

# SAN MATEO CONSOLIDATED FIRE DEPARTMENT



Proudly serving the cities of Belmont, Foster City, and San Mateo



## 2023 ANNUAL REPORT





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A MESSAGE FROM THE FIRE CHIEF

San Mateo Consolidated Fire Department (SMC Fire), like most organizations, was required to deal with a degree of fiscal uncertainty through most of 2023 brought on by inflation and predictions of significant economic impacts. Though we adapted to these challenges by evaluating and updating processes to stay in front of production delays, supply chain issues, and increased costs for goods and services, we continue to look for new and creative methods in all aspects of our operations to ensure continued fiscal responsibility while honoring our commitment to provide the highest level of public service possible. Our Strategic Plan is focused on continuing to build on employee training and engagement and to bring in technology that will give us the analytic tools necessary to monitor all facets of the organization and implement effective measures.

As we complete our 5<sup>th</sup> year of operation, I am happy to say the organization is finding its stride. We continue to build on the strong foundation to support the actions needed to honor our mission and values. Our culture is built on trust and collaboration at every level and is most prevalent in the work done by our participatory management process known as FACT (Fire Action Consensus Team). It is extremely encouraging to be a member of an organization that not only supports input and collaboration but requires it from every level of every division in order to create positive change.

2023 started with a storm that tested emergency response and mitigation at every level. Spring continued with a wetter than normal pattern, which led to a slower than normal wildfire season. Deployments totaled just under 11,000 hours, which is well below our five-year average of almost 14,000 hours. Though slower than normal, we still managed to send crews to multiple fires in Northern California, Oregon, and Idaho. Fortunately, the excessive rainfall kept local wildfires to a size that was quickly managed by local resources. Operationally, we saw a significant uptick in both our responses for service and total inspections. Responses increased by 11.5% to 19,719 and our inspections increased by 14.5% to 7,388. With steady increases in demand for services, the importance of staying fully staffed has remained a focus. Industry-wide, we are seeing significant staffing challenges, primarily with the entry-level Firefighter and Firefighter/Paramedic positions. Though we are seeing a decrease in the applicant pool, the draw of a culture-focused and competitive organization like SMC Fire has allowed us to bring in outstanding candidates for all positions.

During the year, we congratulated and bid farewell to several retirees, including, Fire Captains Gary Jacobs, Steve Whitmarsh, and Al Piacente and Firefighter Gino Fumagalli. With retirements came opportunities for promotions. In our Operation’s Division, we promoted Matt Van Orden and Derek Clary to Fire Captain. On top of that, we saw 13 new faces join the organization, filling vacancies and new positions in every division. They are now part of the SMC Fire family, and we are excited about the energy they all bring to the organization.

Unfortunately, 2023 brought with it a stark reminder of the dangers of the service we provide. On July 21, 2023, at the age of 54, Firefighter Mike Ramsey lost his battle with a job-related cancer. This was the first line of duty death we experienced as an organization, and it was incredibly impactful to every member of our fire family. Though we provided Mike and his family with an appropriate memorial, the greatest honor we can give is to continue to focus on ways to improve the health and safety of our employees through programs and policies that focus on the physical and behavioral health of our organization. With Firefighters being at a significantly higher risk of a cancer diagnosis than the general public, we will continue to identify and implement practical solutions with the goal of never having to provide a memorial service for one of our own again.

As Fire Chief of San Mateo Consolidated Fire Department, I am extremely proud of the solid foundation the organization has built over the past five years. Our focus has been on implementing policies and processes that support the organization’s mission and vision. With a strong foundation in place, built on a culture of trust and communication, we are confident we can meet future challenges head on while maintaining public trust. I am inspired by the dedication I see throughout our organization, and I am reassured daily by the level of talent and leadership I see throughout the Department. Our commitment to provide outstanding public safety remains steadfast and strong, and we are thankful for the opportunity to serve the cities of Belmont, Foster City, and San Mateo.

Respectfully,  
**Fire Chief Kent Thrasher**



**Our Mission**

Providing all risk fire and emergency services through professionalism, collaboration, and public trust.

**Our Vision**

Fostering our culture of excellence through involvement, effective communication, and commitment to high performance.

- Our Core Values**
- Respect
  - Accountability
  - Dedication
  - Integrity
  - Compassion
  - Altruism
  - Leadership

