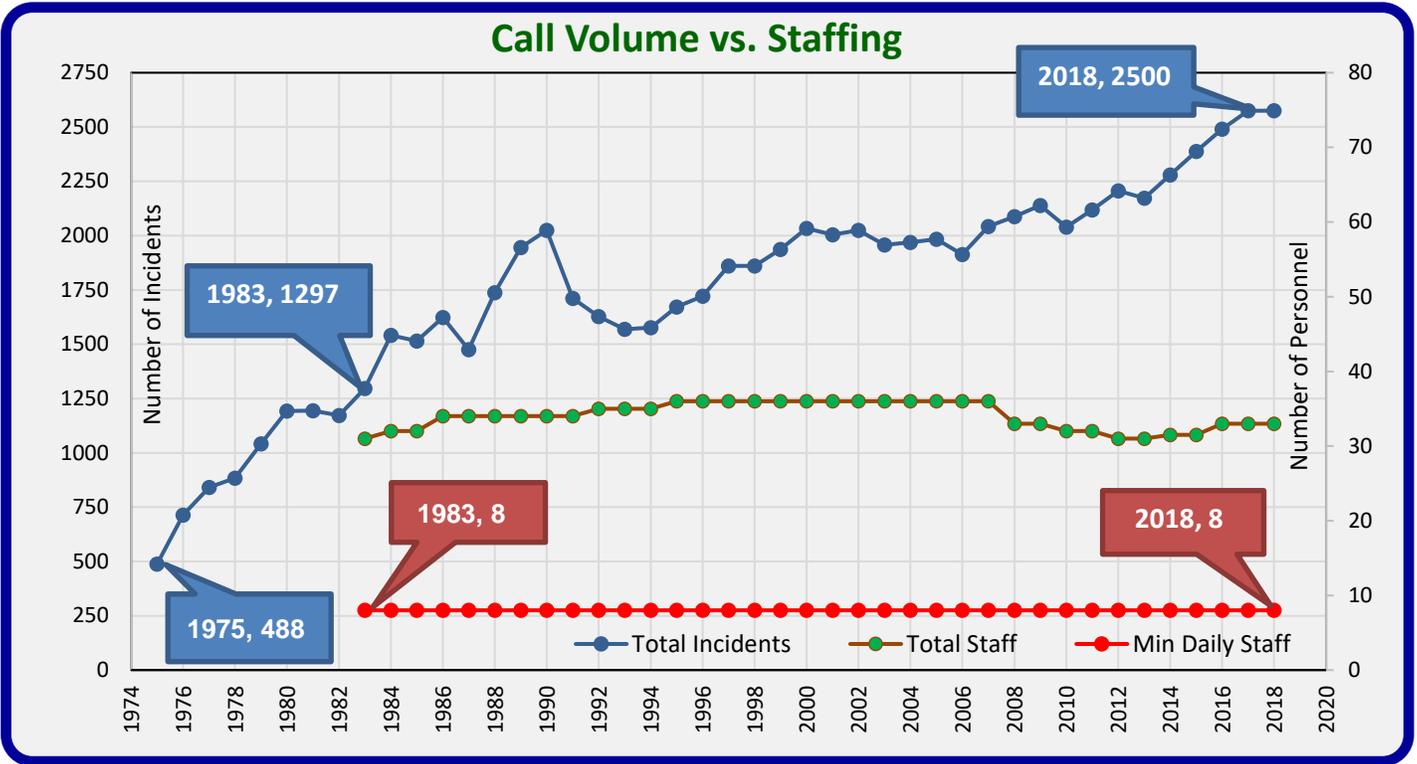
Average response time varies depending on location of the crews, location of the call, traffic patterns, road closures, etc.

Average Response Time: 4:41 min

For all Emergency Calls



Services & Response



2018 Calls – Day of the Week

Sunday	349
Monday	371
Tuesday	341
Wednesday	366
Thursday	356
Friday	366
Saturday	351

The Benicia Fire Department continues to see an upward trend in calls for service. With limited population growth, we see increased calls in our aging population. Medical emergencies and rescue incidents remain a large majority of our calls. With high service expectations, we respond to routine calls that provide safety and peace of mind to our citizens.

Highlights & Achievements

Personnel Highlights...

