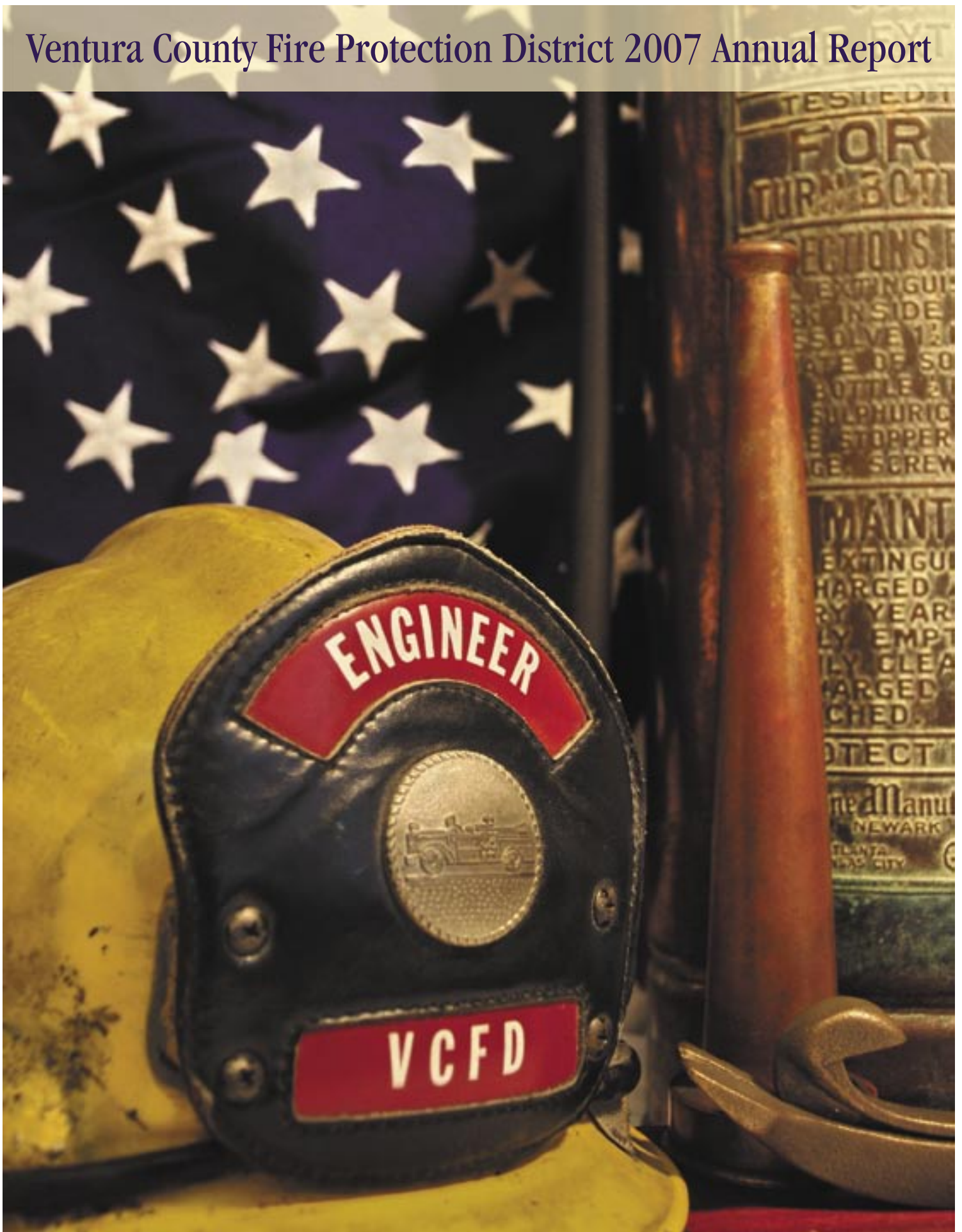


Ventura County Fire Protection District 2007 Annual Report



Message from the Fire Chief



Chief Roper

Anticipate and respond is more than just the mission statement for the Ventura County Fire Protection District, it's a way of life, because we can't be successful as a department without doing both.

Fiscal Year 2006-2007 and the calendar year of 2007 were challenging, but due to the dedication, preparation and skill of our department members, we met the challenges as we delivered consistently high levels of service to the public who relies on us for their safety.

