



SUNSTITES-PEARCE FIRE DISTRICT

SERVING RESIDENTS OF THE SUNSTITES-PEARCE FIRE DISTRICT,
AND NEIGHBORING COCHISE COUNTY

Mailing Address: PO Box 507, 105 TRACY ROAD PEARCE, AZ 85625

PHONE: (520) 826-3645 FAX: (520) 826-3586

Fire Chief's Report for October 20, 2020

1. EMS Calls= 33
 - A. In District Calls= 19
 - B. Out of District Calls= 14
 - C. Number of Patients Transported= 22 (plus 2 by Elfrida)
 - D. Number of Patients Flown Out= 2
 - E. Number of Patient Refusals =6
 - F. Number of Mutual Aid Given Calls= 0
 - G. Number of Mutual Aid Received Calls= 2 (Elfrida 2)
 - H. Number of Dead on Arrival Calls= 1

2. Fire, Service and Good intent Calls = 23
 - A. In District Calls= 17
 - B. Out of District Call= 6
 - C. Wildland Fires = 5 [Mullen (WY), Squaretop, Encinos, Ironwood/Lansing, Ironwood]
 - D. Structure Fires= 0
 - E. Car Fires= 0
 - F. Hazardous Materials= 0
 - G. Good Intent= 2
 - H. Service Calls=17
 - I. Mutual Aid Given Calls=0
 - J. Mutual Aid Received Calls= 0
 - K. Prescribed burns=0
 - L. Motor Vehicle Crashes= 0

Total Fire and EMS Calls year to date are 552. Total calls since September 15, 2020 are 56.

Training:

1. Fire training: On duty crews have been completing on shift training. These sessions included: service checks of apparatus and equipment, and physical fitness training.
2. EMS training: On duty crews completed on shift training. These activities included: regular checks of ambulances, EMS supplies, equipment, and medications; continued independent completion of on-line modules. We held

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one group EMS session with our staff and instructors from Air Evac, covering airway management skills.

3. We have enrolled Captain Garner in the regional hazardous materials technician course beginning October 26.

Wildland:

1. We currently have two engines assigned to the Ironwood Fire. We have no resources currently assigned out of area. We have had a total of 5 wildland assignments since the last meeting.

We have a total of \$116,635.88 in open bills with Arizona Department of Forestry and Fire Management (DFFM) submitted in October. We have received \$149,424.80 for bills submitted since July.

Out of District Services:

1. We currently have a balance of \$60,050.00 for the outstanding services that have been provided outside of the district boundaries since 2013. Of the out of district services provided, eight incidents, with a total of \$20,401.43 are in collections. Total unpaid balance that is not in collections is \$39,648.57.

Emergency Medical Services:

Total billings since July are \$142,782.90; total payments received are \$46,799.29. Of that amount, \$14,442.74 was re-directed by Noridian towards servicing the Medicare debt. Since May Noridian has re-directed \$30,327.46 in reimbursements towards our outstanding debt for Medicare over-payments.

Hazardous Materials:

1. Due to conflicts with another incident, we were unable to respond for one hazardous materials incident at the Chiricahua National Park.

Maintenance

1. M-303 received a new windshield, new batteries and a new injector pressure sensor.

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Communication:

1. Cochise County Health Department: Please visit the County website for weekly Covid-19 updates (<https://covid-cochisehealth.hub.arcgis.com/>). Yesterday's report showed 114 active cases in Cochise County.