PROMOTIONS

DIVISION CHIEF

Jason Fein
Jed Matcham

FIRE CAPTAIN

Adam Malbrough
Carl Littorno

FIRE ENGINEER

Rich Garner



NEW HIRES

FIREFIGHTER PARAMEDICS

John Alcantara
Chris Gonzales
Josh Goodreau

COMMUNITY PRESERVATION OFFICER

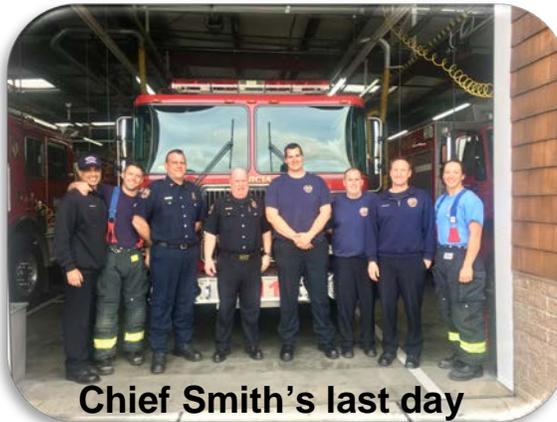
Cathy Ramblas

HYDRANT MAINTENANCE

Ivan Rogers



Elaine Maher
"Dispatcher of the Year"



Chief Smith's last day



Todd Matthews
"Firefighter of the Year"

RETIREMENT



DIVISION CHIEF KC SMITH

Thank you for
over 30 years
of dedicated
service!

Chief
Smith's
final radio
transmission:
March 13, 2018

Chief Smith had
significant roles in:

- * The Volunteer Program
- * Benicia Community Emergency Response Team (CERT)
- * Emergency Preparedness
- * Community AED Program

Education & Training

We are committed to developing and maintaining our knowledge, skills and abilities. Training improves our service capabilities and ensures that the community is getting the best possible service and response. Compliance with industry standards is a priority.



James Lemos Pool Lifeguard Training



Dollhouse Burn Fire Behavior



Probationary Firefighter Training



Engineer Training

We devoted
9,364 hours
to training in 2018



CPR Training

CA Firefighter Joint Apprenticeship Committee (Cal-JAC)

The California Fire Fighter Joint Apprenticeship Committee is the state's preeminent firefighter training and recruitment organization.

A labor-management collaboration, Cal-JAC has been at the heart of building a more qualified, more diverse fire service to meet California's changing needs.

All new and promoted Benicia firefighters become apprentices through the Cal-JAC Program.

Fire Prevention Division

Functions:

The Fire Prevention Division's primary function is to prevent fires by enforcing standards referred to as the Fire Code. The Division's functions include:

- Fire Inspections and Code Enforcement
- Fire and Life Safety Education
- Fire Protection Construction / Systems Review
- Inspections and Issuance of Fire Permits
- Annual Business Inspections

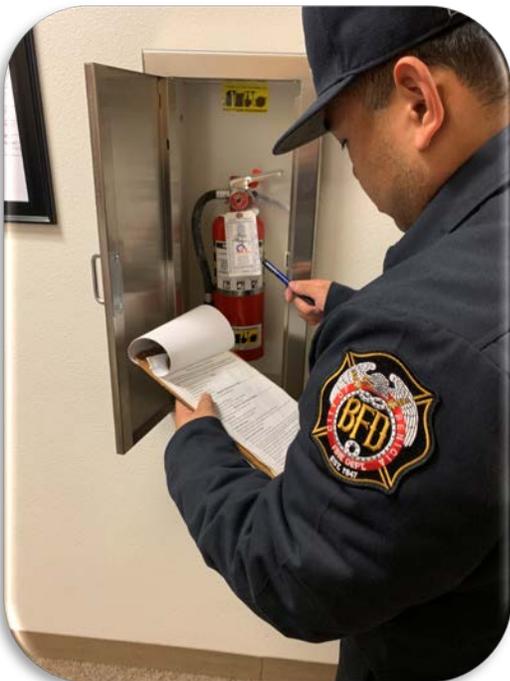
2018 Inspection Activity

1,019 Operational Permits Issued

68 Construction Inspections

1,091 Fire & Life Safety Inspections

64 Vendor Booth/Tent Inspections



Engine Company Inspection Program

Designed to assist the Fire and Life Safety Division with completion of the more basic business inspections, as these are less complicated and focus on general fire code compliance while presenting opportunities for pre-fire planning and increased knowledge of the buildings within the City of Benicia.