Looking back over the past year, it's clear that numbers and statistics only tell part of our story. The numbers quantify what we do, but they can't show the depth of commitment, the pride and quality of the people whose daily activities are represented by the statistics.

It's people who carry out our mission, and the numbers in this report are really mile-markers tracking our progress toward

a safer, healthier Ventura County. To that end, several important steps were taken during the last fiscal year.

Our new fire sprinkler ordinance, Ordinance 25, has gone into effect, greatly increasing the number of structures protected by automatic sprinkler systems. We have effectively declared a year-round fire season due to evolving climatic and environmental conditions, allowing us to be better prepared to respond to major emergencies at an appropriate level, regardless of the time of year. The success of this change was evident in our response during the October Fire Siege. Finally, we are continuing to upgrade our equipment and facilities, such as the new fire station in Malibu, to meet the needs of the dynamic communities we serve.

The photos and statistics in this report will give you some insight into what we mean when we say, "Committed to Excellence, Delivered with Pride."

Board of Directors

The Ventura County Fire Protection District is a dependent special district within the county that was created by a special election, held in 1928, to provide fire protection for the unincorporated areas of the county. Over time, the protection was expanded to include six cities in the county – Thousand Oaks, Simi Valley, Moorpark, Camarillo, Port Hueneme and Ojai.

The County of Ventura Board of Supervisors acts as the fire district's board of directors. One supervisor is elected from each of the five supervisorial districts within the county. These five supervisors appoint the fire chief to provide fire protection services for the district.

Currently, the Ventura County Fire Protection District Board of Directors is comprised of:

District 1 – Supervisor Steve Bennett

He represents the communities of San Buenaventura, Montalvo, Saticoy, Oxnard Shores, Mandalay Bay, northwest Oxnard, north Ventura Ave., Foster Park, Casitas Springs, Oak View, Miramonte, Meiners Oaks, the City of Ojai, the eastern Ojai Valley and Upper Ojai, and the North Coast.

District 2 – Supervisor Linda Parks

She represents the cities and areas of Thousand Oaks, Newbury Park, Westlake Village, Lynn Ranch, Oak Park, Santa Rosa Valley, Bell Canyon, Hidden Valley, Lake Sherwood, Malibu-Yerba Buena, portions of the Oxnard plain, Naval Base Ventura County Point Mugu and the South coast.

District 3 – Supervisor Kathy Long

She represents the communities of Camarillo,

California State University-Channel Islands, Port Hueneme, southeast Oxnard, the eastern Oxnard plain, Santa Paula, Fillmore, Piru, Lockwood Valley and the eastern portion of Naval Base Ventura County, Port Hueneme.

District 4 – Supervisor Peter C. Foy

He represents the communities of Simi Valley, Moorpark, Somis, Las Posas Valley, Santa Susana Knolls, Box Canyon, Chatsworth Peak, Home Acres, Sinaloa Lake and the Tierra Rejada Valley.

District 5 – Supervisor John K. Flynn

He represents the cities of Oxnard, Silver Strand, Hollywood Beach, Hollywood-by-the-Sea, Channel Islands Harbor, El Rio, Nyeland Acres, the Del Norte area, Oxnard College, portions of the Oxnard plain and the western portion of Naval Base Ventura County, Port Hueneme.