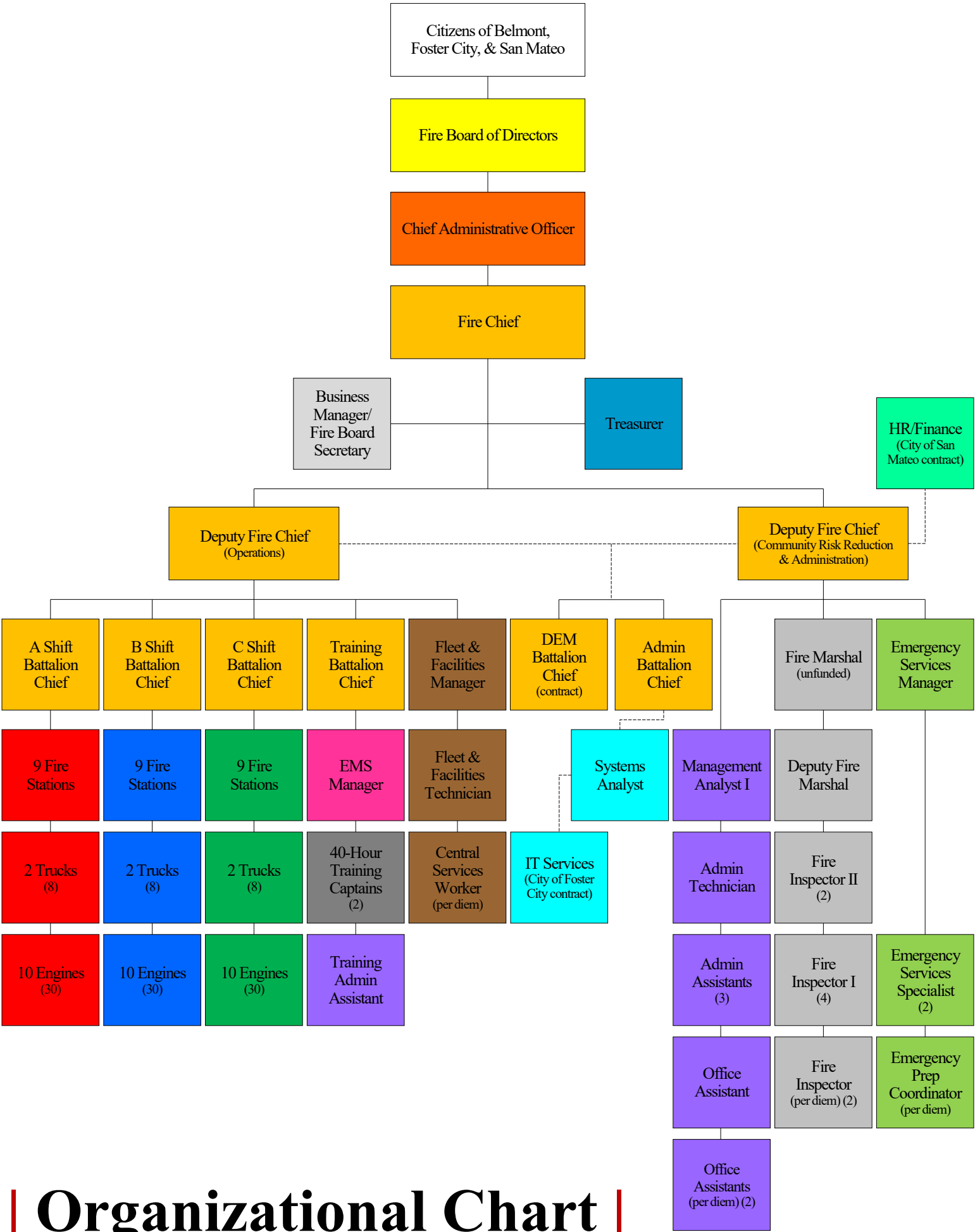
**ABOUT US**

1040 E. Hillsdale Boulevard,  
Foster City, CA 94404  
Monday—Friday  
8:00am—5:00pm  
www.smcfire.org

Administration, Operations, & Training  
Phone: (650) 522-7900  
Email: fire@smcfire.org

Bureau of Fire Protection & Life Safety  
Phone: (650) 522-7940  
Email: fire@smcfire.org

Office of Emergency Services  
Phone: (650) 522-7960  
Email: prepare@smcfire.org



**Organizational Chart**





**Julia Mates**  
Fire Board Chair  
City of Belmont

Member Alternate:  
Tom McCune



**Jon Froomin**  
Vice Chair  
City of Foster City

Member Alternate:  
Patrick Sullivan



**Rob Newsom Jr.**  
Board Member  
City of San Mateo

Member Alternate:  
Amourence Lee



## FIRE BOARD

The Board of Directors, also known as the Fire Board, is comprised of a City Council member from each of the three cities within the San Mateo Consolidated Fire Department’s jurisdiction. Each Board member has a designated alternate from their City Council who serves as a backup in the event of their absence. The Fire Board is primarily responsible for making decisions on major matters for the department, such as budget approval. Regular Meetings are open to the public and scheduled quarterly with the option for additional meetings as needed. In 2023, the Fire Board had seven Regular Meetings and one Special Meeting. They adopted a total of 31 resolutions and one ordinance.



**Fire Station 14**  
911 Granada Street,  
Belmont, CA 94002  
Engine 14, Hazmat 14



**Fire Station 15**  
2701 Cipriani Boulevard,  
Belmont, CA 94002  
Engine 15



**Fire Station 21**  
120 S. Ellsworth Avenue,  
San Mateo, CA 94401  
Engine 21, Truck 21



**Fire Station 23**  
31 W. 27th Avenue,  
San Mateo, CA 94403  
Engine 23, Truck 23,  
Battalion 5



**Fire Station 24**  
319 S. Humboldt Street,  
San Mateo, CA 94401  
Engine 24



**Fire Station 25**  
1455 Shafter Street,  
San Mateo, CA 94402  
Engine 25



**Fire Station 26**  
1500 Marina Court,  
San Mateo, CA 94403  
Engine 26



**Fire Station 27**  
1801 De Anza Boulevard,  
San Mateo, CA 94402  
Engine 27, OES Engine 405,  
OES Engine 2609 & 2610



**Fire Station 28**  
1040 E. Hillsdale Boulevard,  
Foster City, CA 94404  
Engine 28, Engine 29,  
Jet Skis & Boat 28

# Fire Stations



# NEW HIRES



**Shaohsuan (Steven) Fanchiang—Firefighter (lateral) | February 21, 2023**

Steven came to us from Palo Alto Fire Department where he worked as a Firefighter/Paramedic for nine years. His previous experience includes Paramedic with American Medical Response and Research Assistant with Torrey Pines Institute. Steven received paramedic training from UCLA Daniel Freeman Paramedic Education and obtained his license with California Emergency Medical Services Authority. He graduated from University of California San Diego with a B.S. in Microbiology.