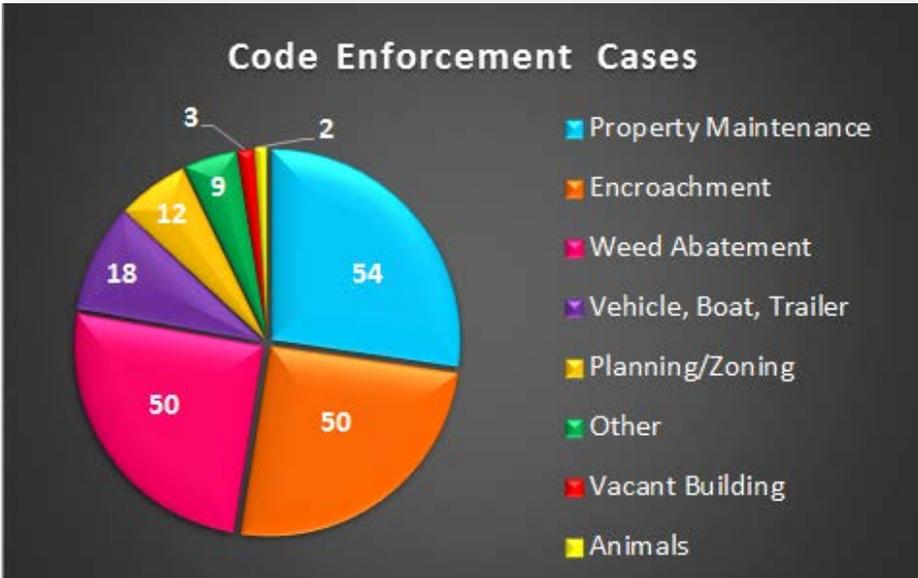
These engine company inspections add to our overall mission by providing prevention services, education to the public, and excellent service to the community, all while providing critical area knowledge to our firefighters.

Code Enforcement

Code Enforcement works under the Fire Prevention Division.

In 2018, our **Community Preservation Officer** opened **196 cases** regarding specific municipal code violations which affect the safety, quality of life and appearance of the city.

We work closely with homeowners, businesses and community groups to enhance and preserve the quality of neighborhoods through public relations, education and code enforcement.

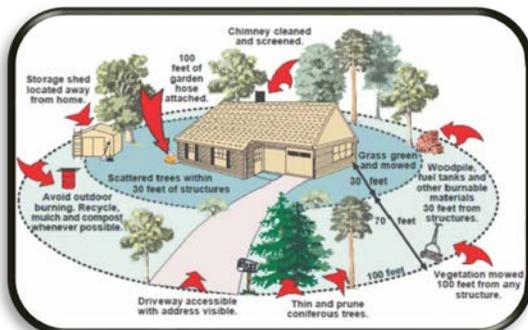


DEFENSIBLE SPACE

Defensible Space is an area around a building in which vegetation, debris, and other types of combustible fuels have been treated, cleared or reduced to slow the spread of fire to and from the building.

Creating **Defensible Space** is essential to improve your home's chance of surviving a wildfire. It's the buffer you create between a building on your property and the grass, trees, shrubs, or any wildland area that surround it.

Defensible Space is also important for the protection of the firefighters defending your home.



VEGETATION MANAGEMENT

The goal of the **Vegetation Management** Program is to control plant material in order to slow the spread of wildfire by changing the characteristics of the vegetation in open spaces surrounding homes and other structures.

Vegetation Management creates separation between vegetation and adjacent structures, and improves fire containment efforts.

The City of Benicia utilizes multiple approaches in its **Vegetation Management** Program: discing, goats and spraying.



Community Involvement

We care about the Benicia Community

Every year, members of the fire department participate in numerous public education and charitable events in the community. These are some of the events our employees and members of the Local 1186 participated in 2018:



2018 Highlights

- Annual Open House
- Thanksgiving Food Deliveries
- Holiday Toy Drive
- Benicia Certified Farmers Market
- Big Truck Roundup
- Storytime at the Benicia Public Library
- Pink Heals Solano
- September 11th Memorial



Public Education - Media

Public education is an integral part of our community risk reduction efforts. The department provides several forms of public education ranging from station tours, school site visits, the Benicia Certified Farmers Market, our Annual Open House, Pictures with Santa, and our daily interactions while out in the community. We are happy to report our programs reached nearly 5000 Benicia community members in 2018.

We have a presence in multiple social media sites including Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and Nextdoor. Our goal is to provide information to all Benicia citizens.



Volunteers/Explorers/Reserves



**Volunteer of the Year
Art Schipper**



VOLUNTEER PARTICIPATION

Reserve Firefighter

Participate in education, training, and experiences that will assist them in pursuing careers as professional firefighters.

