

Questions and Answers

Table of Contents

When was the Fire Protection District Formed?.....	2
What Is The Role and Responsibilities of the Fire Protection District?.....	2
How is the Fire Protection District Organized?.....	2
How is the Fire Department Organized?.....	2
How are the Fire Protection District and the Fire Department related?.....	3
Is The Fire Protection District responsible for all aspects of fire protection?.....	3
How are members of the Board of Directors elected?.....	3
Is anyone on the Board of Directors or in the Fire Department paid?.....	3
Are Firefighters reimbursed for going on calls (gas money)?.....	3
How many Firefighters and EMTs do we have?.....	4
Does the Dobbins-Oregon House Fire Department have a Cadet Program?.....	4
What area does the DOHFPD cover? Number of parcels? Approximate population?.....	4
How long do most emergencies take to resolve?.....	4
Is it stressful to be a volunteer firefighter?.....	4
What are the responsibilities of the Dobbins-Oregon House Fire department compared to CalFire?.....	4
How do the DOHFD and CalFire work together during emergencies?.....	4
Does DOHFD work with other Volunteer departments in Yuba County?.....	5
How many volunteer fire departments are there in Yuba County?.....	5
How are FFs notified that there are emergencies?.....	5
How do firefighters tell Grass Valley Dispatch they are responding?.....	5
How can I listen to Radio Communications for Local Emergency Response?.....	5
How many fire stations are there in the DOHFPD and where are they?.....	5
Do firefighters use their personal vehicles to respond directly to incidents?.....	6
What is the Fire Department Auxiliary?.....	6
How is the Fire Protection District funded?.....	6
Are donations to the DOHFPD tax deductible?.....	6
Who should I talk to about evacuation routes?.....	6
Who should I talk to about clearing or updating roads?.....	6
Who should I talk to about our Fire Department?.....	6
How is the Fire Department related to CalFire?.....	7
What kind of things does the Fire Department respond to?.....	7
What certifications do our Volunteer Firefighters hold?.....	7
What kinds of special equipment does the Fire Department have?.....	8
How does the Fire Department communicate during an incident?.....	8
How do I become a Volunteer Firefighter?.....	8

Questions and Answers

When was the Fire Protection District Formed?

The Dobbins Oregon House Volunteer Fire Company Inc. was first organized in 1985, as a nonprofit public benefit corporation for the specific purpose of providing emergency services to the people of the Dobbins/Oregon House area. The Dobbins Oregon House Fire Protection District (DOHFPD) was created in 1986 by an application to LAFCO (Local Agency Formation Commission).

What Is The Role and Responsibilities of the Fire Protection District?

The District was formed to and is responsible to create our Fire Department and to provision and provide administrative oversight for that Fire Department. The District has little or no role in County planning, infrastructure, and emergency services. The Fire Department (that the District administers) does have a role but it is generally responsive and in the form of advice or technical information when a County agency requests such.

From the founding document approved by LAFCO July 9, 1986:

WHEREAS on application for the formation of the Dobbins-Oregon House Fire protection District encompassing a tract of Land of approximately. 70 square miles was filed with this Commission on June 12r 1986; and

WHEREAS said proposed Dobbins-Oregon House Fire Protection District proposes to provide **fire protection and rescue service; and**

WHEREAS said services are currently not being provided by any other county service area or special district;

For community issues regarding evacuation routes, brush clearing, roads, ordinances, these are the pervue of County agencies such as Office of Emergency Services (OES), Planning, Public Works, and your County Supervisor.

How is the Fire Protection District Organized?

The Fire Protection District is administered by a Board of five elected Directors. The Board includes a Chair, Vice-chair. In addition to the Directors, there is a Clerk of the Board and a Bookkeeper. The Board of Directors appoints a Chief for the Fire Department and provides administrative oversight and financial support for the Fire Department.

How is the Fire Department Organized?

The Chief is responsible for running the Fire Department and is chosen by the District Board of Directors. Other officers are appointed by the Chief.

Assistant Chiefs do everything the Chief does if he/she is unavailable.

Captains are the next officers in line and lead crews of firefighters on fire attack.

Lieutenants are responsible for specific areas such as medical supplies and communications.

Firefighters make up the rest of our volunteers.

Questions and Answers

How are the Fire Protection District and the Fire Department related?

The District was formed to and is responsible to create our Fire Department and to provision and provide administrative oversight for that Fire Department.

Is The Fire Protection District responsible for all aspects of fire protection?

“Fire Protection” in the sense of “Fire Protection District” has a more traditional meaning in that “fire protection” used to be all about having a Fire Department. And that is what the Fire Protection District is about: Your Fire Department.