**Trevor Sanchez—Firefighter (lateral) | February 21, 2023**

Trevor came to us from Central Marin Fire Authority where he worked as a Firefighter/Paramedic for four years. His previous experience includes Journeyman with Gaul & Sons Construction, Fire Intern with Central County Fire Department, Seasonal Firefighter with Cal Fire BEU, and Firefighter Explorer with Cal Fire Explorer Post 955. Trevor received his Firefighter I and Fire Technology Certification from College of San Mateo. He graduated from Foothill College with an A.S. in Paramedicine.



**Melody Chan—Office Assistant II | March 27, 2023**

Melody has over 25 years of administrative experience. She served in various positions as an Office and Administrative Assistant, an Account Executive in Private Risk Management, and Client Services within the insurance field. Since September 19, 2022, Melody has been assisting San Mateo Consolidated's Bureau of Fire Protection & Life Safety Division as a per diem Office Assistant. Effective March 27, she began her new full-time role assisting and supporting the Bureau.



**Jacqueline (Jackie) James—Office Assistant | April 4, 2023**

Jackie has multiple years of administrative experience in health and safety. She came to us from Thyme Integrative Health as an Office Assistant. She served 14 years as a Communications Dispatcher, EMD, and Certified Training Instructor with AMR Burlingame. She also served as a Public Safety Dispatcher with the Communications Department at San Francisco International Airport. Effective April 4th, Jackie began her role assisting and supporting the Bureau of Fire Protection & Life Safety Division.



**Patrick Bignardi—Fire Inspector | April 17, 2023**

Patrick came to us from Central County Fire Department where he was as a Fire Prevention Specialist since 2020. He was a Volunteer Firefighter/EMT 1 with Corte Madera Fire Department in June 2000 to March 2004 and with Lakeville Volunteer Fire Department from November 2014 to October 2017. His experience includes Fire Prevention Specialist with Tiburon Fire Protection District, Vegetation Management Specialist with San Rafael Fire Department, Defensible Space Inspector with Cal Fire, St. Helena, and Fire Logistics Material Handler with Sonoma County Fire & Emergency Services. His certifications include Plans Examiner & Fire Inspector 1, Firefighter 1, PC 832, Hazmat 1st Responder Awareness & Operational, and Youth Firesetting Intervention Specialist & Program Manager. Patrick is a U.S. Navy Veteran, NorCal FPO Public Education Subcommittee member, and CAFAA member.



**Tyler Ikeda—Firefighter | June 23, 2023**

Tyler graduated from San Francisco State University with a B.S. degree in Communication Studies. He completed the Fire Technology Program with College of San Mateo and received his EMT certification with Skyline College. Tyler served as a Cadet for the San Mateo Consolidated Fire Department from 2021 to 2022 and worked as our per diem Central Services Worker from February 22, 2022, through March 6, 2023.



**Rachael Grgich—Office Assistant II | August 21, 2023**

Rachael served as a Dental Hygienist and assisted with administrative duties in a dental office for six years. She graduated from Sonoma State University with a B.S. in Kinesiology and Foothill College with an A.S. in Dental Hygiene. Since September 19, 2022, Rachael has been assisting the Fire Administration Division as a per diem Office Assistant. Effective August 21, she began her new full-time role assisting and supporting Administration.



**Hannah Kopplin—Emergency Services Specialist | September 5, 2023**

Hannah graduated from Louisiana State University with a B.S. in Geography with a concentration in Disaster Science & Management. She has several years of experience as an Intern/Fellow II for San Mateo County EMS Agency's Health Emergency Preparedness Team. Her training includes FEMA ICS, EOC Operations Section Overview, EOC Section/Position Logistics Overview, Local Volunteers & Donations Management of Spontaneous Volunteers in Disaster Training, ICS for Community-based Organizations, and CERT.



**Samuel Nichols—Firefighter (lateral) | November 27, 2023**

Samuel Nichols came to us from Cal Fire San Mateo-Santa Cruz Unit where he worked as a Fire Apparatus Engineer since June 2022. He previously worked as a Firefighter for Riverside County Fire Department, a Volunteer Firefighter/Driver with Santa Cruz County Fire Department, and a Firefighter with the Branciforte Fire Protection District. Samuel also worked for AMR Monterey County as an Emergency Medical Technician. He graduated from Cabrillo College with an A.S. in Fire Technology.



**Neal Narayan—Firefighter (lateral) | November 27, 2023**

Neal Narayan came to us from San Francisco Fire Department where he worked as a Firefighter since August 2021. His previous experience includes Supervisor of the Hazard Awareness & Warning Center for PG&E, Fire Board Member of the California Training Officers Association, Firefighter and Fire Captain with Arcata Fire District, and Seasonal Firefighter I with Cal Fire San Mateo-Santa Cruz and San Benito-Monterey Units. He obtained his Firefighter I from College of San Mateo. Neal is also fluent in Hindi and an FAA Part 107 Drone Pilot.



**Brendan Murphy—Firefighter (lateral) | November 27, 2023**

Brendan Murphy came to us from Albuquerque Fire Rescue where he worked as a Firefighter since May 2019. His previous experience includes EMT for SeniorCare EMS in New York City and Firefighter with Cordelia Fire Protection District, where he served as Treasurer for their Association in 2016. Brendan graduated from Chabot College with an A.A. in Fire Technology and is currently attending the University of New Mexico. Additionally, Brendan recently completed all requirements for his Paramedic National Registry.



**Jarrid Boyer—Firefighter (lateral) | November 27, 2023**

Jarrid Boyer came to us from Cal Fire Nevada/Yuba/Placer Unit where he worked as a Firefighter I since August 2020. He also worked as a construction worker for Boyer Tile since 2004. His previous experience includes Fire Engineer for Five Cities Fire Authority, Firefighter for Ebbetts Pass Fire District, and student assistant for CalPERS. Jarrid graduated from American River College with an A.S. in Fire Technology and obtained his Firefighter I with California Regional Fire Academy.



