

# VCFD Urban Search & Rescue

Ventura County Fire Department Urban Search and Rescue (US&R) units respond to locate, rescue and medically stabilize victims of technical rescue incidents. These include structural collapses, entrapments, confined space rescues, mine rescues, transportation accidents, large animal rescues, trench collapse rescues and rope rescues. Urban search and rescue is considered a "multi-hazard" discipline, as it may be needed for a variety of emergencies or disasters, including earthquakes, hurricanes, storms and tornadoes, floods, dam failures, technological accidents, terrorist activities, and hazardous materials releases. The events may be slow in developing, as in the case of hurricanes, or sudden, as in the case of earthquakes or terrorist events.



These two units respond from Fire Station 40 in Moorpark and Fire Station 54 in Camarillo. US&R 40 is a tractor-trailer unit while US&R 54 is a straight chassis rescue vehicle. Each unit brings a unique quality to the team allowing for search, rescue & medical capabilities.

Both US&R 40 and US&R 54 are classified by the California Governor's Office of Emergency Services as a "Type 1" apparatus. This classification is determined by meeting or exceeding a specific inventory, response capability, training level of personnel, amount of personnel and is the highest level of US&R capability.

Ventura County Fire Department's Urban Search and Rescue program is led by the US&R Officer, in conjunction with Battalion 1 Chiefs. The US&R Officer is a Captain assigned to work for the Division Chief of Special Operations. The US&R Captain coordinates technical rescue equipment procurement, training, logistics and organizational leadership for the US&R program, and represents the Department on State (FIRESCOPE), Regional and local area Operations committees.

Ventura County Fire Department US&R 40 and US&R 54 are part of California Regional US&R Task Force 7, which is coordinated by the California Governor's Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES). CA-RTF-7 agencies include Ventura County Fire, Ventura City Fire, and Oxnard Fire Departments. This state US&R Response System includes eleven other Regional Task Forces. CA-RTF-7 is staffed 24 hours a day, 365 days a year with a 30 person team specially trained and equipped for large or complex urban search and rescue operations. This multidiscipline organization provides five functional elements that include supervision, search, rescue, medical and tool/equipment support. California Regional US&R Task Force 7 is totally self-sufficient for the first 24 hours. The members of CA RTF-7 train year-round in preparation of deployment. Given that the vast majority of live victim rescues in US&R incidents occur within the first 12 to 24 hours after the event, it is imperative that the California Regional US&R Taskforce is trained and equipped for immediate emergency response.