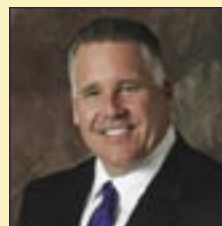
Steve Bennett



Linda Parks



Kathy Long



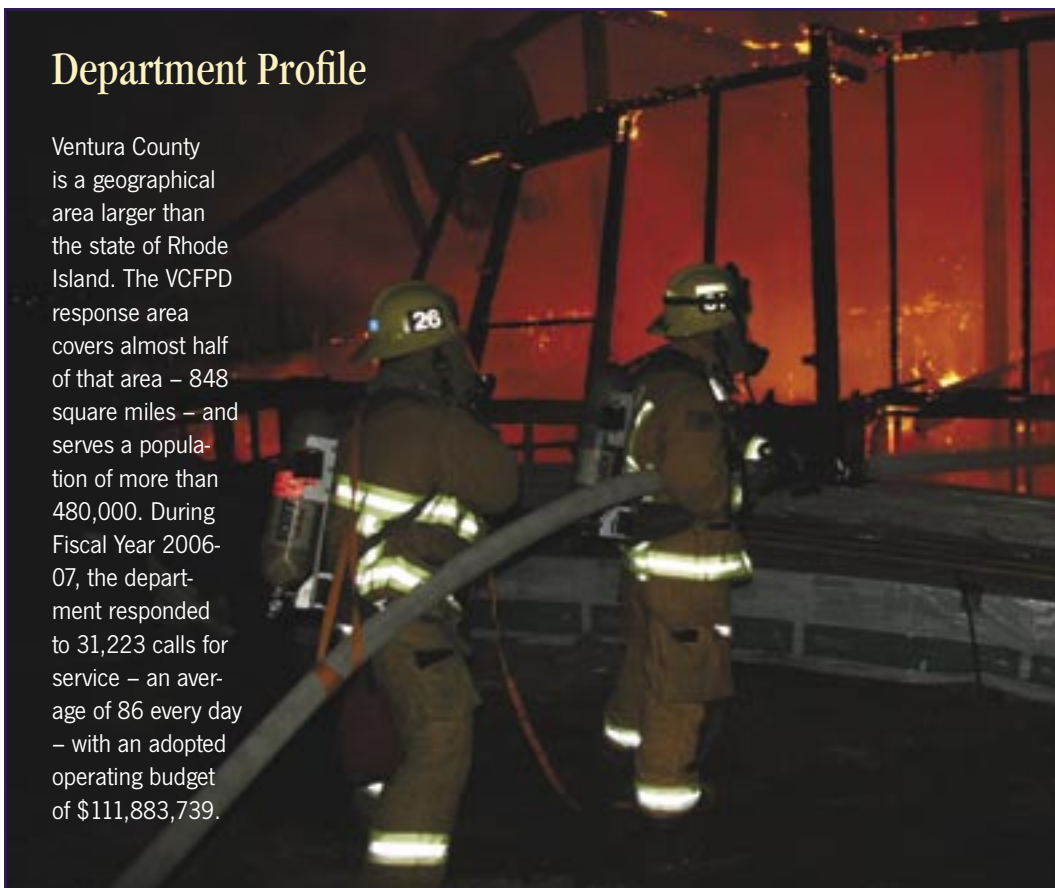
Peter C. Foy



John K. Flynn

Department Profile

Ventura County is a geographical area larger than the state of Rhode Island. The VCFPD response area covers almost half of that area – 848 square miles – and serves a population of more than 480,000. During Fiscal Year 2006-07, the department responded to 31,223 calls for service – an average of 86 every day – with an adopted operating budget of \$111,883,739.



Joe Luna

Memorial

In 2007, the Ventura County Fire Protection District mourned the loss of firefighters Joe Luna and Steven Gregory, both to cancer, contracted in the line of duty.



Steven Gregory

Web Site

The fire district Web site (<http://fire.countyofventura.org>) has become an important source of information to both the citizens of Ventura County and the department itself. The site is a central location to find the most current fire department news, department apparatus and station locations, links and downloads. During major emergencies, a “yellow box” is displayed on the homepage displaying the most current information on the incident, including the type and location of the emergency, evacuations and important Internet links. Each page of the Web site can be translated from English to Spanish with just one mouse-click.

Fire Department Profile

Total Personnel: 579 (471 uniform)
 Fire Stations: 31
 Administration and Support Facilities: 4

Apparatus

First-Run Fire Engines: 30
 First-Run Rescue Engines: 1
 Reserve Fire Engines: 17
 Wildland Fire Engines: 11
 Ladder Trucks (incl. 1 reserve): 4
 Fire Boat and Water Rescue Craft: 5
 Command Vehicles: 14
 Paramedic Squad Vehicles: 4
 Heavy Equipment (bulldozers, etc.): 9
 Other Emergency Response Vehicles: 38
 Staff and Support Vehicles: 117

<http://fire.countyofventura.org/stations/>



Home Page (major incident)



Spanish translation





Bureau of Emergency Services

The Bureau of Emergency Services fulfills the core function of the fire department. The bureau is responsible for all fire suppression activities, the delivery of emergency medical care, response to hazardous materials incidents (HazMat), urban search and rescue (USAR) and water rescues. Because these services require a highly developed set of skills for each safety member, the training division is also a part of the bureau.

