



2023 Annual Report

Respectfully Submitted by,
Tim Cordero, Fire Chief

Mission Statement

We are dedicated to providing professional and courteous service to our citizens and communities with Pride, Trust & Integrity

Core Values

Professionalism

Respect

Integrity

Dedication

Excellence

About the District

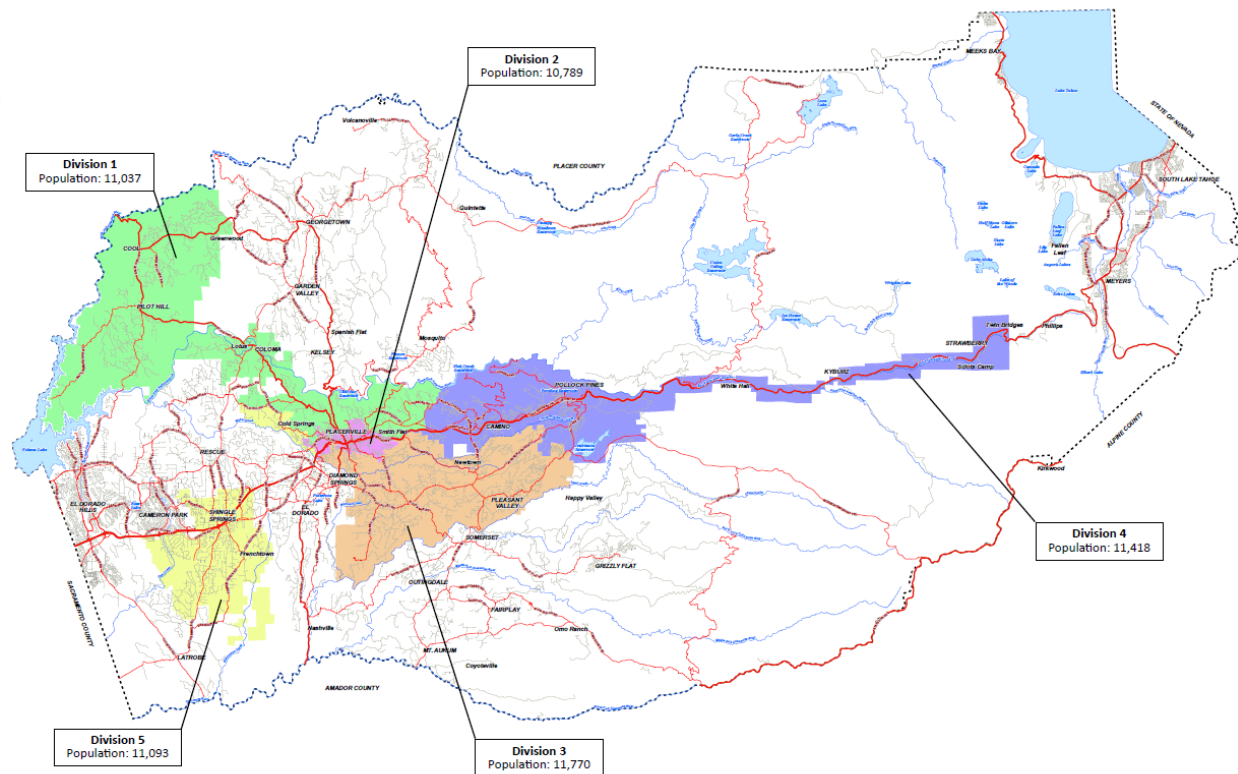
The El Dorado County Fire Protection District is located on the Western Slope of the Sierra Nevada's between Sacramento and South Lake Tahoe. The fire district covers approximately 281 square miles, protecting a population of 75,000 residents. The district provides all-risk services to the City of Placerville, which is also the County seat, along with the communities of Pollock Pines, Camino, Pleasant Valley, Shingle Springs, Coloma/Lotus, Cool, Shingle Springs Band of Miwok Indians and Red Hawk Casino. Within the district are several destinations for recreation, including world class rafting on the American River, the Crystal Basin region of the El Dorado National Forest, and Apple Hill in Camino. These destinations, along with others, bring thousands of visitors to the District annually. US Highway 50, which is the main travel route to South Lake Tahoe, bisects the district and is a significant travel route for tourists year-round.