In current times, we, as a community, have come to understand that “fire protection” is a lot more than whether a fire engine will show up when you need one. Now we look at wildland fires and clearing vegetation, preparing structures, reviewing and improving evacuation routes, and the broader state-wide readiness (think aerial tankers) to provide “fire protection”.

But the name is still “Fire Protection District” even though the scope of what we are intended to do and what we are equipped to do is limited to building and maintaining the best, most well equipped and staffed, Fire Department possible.

How are members of the Board of Directors elected?

When a vacancy on the Board occurs due to a resignation, a notice is posted and applications are collected. The remaining Board members review the application(s), interview the candidate(s) and vote to elect a candidate to fill the remaining term.

When Board Members’ terms expire, candidates for the position must register with the County Board of Elections. If the number of candidates is less than or equal to the number of vacancies, they are elected automatically (no contest). If there are more candidates than open positions on the Board, the candidates are selected by registered voters in the district during a scheduled election.

Is anyone on the Board of Directors or in the Fire Department paid?

We are a volunteer organization. Your District Directors and Clerk are 100% volunteer. The Fire Department’s Chief and all the Dobbins-Oregon House first responders are volunteers. Training expenses, personal protective equipment (PPE), and supplies are covered by the District.

Are Firefighters reimbursed for going on calls (gas money)?

Volunteers are reimbursed, not paid. Recently the reimbursement rate was increased to \$10 per response for firefighters and \$15 per response for EMTs and Officers.

Questions and Answers

How many Firefighters and EMTs do we have?

Currently, we have a Chief, two Assistant Chiefs, three Captains and two lieutenants. We have 9 other firefighters for a total of 17 active responders. Fifteen of our responders are also licensed as EMTs and two are paramedics.

Does the Dobbins-Oregon House Fire Department have a Cadet Program?

Yes, the Fire Department has a Cadet Program designed to encourage young people to join and learn about becoming a Firefighter. Contact Chief Mike Butler or Assistant Chief Greg Stensler.

What area does the DOHFPD cover? Number of parcels? Approximate population?

The District is a 70 square-mile area in the northeastern portion of Yuba County centered on the towns of Dobbins and Oregon House. There are approximately 1868 parcels in the district, and the population is approximately 2400. (Add a link to map?)

How long do most emergencies take to resolve?

The time is highly variable and may range from several minutes to many hours depending on the complexity of the emergency. Firefighters are committed to stay until the emergency is resolved or they are released/replaced. There is no way of knowing how long an incident will take when firefighters respond.

Is it stressful to be a volunteer firefighter?

It can be stressful and it is said that it is more stressful to be the spouse or partner of a volunteer firefighter!

What are the responsibilities of the Dobbins-Oregon House Fire department compared to CalFire?

DOHFD has primary responsibility for medical emergencies, vehicle accidents and fires, and structure (house) fires. CalFire's primary responsibility in our district, which is part of the State Responsibility Area (SRA) is wildland fires. When CalFire station 60 in Dobbins is staffed (currently 9 months of the year), they also are dispatched for and respond to all types of emergency calls in our district.

How do the DOHFD and CalFire work together during emergencies?

For fires and vehicle accidents, the first unit to arrive at the emergency site takes charge of the incident and becomes the Incident Commander (IC). When a Dobbins or CalFire chief arrives at an incident he/she may take over as IC. We work together with CalFire firefighters as partners, closely and cooperatively in all instances to provide the best possible care and response to all types of emergencies.

Questions and Answers

Does DOHFD work with other Volunteer departments in Yuba County?

Dobbins-Oregon House and Foothill Fire have mutual aid agreements for automatic response to structure fires, vehicle accidents and critical medical emergencies (e.g. cardiac arrests). Dobbins-Oregon House will also assist other foothill departments as requested.

How many volunteer fire departments are there in Yuba County?

There are 5. Dobbins Oregon House, Foothill Fire, Loma Rica Fire, Camptonville Fire and Smartsville Fire.

How are FFs notified that there are emergencies?

Firefighters carry pagers which are activated by the Grass Valley CalFire dispatch center. The messages contain information about the type of emergency, the location, and any potentially hazardous situations (e.g. power lines down). Additionally, Dobbins firefighters also have software called "I Am Responding" on their cell phones which receives text messages and which also sound an alarm. I Am Responding also displays a map showing the location of the incident and can track responding resources.

How do firefighters tell Grass Valley Dispatch they are responding?

Most of our active firefighters carry handheld radios (HTs) to communicate with Grass Valley directly, and all of our engines have mobile radios and at least one HT as backup. Effective and clear communication is critical for successful emergency response.

How can I listen to Radio Communications for Local Emergency Response?

The radio frequencies used for communication may be heard using scanners or other radios which can receive transmissions at these frequencies:

Foothill Fire – 155.985 MHz

CalFire NEU West (Local) – 151.325 MHz

Yuba County Sheriff – 460.100 MHz

How many fire stations are there in the DOHFPD and where are they?