**Daniel Rosas—Firefighter (lateral) | November 27, 2023**

Daniel Rosas comes to us from El Cerrito Fire Department where he worked as a Firefighter since November 2020. His previous work experience includes five seasons as a Firefighter I with Cal Fire Butte Meadows/Paradise, Firefighter Intern with Butte County Fire & Rescue, and Teaching Assistant with Butte College Fire Academy. Daniel graduated from the 65th Butte Fire Academy. He is fluent in Spanish and has construction experience as well.





# PROMOTIONS



**Matt Van Orden—Fire Captain | May 26, 2023**

Matt started his career in the fire service with San Mateo Fire Department Cadet Program from 2011 to 2012. He joined the City of San Mateo Fire Department on March 29, 2012, as an Academy Recruit and was promoted to Firefighter on July 1, 2012. Matt is an OES Strike Team Member, Engine Driver/Operator and Aerial Tiller Truck Driver/Operator. He completed his Acting Captain Task Book in July 2021 and has worked as an Acting Captain on many occasions since then. His certificates include Company Officer 2A through 2E, Instructor I, Hazmat IC, Rescue Systems I, S-130, S-190, and S-290. Matt is a member of numerous committees including Safety, Health & Wellness, Sanitization, Life Saving, Social Media, and Widows & Orphans Fund.



**Derek Clary—Fire Captain | November 12, 2023**

Derek Clary started his career in the fire service as a Firefighter for Cal Fire in Butte County in 2001. He then worked as a Paramedic for AMR Santa Clara County and as a Firefighter/Paramedic for the Half Moon Bay Fire Protection District. Derek joined the San Mateo Fire Department as a Firefighter/Paramedic in August 2007. He became an Acting Captain in October 2021 and is a member of the Water Rescue Team. His certifications include Fire Control 3, Fire Control 6, Rescue System I, and IAFF Peer Fitness Trainer. He also developed Running Lane Manual in 2010. Derek participated in the COVID-19 Workgroup and is a current member of the Safety, Health, & Wellness Committee.

# RETIREMENTS



**Gary Jacobs—Fire Captain | May 10, 2023**

Gary Jacobs began his career in the fire service as a Firefighter-Apparatus Operator at Fort Leonard Wood with the U.S. Army from 1986-1990. He served as an Engine/Rescue Captain with NASA Ames Research Center from 1994-1999. On September 24, 1999, Gary joined the Belmont-San Carlos Fire Department as a full-time Firefighter-Engineer/Paramedic. Gary was promoted to Fire Captain in December 2008 and became an Acting Battalion Chief beginning March 2020. Gary served as a member of the San Mateo County Hazmat Emergency Response team since 1999, Union District DVP from 2003-2019, and Local 2400 Executive Officer (Treasurer) from 2008-2019. While a member of the Belmont-San Carlos Fire Department, he was responsible for writing, submitting, and implementing Federal FEMA AFG grants and successfully obtained numerous federal grants. Gary participated as a member of the labor team as an integral part in creation of the San Mateo Consolidated Fire Department. Additionally, Gary supported many of the San Mateo Consolidated Fire Department's software applications, such as Telestaff, and was a member of the Joint Policies Procedure Committee.



**Steve Whitmarsh—Fire Captain | November 3, 2023**

Steve joined the Belmont-San Carlos Fire Department as a full-time Firefighter-Engineer on April 4, 1988. Steve was promoted to Fire Captain on February 16, 2000. Steve served as a member of the San Mateo County Hazmat Emergency Response Team for most of his career. Additionally, he was an active member as a PPE Program Officer, SCBA Manager and Technician, Fitness Equipment Manager, and Truck Tiller Operator Trainer.



**Al Piacente—Fire Captain | December 27, 2023**

Al was hired with the Foster City Fire Department as a full-time Firefighter on August 4, 1986. He was promoted to Fire Captain on October 8, 1999. Al was a member of the San Mateo Consolidated Fire Department Peer Support Team and Wellness Working Group. He has also served as a member of the Mentoring Program. Al has been instrumental in training multiple probationary Firefighters and has been a mentor to many of us throughout his career.



**Gino Fumagalli—Firefighter | December 27, 2023**

Gino was hired with the San Mateo Fire Department as a full-time Firefighter/Paramedic on November 15, 1999. Gino served as FACT Board Chair and a member of the Mentoring Program. In 2009, Gino and the crew of Engine 24 received the Valor Award from the Peninsula Council of Lions Club in acknowledgement of their outstanding lifesaving performance. Gino completed various trainings such as Elevator Rescue Operations, Mass Casualty Training, Fire Management I, Rapid Intervention Crew Tactics, Fire Control 7 Wildland Fire Fighting, and Rescue Systems II.





# Budget

FINANCIALS	2021-2022 ACTUALS	2022-2023 ADJUSTED BUDGET	2023-2024 ADOPTED BUDGET
Personnel	\$42,882,386	\$41,345,843	\$43,030,258
Operating	\$4,828,907	\$4,957,024	\$4,802,555
Capital Outlay	\$1,110,040	\$1,526,379	\$1,793,263
Total Expenditures by Category	\$48,821,334	\$47,829,246	\$49,626,077
Administration	\$3,068,101	\$3,635,746	\$3,911,381
Community Risk Reduction	\$2,654,042	\$2,624,608	\$2,660,294
Hazardous Materials	\$608,970	\$755,255	\$792,518
Office of Emergency Services	\$306,574	\$580,128	\$590,187
Operations	\$42,183,647	\$40,233,509	\$41,671,698
Total Expenditures by Program	\$48,821,334	\$47,829,246	\$49,626,077
General Fund	\$46,167,292	\$45,204,638	\$46,965,783
Special Revenue Fund	\$2,654,042	\$2,624,608	\$2,660,294
Total Funding Sources	\$48,821,334	\$47,829,246	\$49,626,077
Belmont Contributions	\$8,405,749	\$8,722,543	\$9,169,909
Foster City Contributions	\$8,405,749	\$8,722,543	\$9,169,909
San Mateo Contributions	\$25,217,246	\$26,167,628	\$27,509,727
Charges for Services	\$660	-	-
Fire Fees	\$2,718,881	\$2,643,209	\$2,656,585
Grants and Other Intergovernmental	\$3,268,180	\$2,604,012	\$1,061,238
Interest and Miscellaneous	\$90,257	\$59,570	\$64,857
Total Sources of Funding	\$48,106,723	\$48,919,505	\$49,632,225