The fire district maintains 31 stations across the county, staffed 24-hours a day, for responding to emergencies. The fire apparatus at these stations are equipped to handle fires, provide emergency medical care and perform rescue operations.







Committed to Excellence...
Delivered with Pride.

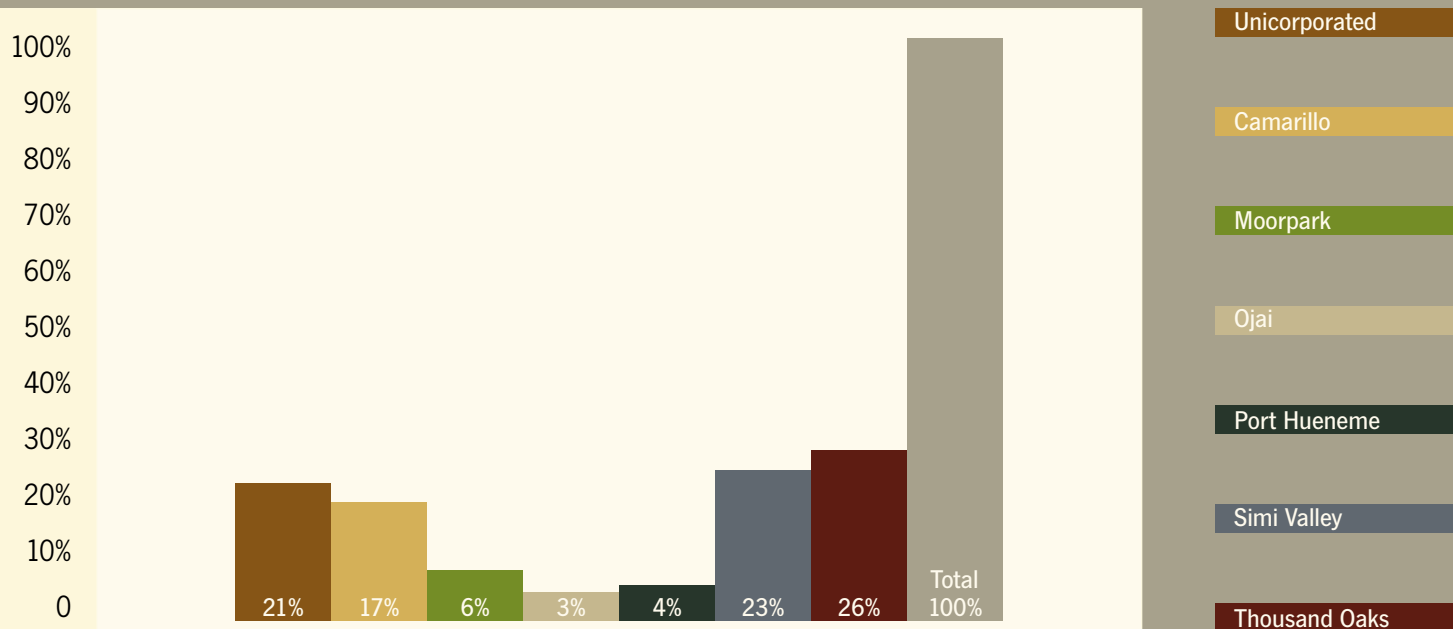


Working Together to Keep
Ventura County Safe

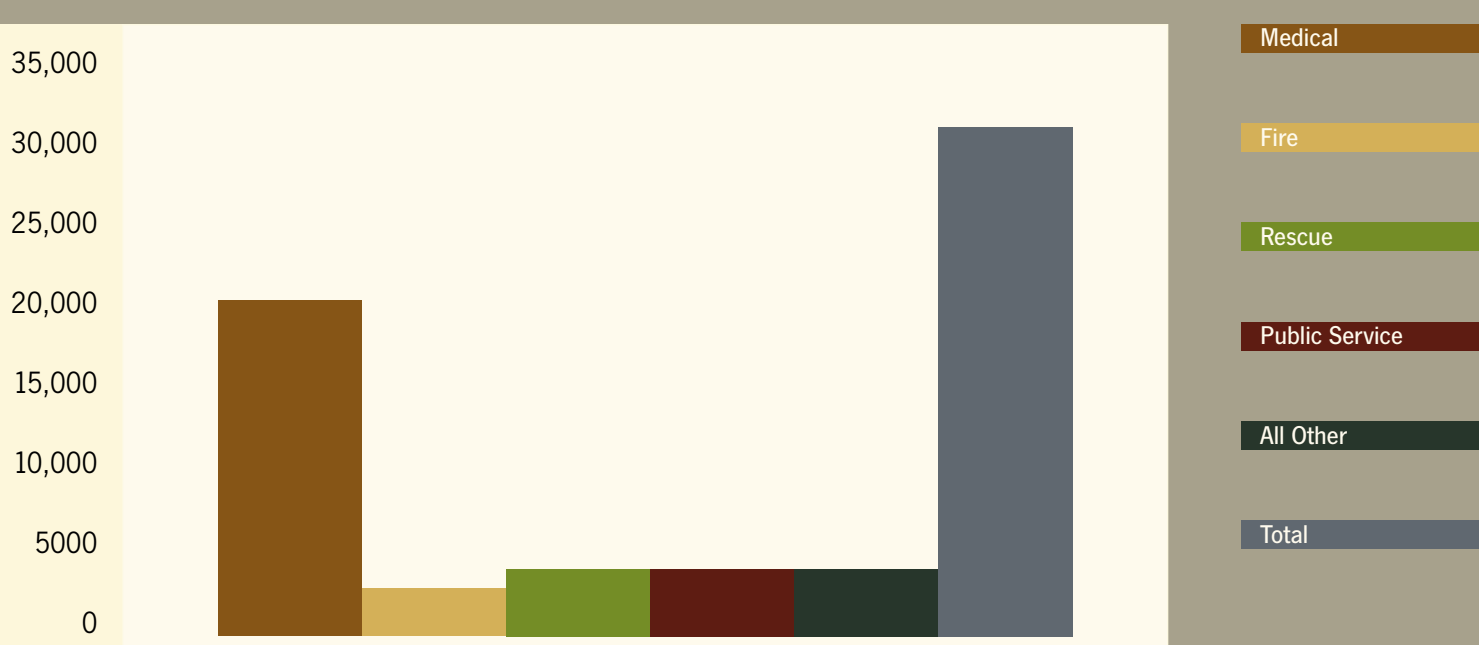




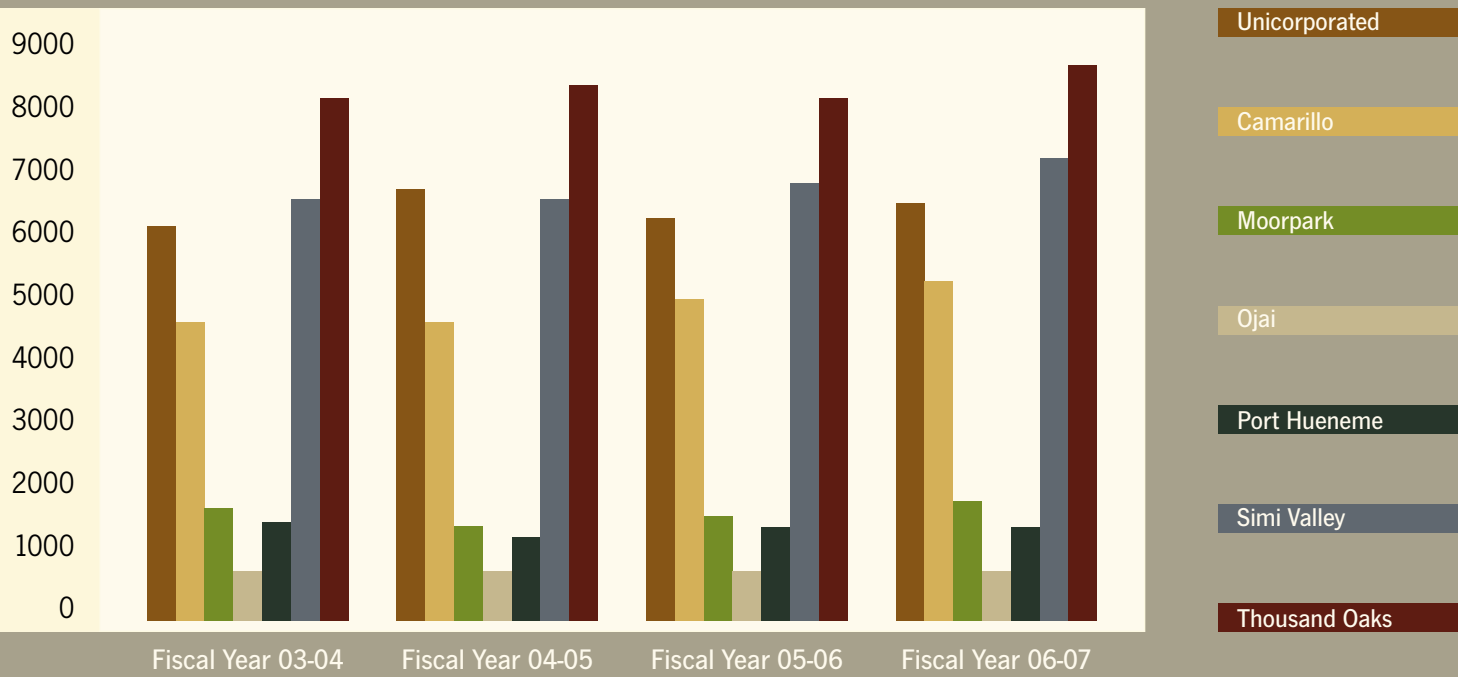
Calls for Service by Community