District Organization

The District is governed by a five-member elected Board of Directors, representing all areas and residents of the District. The Fire District provides all-risk emergency services to the communities and citizens with 80 uniformed personnel staffing 5 engine companies and 5 ambulances, protecting an assessed valuation of \$7,651,567,127.00.

Our District has several operational and administrative divisions to meet the needs of our citizens and firefighters, such as:

- Fire Prevention and Investigations
- Training Division
- Emergency Medical Services (EMS)
- Fleet
- Facilities
- Operations
- Financial / Risk Analysis
- Human Resources



Partnership with Diamond Springs – El Dorado Fire Protection District

In October of 2022, El Dorado County Fire entered into a *Shared Services Agreement* with Diamond Springs Fire, covering training, fire prevention and Chief Officer coverage. Both districts began initial conversations on the potential benefits for the community and our firefighters, that would come from merging the two fire districts. In February of 2023 the Board of Directors from both districts approved *Resolutions of Intent* for the annexation of Diamond Springs Fire into El Dorado County Fire. During the course of 2023, both districts have worked diligently internally and externally to complete this annexation. Fitch & Associates was hired to complete the Feasibility Study, which includes an assessment of the financials, operations, administration and viability of an annexation. The feasibility study supports the annexation and has been formally adopted by both fire boards. Several key benefits have already taken place across both agencies, demonstrating the advantages of an annexation:

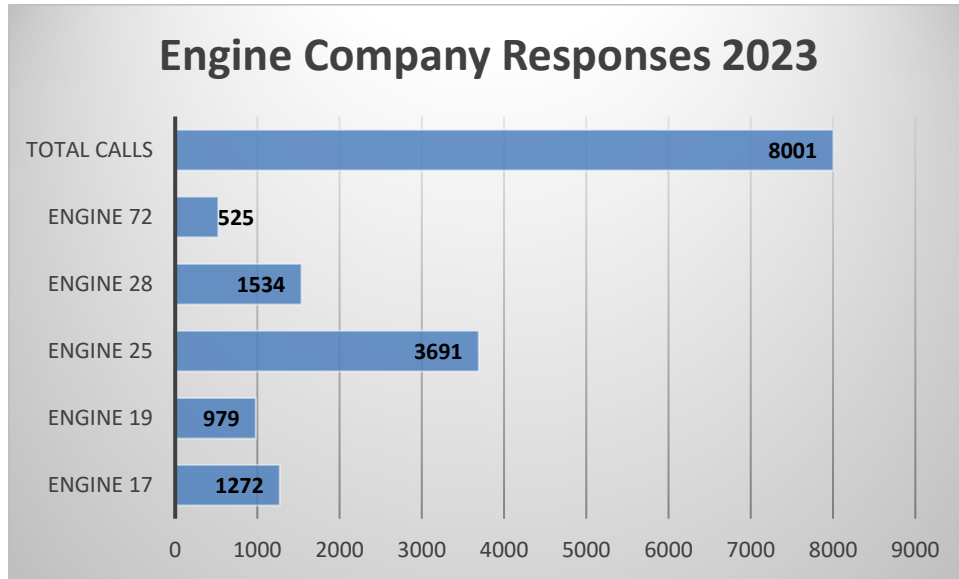
- Medic 49 placed back in service for the community of Diamond Springs
- Standardized on-going training in both Districts
- Fire Prevention Bureau operating out of Station 49 for both districts
- Realignment of staff has provided for two (2) 24-hour Chief Officers on duty
- Sharing of personnel for daily operations and upstaffing of additional resources

These are a few of the examples of increasing both our efficiency and effectiveness for the citizens through a merger of the two districts. Both districts are committed to this process and continue to move forward with completion likely to occur in 2025.