# Mutual Aid Responses

STATE MUTUAL AID				
DEPLOYMENTS	STAFF	FROM	TO	HOURS
EMAC Eugene OR Support	8	8/14/23	8/21/23	1,302

FEDERAL MUTUAL AID				
DEPLOYMENTS	STAFF	FROM	TO	HOURS
OSC Support	1	6/29/23	7/7/23	196
Ridge	1	8/12/23	8/22/23	246
Happy Camp Complex	1	8/18/23	9/2/23	372.50
Smith River Complex	31	8/20/23	10/14/23	8,333
2023 RAC MOB Support	1	8/21/23	8/26/23	121
South Fork Complex	1	8/25/23	9/2/23	196
Chilcoot	1	8/26/23	9/6/23	269
SRF Lightning Complex	1	10/5/23	10/16/23	275

Total deployment hours: 11,310.50



Note: All deployments are reimbursed by the State or Federal agencies.





# Department Statistics

RESPONSES BY UNIT	
UNIT	RESPONSES
Battalion 5	1,144
Engine 14	1,769
Engine 15	1,437
Engine 21	2,388
Engine 23	2,490
Engine 24	1,981
Engine 25	935
Engine 26	1,705
Engine 27	868
Engine 28	1,389
Engine 29	1,302
Engine 2609	1
Engine 2610	1
Hazmat 14	33
Jet Ski 28	30
Truck 21	838
Truck 23	1,298
Other	110
Total	19,719



Average Response Time:

05:27

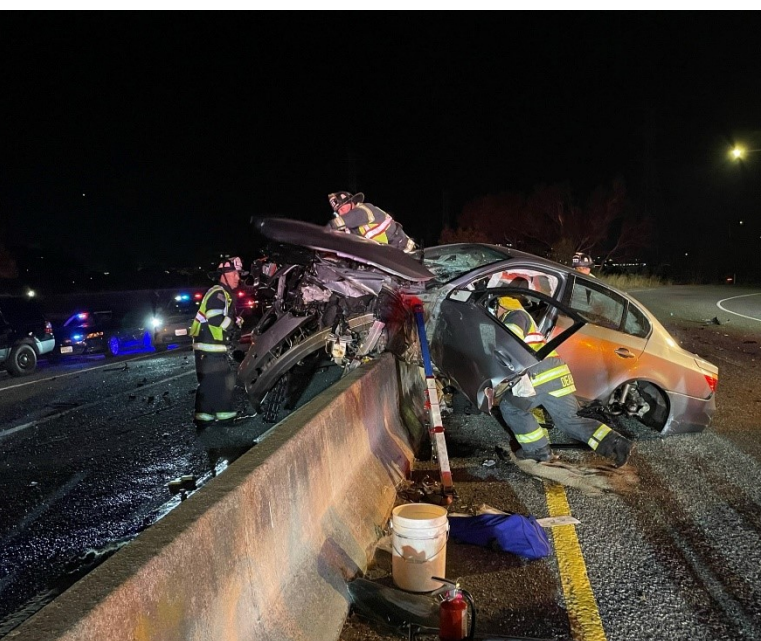
(5 minutes 27 seconds includes Priority 1 calls and 1st arriving unit)

INCIDENTS BY TYPE & APPARATUS RESPONSES		
INCIDENT TYPE	INCIDENTS	APPARATUS RESPONSES
Emergency Medical Services	9,887	10,559
False Alarm & False Call	1,189	1,733
Fire	226	624
Good Intent Call	1,809	2,404
Hazardous Condition	365	619
Overpressure, Rupture, Explosion, Overheat	17	41
Rescue	941	2,333
Service Call	1,183	1,373
Severe Weather & Natural Disaster	15	24
Special Incident Type, Other	9	9
Total	15,641	19,719





# | SIGNIFICANT



# INCIDENTS |





# | Bureau of Fire Protection & Life Safety |

The primary responsibilities of the Bureau of Fire Protection & Life Safety are to enforce all applicable state and local fire codes and standards, as well as conduct fire investigations. Our priorities are to provide and maintain high quality customer service, provide consistent interpretation and effective enforcement of fire codes, and sustain effective communication within our communities to enhance our citizens’ protection. Our Commercial Inspection Program inspects commercial occupancies to ensure fire safety, including those mandated by the state. We also provide fire investigation services to determine the cause of fires. Our plan review program checks all newly constructed and remodeled buildings for Fire and Building Code compliance. In 2023, we also began to conduct annual vegetation/landscape inspections of single family homes located in Fire Severity Zones.

After the 2017 Ghostship Fire in Oakland, the State Legislature passed SB 1205, which requires that a notification to the governing body of each fire department report on the status of their inspections mandated by law in Section 13146 of the Health and Safety Code. Subsequent to this law, the San Mateo County Civil Grand Jury released a report entitled “Fire Safety Inspection Programs on the Road to Recovery” in which they made several recommendations, which were accepted by the Fire Board. One recommendation asked the department to report the mandated inspection results via an annual report no later than March of each year. The inspections are mandated to be done annually on a calendar year basis with the exception of jails, which are to be done every two years.