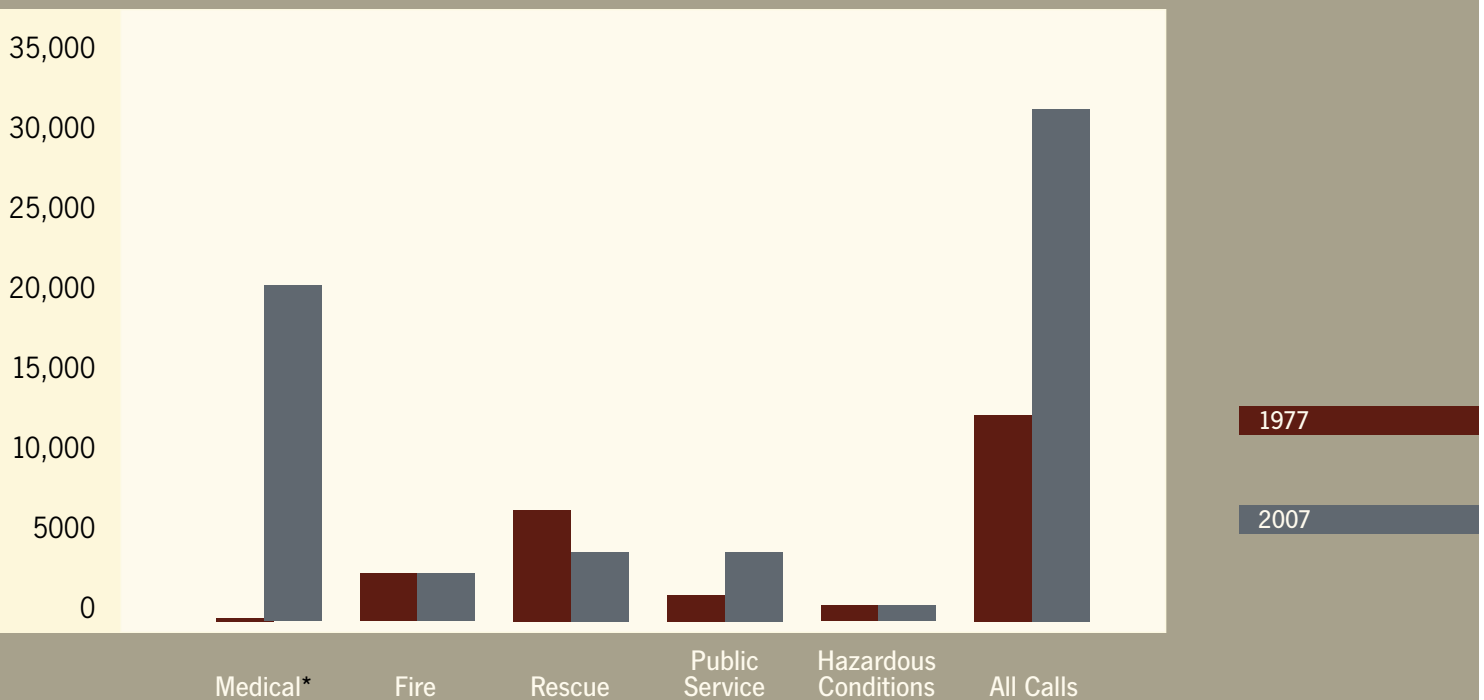
Fiscal Year 2006-2007 Calls for Service



Four-Year Calls for Service Comparison



What's Changed in 30 Years? 1977 vs. 2007 Call Comparison



*In 1977, medical calls were included under "Rescue."