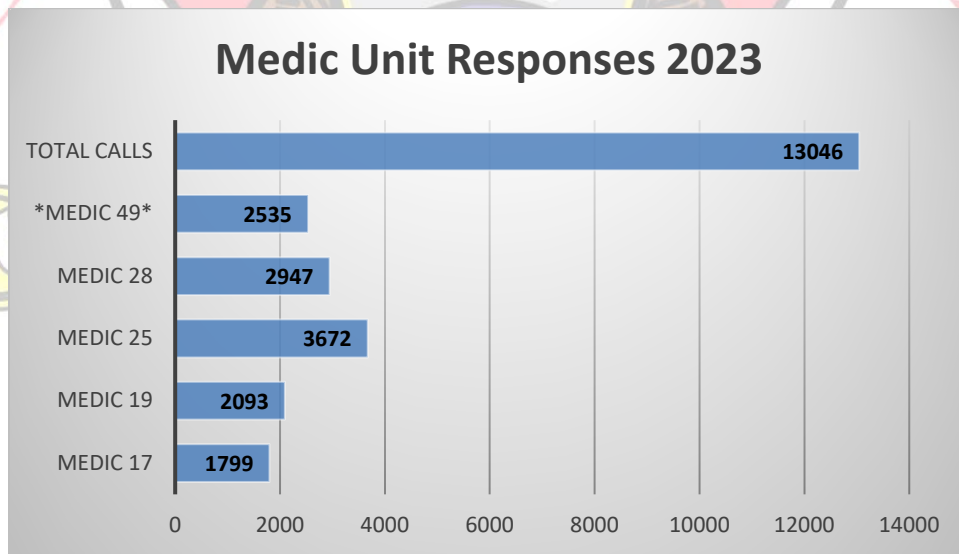
Calls for Service Emergency and Non-Emergency

The El Dorado County Fire Protection District continues to see an increased call for services on an annual basis. These increases in calls range from medical aids, vehicle accidents and wildfires. The district experienced a mild wildfire season in comparison to previous years, however, the winter months before and after the fire season presented significant challenges for our personnel. Our personnel, through diligent training, hard work, and dedication, met the needs of our communities on each and every call.

Engine Company Response Statistics

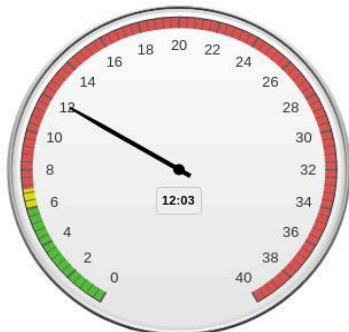


Medic Unit Response Statistics



Average Total Response Time (MM:SS)

Date Reported: Jan 01, 2023 to Dec 31, 2023



Median Total Response Time (MM:SS)

Date Reported: Jan 01, 2023 to Dec 31, 2023



Training Division

All District training aspects are managed and supervised by the Training Division Chief. The District also supports multiple training cadres that are specific to various specialized training functions. Annual core training, which includes State mandated trainings, are delivered through five individual eight-week training modules. Over the course of 2023, our personnel participated in a total of 250 hours of state mandated training. In addition, personnel participated in company level training, specialized multi-company drills in the following areas: live fire, auto extrication, high angle rescue, swift water rescue, wildland firefighting, large area search drills, RIC deployment, commercial roof ventilation, helicopter rescue operations and more.

The district supports several special operations programs with additional training requirements and demands of those involved. These programs include:

- Tactical Paramedic Program (SWAT Medics) – 3 members
- USAR Task Force 7 – 3 members
- Swift Water Program – 20 qualified members
- Helicopter Rescue Technicians 6 members

The training division is continuing to upgrade the site with expanded burn structure development and technical rescue props at Station 23. Personnel, under the direction of the Training Officer, are fabricating and modifying these training props to provide high quality, realistic training for our firefighters. The district implemented a Firefighter Bridge Program to assist our Paramedic Ambulance Operators (PAO's) to Qualified Firefighter Paramedics.