MANDATED FIRE INSPECTIONS			
Occupancy	Total Buildings	Total Inspected	Total Completed
High Rise	27	27	100%
Schools	56	56	100%
Residential	1,893	1,893	100%
Jails	2	0	N/A

Total plan reviews:

1,842

INSPECTIONS	
Commercial	1,047
Construction	1,448
Event Center	15
False Alarms	545
Hot Works	63
New Businesses	108
Tents	15
Wildland	120
Care	123
Total	3,484

# | Cadet Program |

The Cadet Program is a yearlong work experience program in conjunction with the Cooperative Education Program at the College of San Mateo. It is available for young adults who are at least 18 years of age. Cadets can earn one unit of college credit for every 60 hours of participation. The program fulfills the students’ volunteer requirement to earn their California State Firefighter I Certificates. It includes a minimum of 48 hours per month of ride along experience and 60 hours per year in either the Fire Administration, Training, or Bureau of Fire Protection & Life Safety Division. Cadets ride along as student firefighters with the fire engines and truck companies where they respond to emergency calls. They also participate in trainings and interview preparation and volunteer at various events hosted by the department and San Mateo Consolidated Firefighters’ Association. This includes Open House, the Citizens’ Academy, the CERT Program, Academy graduations, Badge Pinning ceremonies, County training events, probationary testing, the Firefighter Chili Cook-Off, the Firefighter’s Toy Program, and holiday events at the stations. In 2023, 13 Cadets completed the Cadet Program. They volunteered approximately 800 hours at events and a total of 6,500 ride along hours.



Explorer Post 904, also known as the Explorer Program, is for those who are interested in pursuing a career in the fire service. The program allows young adults, ages 15 to 21, to explore a career in firefighting, emergency medical services, and rescue. Over the course of a year, Explorers attend regularly scheduled meetings and training sessions that are taught by our Firefighters in a classroom and with hands-on fire suppression training. The training topics include, but are not limited to, fire science, fire hose, search, forcible entry techniques, and CPR. They are also allowed to participate in the department’s ride along program where they can ride on the fire engines and truck companies to observe and use some of their new training and skills. The ride along program gives Explorers an opportunity to experience what it would be like to work a full 24-hour shift in one of our fire stations. In addition to their training, Explorers volunteer many hours of community service throughout the year at various department and neighborhood events, such as pancake breakfasts and fire prevention activities. Other events include the San Mateo Consolidated Firefighters’ Association’s Firefighter Chili Cook-Off and Firefighter’s Toy Program. New Explorer recruits are usually brought into the program once a year around the beginning of the year. Once Explorers age out of the program, ideally, they can move onto the Cadet Program. On average, approximately 15 Explorers participate in the Explorer Program each year.