Phoenix Volunteer Firefighter

Support the fire department both at emergency incidents and during routine activities.

Logistics Support Unit (LSU)

Provide logistical support to the fire department both at emergency incidents and routine activities.

Junior Firefighter – Explorer Program

For youth ages 15 to 18. The program is part of the Boy Scouts of America, Explorer Program. The Explorers are given the opportunity to become part of the department and work with the on-duty crews in daily activities.

Benicia Amateur Radio Club (BARC)

An active group of Ham Radio operators with a slant towards emergency communications.

**We had
80+ Volunteers
who contributed
11,000+ hours
in 2018**

Emergency Preparedness



25 community members participated in CERT training

We believe in partnering with the community to ensure that everyone is prepared in the event of an emergency. We invite the community to take advantage of the many services we provide.



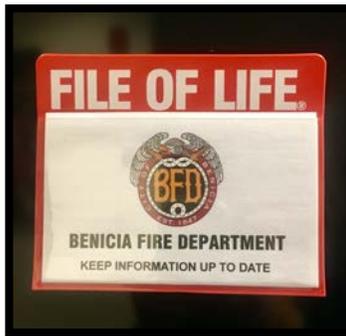
144 community members participated in Get Ready Benicia training



6,000 + Benicia residents opted into Alert Solano



Hands-Only CPR to city employees and community members



Over 500 pouches were distributed to the citizens of Benicia



BARC has over 70 members

EOC Training



In the event of Emergency Operations Center (EOC) activation, City of Benicia employees become Disaster Service Workers.

History

Established 1847 – California's oldest Fire Department

Phoenix



1820's double-decker hand pumper

Benicia Fire Museum acquired in 1878

Used in the 1906 San Francisco earthquake response

Griffin



Late 1800's era restored Ramsey pumper

Benicia Fire Museum acquired in 1985

Chief Solano Engine No 5



Purchased in 1949

One of first 4WD fire engines west of Mississippi

Still capable of pumping 1300 GPM

Solano



Purchased in 1855 for \$608

First engine owned by Benicia Fire Volunteers

Benicia Fire Bell History



The first fire bell was purchased in the mid 1870's from the Packer Bell Co. It was mounted on top of the Capitol Building to call out the volunteer firefighters and to announce momentous events within the City of Benicia.

In the 1890's, St. Dominic's Church requested an exchange of bells, as the one in their belfry was too heavy and they feared its weight would damage the tower. The bell at St. Dominic's was a Vickers Bell made in England in the late 1800s and weighed over 1800 pounds, measured 36" in diameter at its mouth, 24" at the top and 32" high. It is made of iron, coated with brass and bronze.

The Vickers Bell remained mounted on top of the Capitol Building until June 8, 1956 when it was removed to make way for the restoration of the Capitol Building. Since the bell had not been part of the building when Benicia was the Capitol, the bell was removed.



The bell was kept in storage for many years until the first fire museum was established in 1981. The bell was remounted in front of the museum where it remained until 1997 when the bell was then relocated to its current location in front of the new Fire Station at 150 Military West.

Final Thoughts

We are here for you! Regardless of increases in call volume and budget constraints, Benicia Fire is committed to providing excellent service to the community. In 2019, we will build upon our 2018 successes, and will continue to improve in areas where we see opportunity. Our efforts reach beyond Benicia, as we engage throughout Solano County, the Bay Area, and the State of California. These collaborations allow us to share resources, gain valuable knowledge, and are instrumental in achieving our goals.

We encourage each of you to get involved. Whether you take a disaster preparedness class, register for emergency alerts at www.AlertSolano.com, attend our community events, or simply follow Benicia Fire on Facebook and Twitter, your engagement will help us to be successful in our efforts to be responsive to your needs.

Thank you for your continued support! We value your trust, respect, and opinions. Feel free to contact us at any time if you have questions, comments, or suggestions. Best to each of you in 2019!

2019 Goals

- Receive new OES Engine and conduct in-service training
- Received donation of new portable air monitors and develop training and use standards
- Finalize purchase of new Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) System
- Improve career development strategies for all ranks
- Adopt the 2019 fire code with Benicia specific amendments
- Update the City Emergency Operations Plan
- Improve Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM)
- Conduct a major citywide Emergency Operations Center (EOC) training exercise
- Improve department's Reserve Program



Photo Credit: Joe Bergman