Fire Prevention Bureau

The El Dorado County Fire Prevention Bureau has been thriving throughout this past year. The organizational structure was modified from a dual Captain model to a Division Chief and Captain Prevention Specialist position. This has increased the efficiency and leadership capacity providing newfound benefits such as a clear leader's intent, command and control, project management, and succession planning to name a few.

A shared service agreement between El Dorado County Fire and Diamond Springs/El Dorado Fire yielded the benefit of increasing staffing to add a full time Inspector to the bureau. The Inspector position had previously provided a 1 day per week capacity, and now is full-time with a dedicated position. This increase in staffing has allowed for increased project management and training opportunities. Both districts continue to maintain compliance with Office of the State Fire Marshal Mandated Inspections in addition to VHR inspections, business license inspections, and fire and life safety

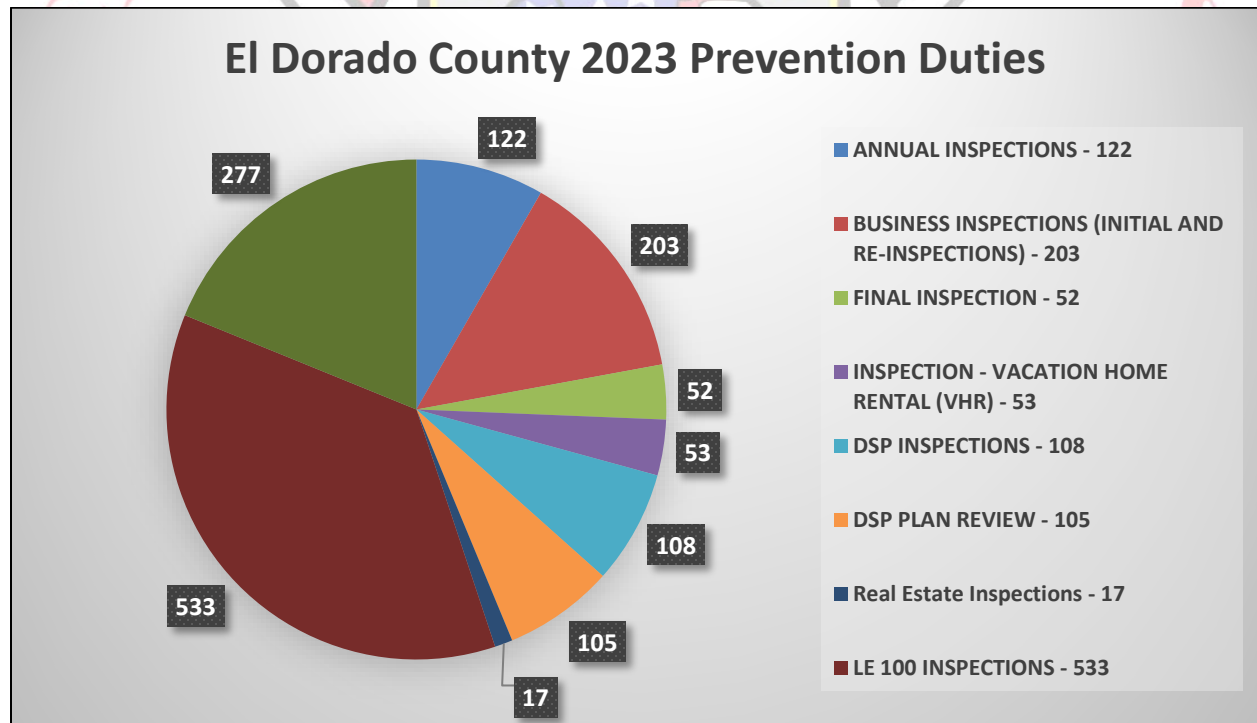
inspections. This position also provides succession planning and promotional opportunities as well as flexibility with assignments for all bureau personnel.

All members of the Prevention Bureau have been engaged in multi-agency cooperation and collaboration with the USFS, Cal Fire, El Dorado County OWPR, Fire Safe Councils and other fire districts. This has been a beneficial partnership that yields many benefits to the community and bureau personnel.