# | Explorer Program |



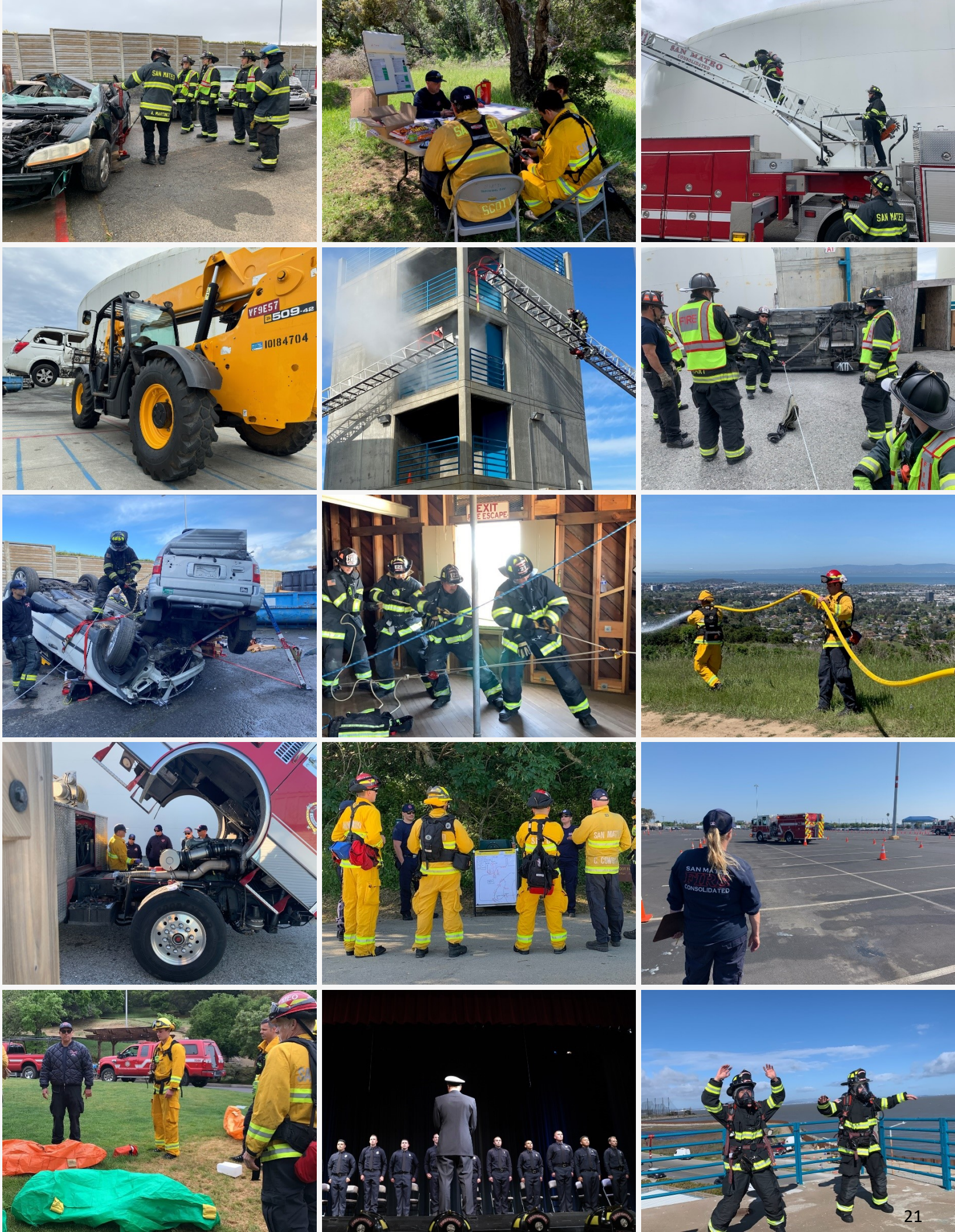
# Training Division

The Training Division is responsible for emergency medical services (EMS) training and state and federally-required fire suppression and rescue training. We also provide employee training and testing, career development, promotional testing, company-level training, safety program implementation, driver training, and any training that keeps our mission to keep our personnel and community safe. The division is staffed by a Battalion Chief, two Fire Captains, an EMS Manager, and an Office Assistant. We host intense entry-level Firefighter academies where recruits complete live fire training, water rescue, fire hose management, auto extrication, wildland training, ladders, forcible entry, EMS training, ventilation skills, hazardous materials incident awareness, and other basic Firefighter skills.

As we celebrate our first calendar year as a stand-alone Training Division, we continue to deliver programs that maintain and develop skillsets for our personnel while striving to enhance leadership development. In addition to supporting the training needs for our entire workforce, 2023 proved to be a busy year for us as we supported the on-boarding and development of 31 new probationary employees. We also led the County in developing a partnership with the College of San Mateo and County Training Officers to start a joint County Fire Academy that graduated 27 new County recruits in December. Some of our other notable 2023 accomplishments include:

- Water rescue operations training
- Continued development of in-house State Fire Training certified Instructors
- Truck company specific hands-on training
- An Internal Lateral Fire Academy
- The first round of training for the new electrified Caltrain service and Zoox autonomous vehicles
- The first ever “Girls Fire Camp” at the College of San Mateo, providing young women the opportunity to explore a career in the fire service
- Development and execution of a Countywide Truck Academy
- A new Tractor Drawn Aerial driver training certification program
- Hosting a presentation on Solar Panel and Lithium Battery safety for Firefighters
- Type 6 Driving and Wildland RT-130 refresher training
- Training and implementation of ImageTrend, a new patient care report documentation system
- ACLS paramedic recertification
- RIC, Air Management, and VEIS drills with all crews
- Training Tower improvements
- Maintenance of compliance with SCBA orientation and fit testing
- Claremont Street first-in response drill for all crews
- Administration of annual flu shots
- Purchase of and training on a new roof rescue device
- Purchase of a new thermal manikin that will enhance thermal camera-assisted rescue training
- Annual driver/operator cone course rodeo training
- Our first San Mateo Consolidated Fire Company Officers Manual
- Purchase of a new Telehandler forklift with funds earned from training hours
- Quarterly rope rescue training
- Probationary training and testing

TRAINING HOURS		
EMS	Operations	Driver Operator
3,859	25,353	4,731





# Community Emergency Response Team

The Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) continues to be very active. Since the first course in 2004, well over 3,000 residents have gone through training and become part of their CERT. CERT is a national program, but its heart lives at the neighborhood level. In the program, residents learn to perform key skills that will help themselves, their household, and their neighbors during emergencies. The program is also offered to City employees, making them better prepared both at home and at City Hall when an emergency strikes.



In 2023, we offered two CERT Courses, one at the San Mateo Adult School and the other at the Belmont Sports Complex, producing 43 new CERT graduates. During the year, our CERTs put in a lot of work and training, including Sandbag & Flood Mitigation, Building Damage Assessment, specialized PG&E Training, and Stop-the-Bleed. However, the highlight of the year was getting the National CERT Association to select the Peninsula as the host location for the 2023 National CERT Conference. Our staff helped put on a conference complete with workshops, trainings, dignitaries, vendors, and entertainment for over 1,000 attendees from all over the United States. Our CERT members volunteered hundreds of hours to pull off this very elaborate event. We were especially thrilled that our own San Mateo Consolidated Fire & San Mateo Police Joint Honor Guard were asked to present the colors at the Opening Ceremony. Our CERT members and their peers from all over the country were able to take trainings and network with members from other CERTs. They also competed in a timed competition testing their CERT skills such as light search and rescue, disaster medical, small fire suppression, grid search, rescuing a victim from under a heavy object, and radio communications. 18 teams competed. In the end, one of our CERT teams came in 4th, which was just four points shy of 1st place. The conference provided many fun and educational opportunities, and our CERT volunteers took full advantage of it. By the end of 2023, CERT members volunteered 2,982 hours among our three cities. They provided support to numerous events including Earth Day Clean-Up, National Night Out, Disaster Preparedness Day, Water Dog Fun Run, and the Department's Open House. We are sincerely grateful to all our CERT volunteers.



## Office of Emergency Services

The San Mateo Consolidated Fire Department Office of Emergency Services Division (OES) has two areas of emphasis: (1) to prepare City staff and leaders in order to lead their jurisdictions through disaster response and recovery and (2) to prepare the public. For both, the goal is to constantly improve the state of readiness with a focus on prevention, preparedness, mitigation, response, and recovery from all possible emergencies and disasters.

