

Message from the Chief

Chief's Memo – May 7, 2007

CAL FIRE unveils new emblem during Wildfire Awareness Week to better reflect its broad mission



Governor Schwarzenegger has declared the week of May 6th -13th as Wildfire Awareness Week. All Californians, especially those living in Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) areas, must be prepared for the dangers associated with wildfires. A dry winter and spring means increased fire danger statewide. We all have a role to play in avoiding destructive wildfires. This week is one of our best opportunities to educate the public of their responsibility to:

- Clear vegetation 30 feet from homes and reduce vegetation within 100 feet of homes.
- Be prepared to evacuate their home, if necessary.
- Not mow dry vegetation during hot, dry weather.
- Be aware of potential fire dangers and report them.

As a result of the authority granted to the director by the passage of AB 1423 (Bogh), I announced, in January, that the Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, formerly referred to as CDF, will now be referred to as CAL FIRE to better reflect the Department's evolving mission.

During Wildfire Awareness Week we will also take the opportunity to educate the public regarding the diversity of what we do as an organization. The department provides forestry, fire protection, and State Fire Marshal services throughout the state.

In addition, CAL FIRE is a highly-trained all-risk full-service department serving the diverse emergency needs of the State of California including; responding to emergency medical calls, structural fire calls, search and rescue, hazardous material incidents, arson and bomb investigations, emergency management during floods, earthquakes, disease outbreaks, as well as wildfires.

Since the 1940s, CAL FIRE has served local governmental entities such as cities, counties and special districts under contracts to provide many forms of emergency services for their communities. CAL FIRE provides full-service fire protection to many of the citizens of California through the administration of 146 cooperative fire protection agreements in 35 of the State's 58 counties, 25 cities,

31 fire districts and 34 other special districts and service areas.

CAL FIRE more aptly describes the department's diverse role in fire and emergency response, fire service training, fire and life safety, resource management, and environmental protection.

CAL FIRE still honors the legacy and tradition of the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, while recognizing the need to move forward and identify the considerable evolution the department has gone through over the course of the last 122 years.

The California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection's history:

- 1885 - "Board of Forestry" established.
- 1927 - "California Department of Natural Resources, Division of Forestry"
- 1961 - "California Department of Conservation, Division of Forestry"
- 1977 - "California Department of Forestry"
- 1987 - "California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection"
- 1995 - "California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection and Office of the State Fire Marshal"
- 2007 - "California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection" formerly known as CDF becomes CAL FIRE.

Each change and consolidation denotes the evolution of the department's roles and responsibilities and illustrates that CAL FIRE has grown to meet the demands of a growing state. The department's mission has been well established through legislative actions, through Board of Forestry and Fire Protection policy, through Executive Orders of the Governor, through mission tasking by the Governor's Office of Emergency Services, through administrative and case law, and through contracts with local government.

There have been nine changes to the department's patch over the years. The most current change retains key elements of the previous patch in the new design.

I would like to recognize and thank the Executive Team, CDF Firefighters, and the entire Branding Committee for their hard work and dedication as we move forward with the rollout of the department's new uniform patch and emblem. The committee was co-chaired by Unit Chief Bill Holmes and Deputy Director of Legislation Dave Titus. The other committee members included; Yvonne Butcher, Brian Estes, Jeff Hartsuyker, Cathy Kurtz, Jay McDonald, Jim Nolan, Ignacio Otero, Thomas Porter, Barbara Rowe, Bill Snyder, Dee Tokimitsu, Janet Upton, Marge Yarbrough, Kelly Zombro, Bob Wolf, Terry McHale, and Jim Rissmiller. Alisha Herring, Daniel Berlant, Bart Chambers, Greg McFadden, and Roger Mattson served as associate committee members. Kate Dore of Dore Davis Design served as a consultant on the project and was funded by CDF Firefighters.

The new emblem will be placed on all new equipment and uniforms, as well as on older equipment and uniforms as emblems wear out.



The new emblem reflects the evolution and diversity of the department's mission over time.

- It retains the traditional shape of a “shield” which reminds us of our duty “to protect and serve the public.”
- It retains the complete department name “California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection” to honor our history, culture, and traditions.
- It boldly displays the new shortened moniker “CAL FIRE” approved by the legislature and the Governor to reflect our broadened mission from the more traditional forestry role.
- It honors our beginnings in 1885 with the establishment of the Board of Forestry
- It displays the “Golden State” taken from the original Office of the State Fire Marshal’s emblem to remind us of our duty for statewide protection of life, property, and the environment.
- It displays a globe to remind us of California’s worldwide leadership.
- The globe is “red” to remind us of our constant battle against wildfires and global warming.
- It displays a rising sun with its “Seven Points of Light” to reflect our coordination and cooperation with local government.

Regards,

Ruben Grijalva, Chief
Director