The Bureau continues to provide a high level of customer service with plan review for commercial and residential development, participation in working groups, performing public education and outreach to over 350 square miles of multi-agency constituents.

Prevention personnel continue to take classes at the National Fire Academy including Youth Fire Setting Intervention, Fire Adapted Communities, and Managing Effective Fire Prevention programs in addition to OSFM FSTEP classes. This dedication to ongoing education exemplifies the commitment needed and expected given the importance of fire prevention.

Fire Prevention Activity Totals for 2023



Apparatus & Fleet

Our apparatus fleet and equipment are managed by a Division Chief, who is responsible for the maintenance, repairs, and replacement plan. Our apparatus undergoes routine maintenance, annual maintenance and required certification when applicable. This also includes the annual pump testing of all fire apparatus. Our fleet management has been bolstered by the addition of several members of the district who assist with minor repairs and service in-house. This program benefits the district by reducing down time for equipment and saving tax dollars on routine services and minor repairs. During 2023, three additional type 1 engines were ordered and the prebuild process has been completed. Estimated delivery will be fall of 2024. Additional apparatus included two utility vehicles and the replacement of one command vehicle.

The district is currently undergoing a change in business model and deployment of resources to include the addition of Diamond Springs Fire. The cost of new apparatus, coupled with the repair and maintenance continue to challenge the district. Another emerging issue impacting all fire departments is the lag time to obtain new apparatus. Historically, the timeframe from order to delivery for fire apparatus was 12-18 months, now the estimated time has been pushed to 4 years. Overall apparatus size remains a continual challenge for the apparatus specifications committee, however, they continue to work to find ways to keep apparatus size optimum for our District. The geography and road systems within our District favor smaller apparatus, unfortunately, changes in emission requirements and NFPA recommendations have continued to require larger apparatus builds.

The district currently allocates \$350,000 annually to the apparatus replacement fund. Costs of apparatus are projected to outpace this fund in the near future, the district will need to increase this allocation to avoid shortfalls and financing costs. Maintaining an adequate apparatus replacement fund allows us to pay cash at the time of ordering apparatus, which yields a significant savings for pre-payment, further stretching our apparatus budget to meet our needs.

Honor Guard

Our Honor Guard has been involved in several promotional ceremonies this past year, with additional events in the upcoming year. The Honor Guard is currently working on recruiting additional members to expand their group.

Critical Incident Stress Management – Peer Support Group

The members of our CISM team continue to maintain a state of readiness for any needs our personnel may have. Our District is truly blessed with the high level of commitment and training our team members have maintained. The recent retirement of Engineer Campbell, the longtime lead for this program, has left a void. We are fortunate that retiree Campbell has remained in touch with the team and the district, ensuring our members have the necessary support to navigate challenges they may encounter. Through a partnership with the Sierra Chaplaincy and the El Dorado County Fire Chiefs Association, we have created another channel of support for our personnel.

Emergency Medical Services (EMS)

There were several changes for the EMS division in 2023, beginning with the implementation of the Paramedic Apparatus Operator (PAO) program. Beginning in February, the EMS division began the training and accreditation process to on-board 6 PAOs with the intent to staff Medic 49. Utilizing a single role paramedic model and matching the current suppression schedule, the PAO program has been successful in both operations, recruitment, and retention. An additional 6 PAOs were hired and began their orientation and accreditation in April, expanding the program to operate 2 medic units. To date, the PAO program staffs both Medic 49 and Medic 28. With the acquisition of Medic 49, El Dorado County Fire now operates 5 of the 8 JPA medic units in the county.

El Dorado County Fire has adapted to the challenge of hiring suppression qualified paramedics by developing a pathway for current PAOs to achieve a suppression position within El Dorado County Fire. The PAO Bridge Program was developed to transition PAOs to the suppression side by allowing candidates to study, learn, and practice the skills necessary to qualify for the state certification level of firefighter I/II. The PAOs train both internally and externally to prepare themselves for the certification process while also working in the capacity as a Paramedic at station 19. The first candidates in the bridge program will test for certification in May 2024 allowing us to add 3 Firefighter/Paramedics positions to the suppression ranks.

