



## EL DORADO COUNTY FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT

### PRESS RELEASE

**For Immediate Release: 01/12/2021**

**Date/Time of Occurrence:** 01/16/2021

**Nature of Occurrence:** Fire District to move forward with new Business Model

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Camino, CA — In mid-January, The El Dorado County Fire Protection District will be reallocating existing personnel to enhance staffing levels on several fire engines. This move is part of a larger business model change that was approved by the Board of Directors last month.

The business model change was proposed by a Joint Labor Management Committee (JLMC) comprised of Fire District Chief Officers and the leadership from the El Dorado County Professional Firefighters Association. The JLMC was authorized by the Board of Directors in August 2020 and was charged with evaluating the overall operations of the Fire District and developing and a business model change to meet the needs of the communities while addressing on-going concerns within the District. The JLMC identified several main areas of concern, which included the low staffing levels of 4 of 6 engine companies, retention of qualified and experienced firefighters and providing pathways for increasing the number of firefighter paramedics within the District – all while remaining within the confines of the Fire District budget.

The Fire District sought additional revenues in the fall of 2019, via a tax initiative Measure B, to address issues like those identified by the JLMC. The tax measure was soundly defeated by voters and the measure failed. Although the tax initiative was defeated the concerns with safe staffing levels on engine companies, facility upgrades, and retention issues continue. The El Dorado County Fire Protection District is an independent special district; therefore, funding for the Fire District comes from local secured property taxes and a small special parcel tax, not the county, state, or federal government budgets.

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Adding firefighters to enhance staffing levels on fire engines was a leading concern for the JLMC. Remaining below recognized national standard staffing levels reduces firefighter safety and efficiency. Absent of the additional funding necessary to increase staffing levels, the JLMC identified the opportunity to partner with Cal Fire in the Camino area to free up personnel to be reallocated and increase staffing on several other fire engines. The two staffed fire stations in Camino: Cal Fire Station 20 (Mt. Danaher Rd), and El Dorado County Fire Station 21 (Carson Rd.) are within eyesight of each other and often split emergency call response in that area. Through a partnership with Cal Fire, the Fire District will provide year-round coverage for the community of Camino utilizing Station 20. Personnel from the Fire District's Station 21 will be redeployed to Engine 17 in Pollock Pines and Engine 19 in Pleasant Valley, enhancing staffing levels from 2 firefighters to 3 without the need to hire additional personnel. The closure of Engine 21 reduces a duplication of resources in Camino and provides enhanced firefighter safety without increasing the District's operational budget.

The Cal Fire Engine(s) at Station 20 other agencies in the West Slope of El Dorado County operate under a "closest resource" agreement, which dispatches the closest resource to an emergency scene, regardless of jurisdiction. The Cal Fire engine(s) at Station 20 are already part of this dispatch matrix and routinely respond to medical aids, vehicle accident, and fires within Camino and beyond.

The Fire District is pleased to be able to partner with Cal Fire and enter into this cooperative agreement which allows the District to improve service levels while operating within current budget constraints. This unique opportunity for partnership exists within Camino and will allow the Fire District to stretch tax dollars further.

For additional information, please contact the El Dorado County Fire Protection District Administrative Office at (530)644-9630.

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