Bureau of Support Services



The Bureau of Support Services consists of the Vehicle Maintenance Division, the Wildland Fire/Aviation Division and the Supply Division.

The Vehicle Maintenance Division is responsible for keeping the district's fleet of more than 250 vehicles in service and available for response. The Wildland Fire/Aviation Division responds to wildfires with hand crews and dozers to create firebreaks, conduct backfiring operations and assist in firefighting operations. The division also coordinates the use of the Ventura County Sheriff's Department fleet of helicopters for water-dropping on wildfires, hand crew transportation to remote locations and search and rescue flights. The Supply Division receives and distributes all goods and material for the fire district.

Bureau of Fire Prevention

The Bureau of Fire Prevention is made up of six functional divisions that are both interrelated and mutually supportive. They are: Planning and New Construction, Code Enforcement and License Care, Engineering and Fire Protection Systems, Fire Hazard Reduction and Filming, Community Education and Public Information.

Through its processes and programs, the bureau works to make Ventura County a safer place to live, work and play by creatively applying the fire and building codes to growth in the county's dynamic communities, and by educating and informing the public on how to prevent fires and prepare for disasters.

Notable Achievements:

- Fire Sprinkler Ordinance 25 adopted and put into effect. Requires automatic fire extinguishing systems (sprinklers) in all new buildings except for certain low-hazard structures.
- Fire Hazard Reduction Program: 14,000 abatement notices mailed, 18 parcels abated by VCFPD
- Total Inspections and Plan Checks: 4993
- Wildfire Action Plans Distributed: 119,000
- VCFPD Web Site Visits: 226,522



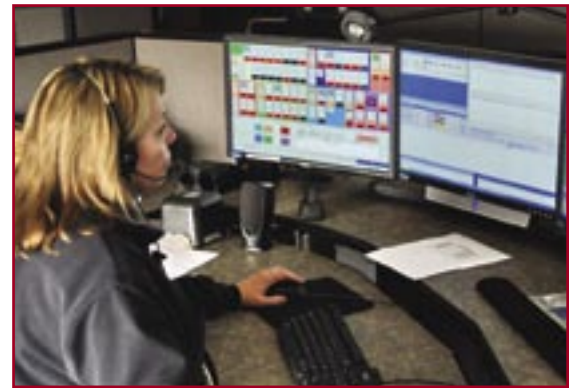
Bureau of Communications and IT

Three main divisions make up the Bureau of Communications and Information Technology: the Fire Communications Center (FCC), Information Technology (IT) and Geographic Information Systems (GIS).

Public Safety Dispatchers at the FCC take calls from the public and dispatch the appropriate level of response from the fire department to meet the call for service. As a regional dispatch center, the FCC directs responses from the Ventura County Fire Department and most of the other fire agencies and ambulance services in the county. The FCC celebrated its first full year in its upgraded and modern facility on Durley Ave. in November 2007.

Information Technology provides the fire district with the radio, computing and telephone services it requires to deliver its services to the public and operate its non-emergency business functions.

Using computers mounted in the cab of their fire engines, the Computer-Aided Dispatch system allows firefighters to see the location of an emergency on a map as they are dispatched, speeding their response. Each engine is also equipped with a global positioning sensor that allows FCC to see the location of each unit, ensuring that the closest unit is being sent to the emergency. GIS identifies, gathers and maintains the geographical information necessary to support the CAD system and also produces maps of major incidents (particularly wildfires), weather patterns, fire history and many other options.



Bureau of Human Resources and Planning

The Bureau of Human Resources and Planning plays a critical role in the health and safety of the district's personnel and the protection of the public.