The EMS Division continues to lead the county with qualified Field Training Officers (FTO). FTOs are critical for internal accreditations and both internal and external field internships. Accreditations and field internships help FTOs and students by staying engaged and current with policies, procedures, and protocols. ECF has become a field internship hub for paramedic programs including Sac State, UC Davis, NCTI, Truckee Meadows JC, and American River JC. El Dorado County Fire currently has 10 FTOs.

Our tactical medic program continues to expand and provide inter-agency collaboration with the El Dorado County Sheriff's Office. Tactical medics respond to SWAT

deployments several times each year and provide emergency medical treatment for the Sheriff's during these operations. The current staffing for these positions consists of two Firefighter /Paramedics. A third Firefighter/Paramedic will be attending the required 2-week tactical medic academy in April 2024 increasing the tactical medic ranks to a total of 3 medics.

The EMS Division has developed a cadre of Emergency Vehicle Operations Course (EVOG). These Instructors address new hire driving operations. Driving and operating ambulances is a day in, day out operation for El Dorado County Fire and one that holds considerable liability. A certified EVOG program helps to reduce this liability. The EMS Division has 3 certified EVOG instructors who provide an EVOG certification for all new firefighters and paramedics. The EVOG cadre is currently training 3 additional EVOG instructors to bolster cadre to 6.

Facilities Report

The El Dorado County Fire Protection District has five stations that are staffed 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. These stations are located in Cool, Pollock Pines, Pleasant Valley, Placerville, and Shingle Springs. The administration office is currently located in Camino.

This past year, the district was able to break ground on its expansion/update project for Station 17. This project took up a significant amount of time and energy from when it started in January, until its final completion in August. The goals of this project were to expand and improve the facility so that it was both safe & functional for District personnel. This was done by addressing highlighted problems such as plumbing leaks, repairs to the electrical system, water pooling under the apparatus, and septic system repairs. In addition, a second shower was added for crews to clean up after fires and the workout room was updated. Funding for these last two improvements was assisted by local groups hosting community fundraisers.

Another large project the district addressed was replacing the siding on Station 15 in Strawberry. Over the years, the station siding had failed to the point that it needed to be replaced before any structural damage could occur. The old cedar lap was replaced with new fire-resistant siding.

Work was also completed to ensure we were abiding by our own Defensible Space Regulations. Station chimneys were serviced, roofs/gutters cleaned out and weed abatement was done by fire personnel on a weekly basis. Also, all identified hazard trees were removed to provide a safe place for district personnel and visitors.

The district continued this past year to support our local Fire Safe Councils. Multiple groups were allowed to utilize various fire stations to conduct monthly meetings. In addition, they held clinics to share home defense information and green waste days to assist their communities with fuel reduction.

As with each year, older and outdated systems need to be repaired. Inevitably, some systems require replacement. This led to two stations getting new bay heaters, updating the water filtration system for one of our stations that uses a well, repairing the plymovents at multiple stations, and some single pane windows being replaced at Station 25.

Total stations: 14
Acres of land to maintain: 16.23
Square feet of stations to maintain: 65,000
Stations staffed by district personnel: 6
Stations used by other government agencies: 2
Average station age: 48 years
Oldest Station: 74 years, Station 25
Newest Station: 13 years, Station 28
Last remodel(expansion)- 7 months (2023), Station 17

Administration

The Administrative Team has taken on several projects during the past year to enhance the efficiencies within the district. Most notably is the current transition of our payroll software to a modern platform. The current system is based around the Microsoft Access database, which is very outdated and cumbersome for staff. We will be transitioning to the UKG platform that integrates with Telestaff to modernize the payroll department. This transition has been very labor intensive, given the complexities of our payroll with JPA and Fire personnel. We anticipate being fully transitioned to UKG during 2024.

As previously noted in the EMS Division report, the district established a new rank within the organization, Paramedic Ambulance Operator. In addition to the operational effort to standup this new rank, administratively there were also multiple items that needed to be addressed for the success of this new position.

