

THE FIREFLY

FALL 2009

From The Fire Chief

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Foothills Fire Protection District
Acting Fire Chief

Brad Danek
303 526 0707 Ext 2 #



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Three wildfires in our district this season

The first, on July 20th in the Cold Springs area south of Genesee. A sparking power line triggered a fire that was burning up a draw towards homes. It was suppressed at less than an acre.

The second fire was August 14th by the "M" on Lariat Loop. **Fireworks triggered this fire in the middle of the night & was kept under two acres.**

The third & most recent fire was on the morning of September 4th on Lookout Mountain near the communication towers. **This fire was moving uphill towards homes in the area but a quick attack by Foothills firefighters stopped the flames before any damage could be done.** This fire was about 2 acres in size.

I want to express thanks to all the firefighters who worked hard to protect the community & to the residents who continue their efforts in mitigating their homes & land to make this a safer community for all of us.

2010 Firefighter Academy

The department is currently gearing up for the Academy which starts in January. So far we have thirteen applications from both out of district & in district residents.

Our personnel officers have been reviewing the applications & will start doing interviews in mid-October. In order to increase our applicant pool current volunteers have been walking door to door within the district to help educate residents about the fire department & offer applications to those who may be interested in joining.

We will also be participating in the Red Rocks College Job Fair.

Here we will have access to men & women who are currently enrolled in the Fire Science Program & already have training & the required certifications to be an FFPD firefighter.

This saves the department money in training & helps bring more members on quickly.

Once applicants complete the required training they then go through a probationary period before they are accepted as full members of the department.

Please feel free to contact me if you are interested in joining!
Brad Danek, Acting Fire Chief

Many hands make light work

Article by Firefighter Patti Stajcar

You see the signs on all the fire stations as you go about your day **Volunteers Needed**

We have started going door to door to recruit new members in an attempt to involve our neighbors, **YOU**, in the protection of our community.

So if you see a fire truck on your street with volunteers knocking on doors, come on out and chat with us.

Even if you're not the firefighter type, YOUR fire department can use help in many areas of expertise;

through our auxiliary, carpentry, electrical, food for our long fire scenes & trainings or possibly data entry.

The more volunteers we have the better & safer our community can be.

CONGRATULATIONS FFPD FIREFIGHTER



Foothills Fire & Rescue Firefighters are recognized for their outstanding achievements, duty to the community & the department.

Congratulations
this quarter to
Jason Gibb

Foothills Fire Protection District 2009 Board Meetings

Held every third Tuesday of the month at MVCC 6. 30 pm
Residents are welcome to attend. Upcoming meetings:

- Oct 20th - Nov 17th - Dec 15th -

Driving Safely in Colorado Winters by Jeanette Kehoe FFPD Business Manager

Foothills Fire sees an increase in accidents as soon as the first snow hits.

Quite often these crashes are caused by unsafe driving in hazardous conditions. If you are not comfortable driving on snow and ice or have a new car, it is a good idea to practice in a snowy, open parking lot so you become familiar with how your car responds.

But remember, driving in the winter can be extremely hazardous even for the most seasoned driver.

On icy roads remember to decrease your speed and leave extra stopping room between you and the next car.

Don't use cruise control or overdrive on icy roads and watch out for extra ice on bridges and under overpasses.

Brake gently to avoid skidding and if your wheels lock up, ease off the brakes.

If you have standard brakes, pump them gently. If you have anti-lock brakes, apply steady pressure and they will pulse themselves.

If your rear wheels start to skid, steer in the direction you want the front wheels to go. If your front wheels skid, take your foot off the gas, shift to neutral and wait to steer until the vehicle slows.

If you get stuck, do not spin your wheels since this will dig you in deeper.

Turn your wheels from side to side to push snow out of the way. Use a light touch on the gas to ease your car out.

If this doesn't work, clear the path around your wheels with a shovel and throw down dirt, salt, or kitty litter. Try rocking the car gently forward and back to help get you out. Be aware of oncoming traffic as you pull back onto the road.

For more driving tips and safety items to carry in your car in the winter

see recommendations from websites such as the National Safety Council, the Colorado Department of Transportation, and the Weather Channel.

And please, be safe out there!