The Human Resources unit handles the recruitment, hiring and administration of the district's employees. It staffs the fire stations, coordinates insurance and other benefits, conducts testing for promotional opportunities and performs risk assessment for the department. Industrial accidents and injuries are also under the supervision of Human Resources.

The Pre-Emergency Planning and Arson/Fire Investigation unit aids the district by preparing plans for department actions in the event of a major emergency or disaster, investigating the cause of fires and training Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) members.



CERT Training

Total Fire Cause Investigations: 173

- | | |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| • Structure Fires: | • Vehicle Fires - 32 |
| Arson - 21 | • Brush/Vegetation Fires - 48 |
| Referred to Law Enforcement - 25 | • Bodily Injuries - 2 |
| Cost Recovery - 20 | • Other - 23 |
| Civilian Fire Deaths - 2 | |

Bureau of Administrative Services

The Bureau of Administrative Services is responsible for the financial management of the fire district. Its functions include payroll, accounts payable, accounts receivable, purchasing, budgets, insurance matters, financial analysis and facilities management.

Current Capital Projects:

- Construction of Fire Station 56 (Malibu)
- Remodeling of Fire Station 28 (Piru)
- Designs for Fire Stations 43 and 47 (Simi Valley)
- Remodeling or construction of fitness rooms at stations currently using the apparatus bays for fitness equipment.

Station 56



Notable Incidents



May 7, 2007 – Oil Field Fire

Just before midnight, a fire began in a 2,500-gallon heater/treater unit filled with crude oil at an oil tank farm in an unincorporated area of the county between Oxnard and Camarillo. As the first units arrived on scene, they found fire spreading onto the ground and extending into piping areas. Fire was coming out of the top of the heater/treater, down the sides of the tank and under the tank. There was significant danger to the firefighters, nearby oil field equipment was threatened and there was an environmental risk from hazardous materials.

In a tremendous example of inter-agency cooperation, units from Ventura city, Oxnard and Naval Base Ventura County responded along with the Ventura County Fire Dept. to attack the fire. More than 20 pieces of apparatus responded to the scene, including four crash trucks – specialized units for fighting aircraft or flammable liquid fires. More than 680 gallons of foam and 15,000 gallons of water were used to extinguish the fire.



July-August 2007 Zaca Fire

At almost a quarter-million acres, the Zaca Fire was the second-largest wildfire in California history. It began on July 4, in Santa Barbara County and burned steadily over the next few weeks towards Ventura County. Thousands of personnel were assigned to the fire at its peak.

Ventura County firefighters were assigned to the fire throughout the incident, but the activity increased as the fire approached Ventura County. Ventura County firefighters and handcrew members kept the fire from threatening the city of Ojai by undertaking a massive backfiring operation along Highway 33 in the Wheeler Gorge area. The firefighting conditions were miserable – hot, dry and windy – and the terrain was dangerously steep and hazardous, but an intense firefighting effort halted the progress of the fire near the county line. Thanks to this work, the Zaca Fire did not enter the Ojai Valley and the homes and ranches along Highway 33 were spared.



October – 2007 Fire Siege

In late October, high temperatures, low humidity and strong Santa Ana winds combined to create the conditions that resulted in the 2007 Fire Siege. At the peak of the emergency, 20 major fires were burning in Southern California, but three were of major concern in Ventura County.

The Ranch Fire started in the evening of October 20 near Castaic in Los Angeles County. Pushed by winds gusting to more than 100 mph, the fire was driven into Ventura County near Lake Piru. Aggressive firefighting finally halted the progress of the blaze near Fillmore. It eventually burned 58,401 acres and destroyed 10 structures.

On Monday, October 22, the Magic Fire started near the Magic Mountain amusement park in Los Angeles County. Hard work by the firefighters stopped the fire three miles from the Ventura County line after burning 2,824 acres.

The Nightsky Fire was much smaller, but it threatened a number of expensive homes in a series of small canyons in the Santa Rosa Valley between Moorpark and Thousand Oaks. The fire was contained at 50 acres, but decorative bark used for landscaping on many properties served as a perfect incubator for spot fires. Firefighters methodically worked their way through the area, painstakingly combing the bark to extinguish all traces of fire.



Ventura County Fire Department

165 Durley Avenue • Camarillo, CA • 93010 • 805-389-9710 • Fax: 805-388-4364 • <http://fire.countyofventura.org>