2. Grants:
 - 100 Club: We have been approved for \$5,783.08 for two complete sets of firefighter turnout gear.
 - Firehouse Subs: submitted for the grant request for \$24,717.92/ 100% for UTV, with accessories and retrofit modifications.
 - Leary Foundation: submitted grant request for \$24,999.98/100% for extrication equipment; submitted follow-up addendum to explain special district status.
 - Gary Sinise Foundation: new grant request to duplicate Firehouse Subs grant if unfunded, or to develop a secondary replacement grant. This grant proposal is still in the development stage.
 - Legacy Foundation for Southern Arizona: submitted new request for turnout extractor and cleaning equipment for \$23,000 ; this grant is an updated request for a previously denied grant to Legacy; and it duplicates a previous unfunded grant to Pascua Yaqui; consideration is pending.
 - Ak-chin grant follow-up: three Tempus Pro units have been sent back to Enerspect for technician work to add on defibrillator components and add new protective cases. Cases will be funded from trade-in value of old Lifepak 12's that are being replaced by the Tempus units. Nominal value of this trade is \$2400.
 - AFG grant follow-up: for Wildland Type 3 Engine and radios; currently in award cycle, but no word yet.
 - Gila River follow-up: received award notification of grant approval for \$44,682 for hand-held radios and associated repeater network upgrades; this funding has been accepted on our behalf by the Cochise County Board of Supervisors.

3. Local Emergency Planning Committee report: A virtual meeting was held last Thursday.

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4. Cochise County Fire Association/ Cochise EMS Association reports: A virtual meeting was held on September 23. The next meeting will be October 28/virtual meeting.
5. Treasurer's Office: We are continuing to receive assistance from the Treasurer's office for analysis regarding our line-of-credit and income shortfall. We did not finish the year out of our line of credit by June 30, and converted \$144,790.86 to a registered warrant account with Cochise County. Looking ahead, our success in limiting growth in the registered warrant will depend on the rate of Noridian payments, the availability of additional wildland extended assignments, and continued reductions in payroll and maintenance. As of today, the registered warrant was at \$181,871.92, a decrease of \$55,104.35 since the last meeting. This improvement is causally related to the \$79,475.12 in property taxes we have received so far in October.
6. Payroll reduction: We have reached a payroll reduction agreement with operations staff that remains in effect, and reduces base wages by approximately 20%. Nevertheless, payroll remains higher than budgeted due to extended wildland season assignments.
7. FEMA/ AZ DEMA: We have submitted RFP to FEMA for reimbursement for COVID-19 response related expenses, including the mobile triage shelter set up at the Northern Cochise Community Hospital. We are continuing to seek reimbursement.
8. Medicare- On July 2 Noridian Healthcare Solutions approved our application as an ambulance service supplier effective back to May 1, 2020. We have directed our billing service to re-submit bills from May and June and moving forward. For services prior to July 1, Medicare has redirected \$15,884.72 towards the debt we owe them from 2013 to 2017. For services since July 1, Medicare has re-directed an additional \$14,442.74 from the July-August-September billings. We are being charged a 10.125% interest on our debt, and these re-directed revenues go to pay the outstanding interest before paying down the principal.

At the last Board meeting, our attorney, Mr. Matura was directed to send a letter to his counterpart at CMS with a settlement offer for the outstanding debt. We have not yet received a counteroffer. Additionally, in June the District Court directed part of our dispute to be re-considered by the Administrative Law Judge, but we have not yet received a schedule date for that re-hearing.
9. Surplus Wheelchair van- the van has been listed for auction on publicsurplus.com through November 3.

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10. Surplus SUV – this vehicle has received more use on out-of-district wildland assignments than I had foreseen, and has not been listed for sale. The long-term plan still includes selling off older vehicles as part of our budget right-sizing process. But I may have been premature in designating this vehicle, and may ask the Board to re-consider its status.

11. Audit- we are continuing to participate in the audit process with Walker & Armstrong, and have been providing them with documents and phone interviews.

12. Staffing- I have added open postings for part-time employees. My plan is to increase the number of certified employees with local residences available for local fires, to increase the number of employees available for out-of-area assignments, and to be able to flex staffing levels up without expending overtime costs. We have not received any additional applications this month.

13. Workers Comp – We had a site visit with a representative from Traveler’s. They provided us with some procedure recommendations to manage our risks and smooth the transition between the previous carrier Copperpoint and Traveler’s.

14. Fundraising – In response to the appeal letter coordinated by Ms. Allen, the Fire District has received 135 cases of drinking water, and \$1,000 in cash donations. At this point we are well-prepared water-wise for this fire season that never seems to end; cash contributions, of course, are always welcome.

15. Introduce employees on shift.

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