Homeowners

that would like to participate in future training exercises by allowing fire department / rescue / emergency crews access to their properties can contact Jason Gibb via

email at gibbjia@gmail.com

or contact the Foothills Fire Department at

303. 526. 0707 Ext 1#





Our district & the intermixture of our homes & the various vegetation types can be best described in fire scenario terms as an Urban Interface Environment.

This basically means that some of our highest fire risks may well involve wildland fires (grasses, shrubs & trees) occurring in close proximity to homes.

As an in district homeowner & volunteer fire fighter with Foothills Fire, I have listened to many neighbors express concerns regarding the possibilities of wildfires in the area, the impact of beetle kill on wildfire risks & the preparedness of the fire department to deal with such.

In assisting the department, a number of local residents offered the use of their properties for Urban Interface fire training purposes.

This generous offer & commitment has provided the fire department with the opportunity to conduct as near to realistic wildfire exercises. Homeowners also agreed to allow the use of smoke generators, hose deployments & the spraying of water/biodegradable fire foam so that fire fighters could gain the most amount of experiences.

No live fires have been conducted during these trainings to ensure homeowner & property safety.

Training Incident Type & Summary

Grass & tree fire in proximity to residential structures

The training incident was toned out by Jeffco Dispatch at approximately 6.45pm on Sept 2nd, 2009. Two engines & crews responded to the call in preparation to fight a wildfire & or the possibility of a house fire.

The fire (simulated by smoke generators) resulted from a lightning strike (simulated) near a home located on Parkview Avenue in the vicinity of the Apex Open Space.

The general area is a mixture of ridgelines & saddles, with a mixture of vegetation types ranging from large ponderosa pines, to smaller piñon pines & mixed grasses of various heights. Winds in the area were variable in both direction and strength.

Winds in the area were variable in both direction & strength. Entry into the area was via single paved roadway bounded by large trees & tall scrub.

This made fire fighting more difficult as the need for a possible evacuation of residents was always on the mind of the fire commander as the fire spread.

The variable winds caused the fire to spread rapidly and crews were required to move rapidly to extinguish spot fires that were appearing across an area of approximately 1.5 acres.

Additional resources from adjacent fire agencies (Genesee & Evergreen fire) were called in by the Incident Commander to assist with containing the fire (this was again simulated).

As wind conditions continued to worsen it became evident that due to dry vegetation close to a home, the situation could quickly involve such structures.

The local homeowner was thus ordered to evacuate their home & area immediately.

During the evacuation the homeowner indicated to the fire incident commander that a family member was missing & was last seen entering an adjacent barn. Almost at the same time fire teams reported that the fire had reached the barn & that smoke was now filling the structure indicating it was possibly on fire.

Rescue Fire fighters reacted quickly by making a forcible entry into the barn via a side wall (using a chainsaw).

They then proceeded inside to search for the reported missing family member & extinguish the fire. The family member was found inside unconscious but breathing & was immediately removed to safety & treated for smoke inhalation. (Simulated via smoke generators & the fire department's rescue dummy).

Simultaneously, additional fire crews were able to extinguish the grass fire & external materials surrounding the barn.



Continued on page 4

Benefits of this training exercise
For the Homeowner

- In case of a fire in the area, know where all your family members are at all times
- Be prepared to evacuate as requested by emergency crews
- A better understanding of how quickly wildfires can spread due to winds & surrounding vegetation
- Increased emergency crew knowledge of the area

For the Fire Department

- Dealing with wildland fires in close proximity to homes
- The need to always consider homeowner safety and evacuation
- Coordination of efforts with other agencies
- Increased awareness & capabilities to rapidly change focus from wildland fire suppression to search and rescue operations

Homeowners that would like to participate in future training exercises can contact the Foothills Fire Department 303. 526. 0707 Ext 1#



DAYLIGHT SAVINGS TIME ENDS NOVEMBER 1ST

CLOCKS TURN BACK ONE HOUR. PLEASE TEST YOUR SMOKE & CO2 ALARMS

"The Firefly" is distributed to every address in the Foothills Fire Protection District. Sometimes issues are mistakenly delivered to addresses in Genesee, Golden, Evergreen or West Metro fire districts. If you are not located in the Foothills Fire Protection District and have received a copy, we apologize. We also encourage you to contact your local fire district for further information or needs on any of the topics presented in this issue.



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