The district was also able to complete and implement the First Responder Fee Program, which provides funding to offset our EMS responses. The Communications committee established a FAQ page on our website to provide information to the public on this new program.

We also established a joint DSP / ECF working group for the annexation process. The working group consists of board members, administrative staff, command staff and union leadership from both districts to work through the required LAFCO process, as well as internal items that will need to be completed for a successful annexation. The working

group has proven to be a critical piece in transparency across the districts, in addition to identifying items and working towards solutions with a common goal.

Our partnership with the City of Placerville continues to work towards a Joint Public Safety Building, providing much needed relief for both our Police Officers and Firefighters serving the City. Senator Alvarado-Gil was able to meet with us to see firsthand the facility needs of our first responders. The Senator was able to successfully obtain funding for \$1,000,000.00 from the State of California for land acquisition necessary for the public safety building.

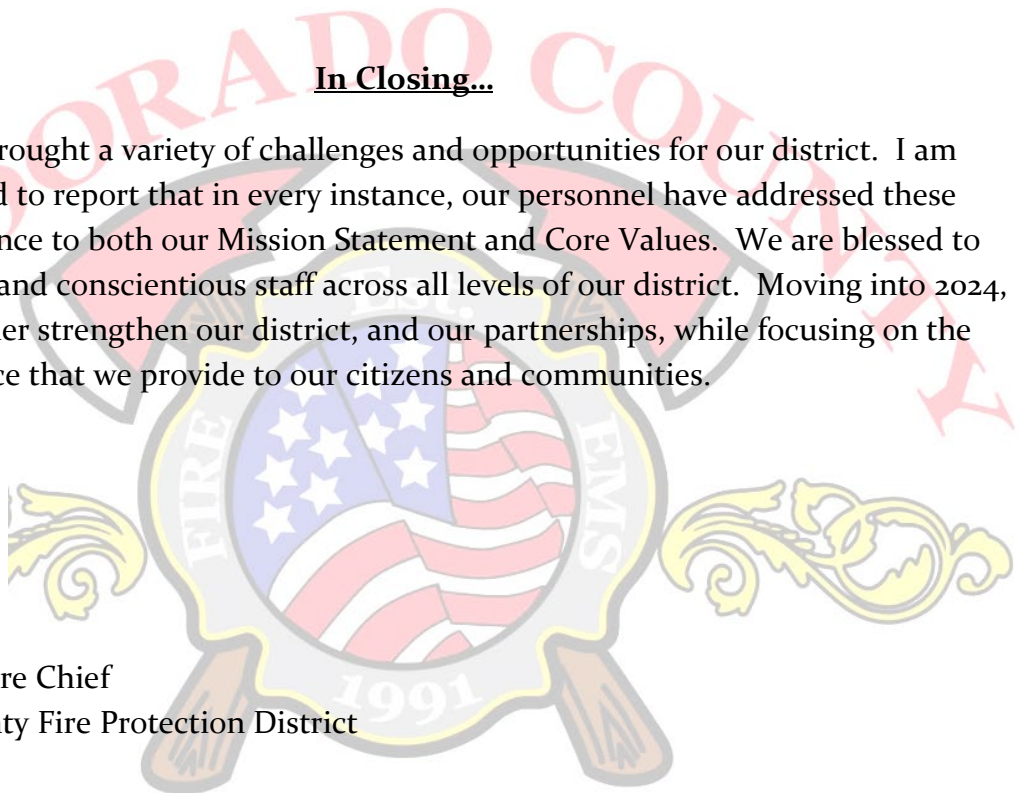
In Closing...

The year 2023 brought a variety of challenges and opportunities for our district. I am extremely proud to report that in every instance, our personnel have addressed these items in adherence to both our Mission Statement and Core Values. We are blessed to have dedicated and conscientious staff across all levels of our district. Moving into 2024, we look to further strengthen our district, and our partnerships, while focusing on the high-level service that we provide to our citizens and communities.

Respectfully,



Tim Cordero, Fire Chief
El Dorado County Fire Protection District



FIRE