OES found themselves very busy at the beginning of the year with Emergency Operations Center (EOC) activations in Belmont, Foster City, and San Mateo as California responded to major flooding that began in the opening hours of New Year's Day. While Foster City's EOC was virtual, Belmont and San Mateo both physically activated their EOCs, and OES staff was there providing assistance. The goal was to provide any and all assistance to our three cities. The heavy winter storms lasted through March, and OES was busy participating in National Weather Service briefings, Crystal Springs Dam spillway conference calls, and San Mateo County Operational Area calls.

On April 19, a major countywide full scale exercise was held called "Rising Phoenix." The exercise required months of planning, and OES was a major participant from beginning to end. It involved the coordination of the Fire Department's Hazmat and EMS Divisions, along with the SWAT officers from the San Mateo Police Department. The exercise was held at the San Mateo County Event Center, and the City of San Mateo participated by opening its EOC in order to test field response and EOC communication and coordination. 2023 was also a year of General Plan updates for cities, and OES played a key role in the updates in San Mateo and Foster City. In both cities, the Safety Elements of those general plans were updated, and a great deal of analysis of city hazards and city goals went into those documents. The Foster City City Council approved the new Safety Element in May, and the City of San Mateo was well on its way to approving its new General Plan by year's end. Foster City conducted a tabletop exercise in October to test the emergency plan of the Public Works Department's Water Division. OES walked the City employees designing the exercise through the planning steps needed to conduct an exercise successfully with participation from multiple participating City departments. With OES guidance, the Public Works Department put on a successful exercise that analyzed in detail the Department's methods and capabilities during an earthquake. Recommendations were made in the after-action phase dealing with everything from decision making processes to communications methods that the Public Works Department is following up on.





# Community Outreach



“THANK YOU FOR ALL YOUR HELP | **Seamless with excellent team work** | Such incredible work on a call | *Courteous, pleasant, very efficient and a beacon of light when they were needed* | EXCELLENT AS A TEAM | THANK YOU TO YOU HEROES | I am so grateful for your time | **I love and support you all entirely** | HIGH PRAISE TO THEM | It was extremely helpful more than I could express | *I did feel very confident that once I called, I'd get the help I desperately needed* | THANK YOU FOR RESPONDING | Kind and courteous and most helpful and knowledgeable staff | **Our emergency personnel are competent and caring professionals** | Our most sincere gratitude | SO HELPFUL | *My family would like to thank them and let them know how much their service meant to us* | We would like to express our gratitude | THANK YOU FOR HELPING | We are most grateful for their helping hands | **Extreme courtesy, competence and efficiency** | We are thankful for your assistance | THANK YOU SO MUCH | Our most sincere thanks for your support | *They responded with the same level of caring and help that they had during the previous times* | Helped us so much in our time of need | THEY WERE WONDERFUL | Much obliged for your department's commitment | **They are excellent representatives of your department** | I was so proud of all | THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR THE AMAZING LIFE-SAVING ACTIONS YOU GUYS TAKE | *I have wanted to thank each of them for getting us through a very challenging period* | I just wanted to say how grateful I am | **They were so kind to me and professional when they arrived** | Our sincerest appreciation | THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR YOUR LIFE-SAVING EFFORTS AND RISKING YOUR LIVES TO SAVE THE LIVES OF OTHERS | We appreciate your skills and support | *We have appreciated all the outstanding help that your dedicated and capable staff have provided to us* | Your people represented you very well | THANKS AGAIN | **We have appreciated their extraordinary assistance** | I was thoroughly impressed | WENT ABOVE AND BEYOND | So pleasant and has great customer service skills | **You are true community heroes”**

# Community Quotes



# Fire Personnel Residences by County



Total fire personnel: **161**

COUNTY	#
Alameda	10
Butte	1
Contra Costa	14
El Dorado	7
Fresno	1
Marin	1
Nevada	2
Orange	1
Placer	6
Sacramento	7
San Benito	1
San Francisco	2
San Joaquin	1
San Luis Obispo	2
San Mateo	74
Santa Clara	11
Santa Cruz	13
Solano	3
Sonoma	4



## FIREFIGHTER MICHAEL JOSEPH RAMSEY

APRIL 6, 1969—JULY 21, 2023

On July 21, the world lost an amazing human and a wonderful father, husband, son, friend, and firefighter. Michael Joseph Ramsey, was born April 6, 1969, in Minneapolis, Minnesota. He passed peacefully at home surrounded by loving family at the age of 54. Mike’s enthusiasm for life and the people he loved was unparalleled. These last few years were not easy for him, and we take comfort knowing that he is no longer in pain. Despite the challenges he endured, he continued to smile and spend time with those he loved fiercely. Mike faithfully served in the fire service for 33 years, working with San Mateo Consolidated Fire Department for the last 26 years. Mike is survived by his loving wife, Sallie Ramsey; three beautiful children, Alyssa (18), Tyson (15), and Juliette (8); father, Don Ramsey of Richmond, California; and brother, Phillip Ramsey of Marin County, California.

### FIREFIGHTER’S PRAYER

When I am called to duty, God  
Wherever flames may rage  
Give me strength to save a life  
Whatever be its age.  
Let me embrace a little child  
Before it is too late  
Or save an older person from  
The horror of that fate.  
Enable me to be alert  
And hear the weakest shout  
And quickly and efficiently  
To put the fire out.  
I want to fill my calling  
To give the best in me,  
To guard my neighbor  
And protect their property.  
And, if, according to your will,  
While on duty I must answer death’s call;  
Bless with your protecting hand  
My family, one and all.



Established January 13, 2019



FIRE DEPT  
STATION



#### WEBSITES

[www.smcfire.org](http://www.smcfire.org)  
[www.smcalert.info](http://www.smcalert.info)  
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