We have 4 stations which house engines. The main station is on Marysville road. There is a station at Collins Lake, one on Rice's Crossing Road in Oregon House, and one on Miriam in Dobbins.

Questions and Answers

Do firefighters use their personal vehicles to respond directly to incidents?

Yes. Many of our firefighters and most of our EMTs will respond using their privately owned vehicles (POVs). Many of our EMTs also carry well equipped medical bags in their POVs allowing for rapid response to medical emergencies without going to a station to pick up an engine. You may see vehicles from Collins Lake and other personal vehicles responding to emergencies.

What is the Fire Department Auxiliary?

The Auxiliary is a separate volunteer-staffed organization that runs the Thrift Store (next door to our Main Fire Station on Marysville Road) and provides significant financial support for the District and Fire Department. The Auxiliary recently contributed \$100,000 toward purchase of a new engine for the Fire Department.

How is the Fire Protection District funded?

The Fire Protection District manages the funding for our Fire Department. Funds come from Measure “K” funds via the County, the Fire Department Auxiliary (see above), and grants from various sources including the State and our local Yuba Water Agency.

Unlike a few of our nearby fellow Fire Protection Districts, we carry no debt and no public bonds; We raise money first and then buy the (very) expensive equipment that the Fire Department needs. One of the reasons we can do this is we are all-volunteer; we do not have a large payroll draining a large part of our resources.

Are donations to the DOHFPD tax deductible?

Yes

Who should I talk to about evacuation routes?

Talk to Yuba County Office of Emergency Services (OES).

Who should I talk to about clearing or updating roads?

Talk to Yuba County Planning and Public Works Departments.

Who should I talk to about our Fire Department?

Any of our District Board members are happy to talk with you, but the bottom line for information about the Fire Department in our Chief, Mike Butler.

Questions and Answers

How is the Fire Department related to CalFire?

CalFire is a state-wide organization. DOH Fire Department is a separate local organization.

Although CalFire responds to all 911 calls, their main responsibility is wildland fires. They are some of the best in the world for those emergencies. They also have EMT's or EMR's and equipment on their engines for medical emergencies. They are generally here for fire season only (except for at the Loma Rica/Browns Valley CalFire Station). The rest of the year is covered by DOH volunteers only.

What kind of things does the Fire Department respond to?

911 Calls

The Volunteer Fire Department is responsible for responding to 911 calls.

Fires

It is responsible for structure fires and for helping with wildfires as well. For structure fires they have special equipment like smoke ventilation fans, saws, lighting pods, air support and compressors, infrared heat cameras, generators and extra ladders.

Vehicle Accidents

For vehicle accidents we have several sets of extrication equipment including jaws, air jacks, metal and window saws and emergency lighting. There are foam generation units on the engines for fuel and vehicles fires.

Medical First Response

Our EMTS (Emergency Medical Technicians) have been certified in many advanced medical skills. These include: Advanced airways and forced air (CPAP), EPI injections, narcan, blood sugar and blood O2 monitoring, AEDs, and mass shooting triage and response.

Many of these skills were taught to Yuba County volunteers as an experiment many years ago. Because of success they are becoming standard operating procedures for all EMTs nationwide.

Rescues

Our volunteers have rope rescue gear for extracting patients out of the steep canyons found in our district.

What certifications do our Volunteer Firefighters hold?

Many of our personnel hold EMT certificates. All firefighters complete at least basic wildland firefighter training and hold a CPR/BLS certificate. Some of our personnel are also certified in rope rescue and other specialized areas.

Questions and Answers

What kinds of special equipment does the Fire Department have?

We have fire engines, rescue vehicles and water tenders. The water tenders are used to shuttle water for remote fires. Think of them as portable fire hydrants. A tender carries 3000-4000 gallons of water while a regular fire engine only carries 500-800 gallons so without hydrants they run out quickly. CalFire has very few tenders so this is one of the key contributions we make to fighting local wildfire. The rescue vehicles are generally smaller and carry medical and rescue supplies

For structure fires we have special equipment like smoke ventilation fans, self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA's), saws, lighting pods, air support and compressors, infrared heat cameras, generators and extra ladders.

How does the Fire Department communicate during an incident?

All emergencies except fires are run on our own radio system which includes 5 repeater towers. We also have tactical (TAC) nets (non-repeater) and medical net repeaters. This system was built and is maintained by a cooperative organization of our local volunteer departments (JPA or Joint Powers Authority).

How do I become a Volunteer Firefighter?

Come to our weekly training meetings at the Main Firehouse (9150 Marysville Road) every Wednesday evening at 630. Ask to speak with Chief Butler or another Officer if the Chief is not available.