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APPOINTMENT OF CAL FIRE CHIEF KEN PIMLOTT

Chief Ken Pimlott was appointed on July 12, 2011 by Governor Brown as the Director of CAL FIRE, after serving as the Acting Director since November of 2010. He is also California's State Forester.

Chief Pimlott has over 26 years of fire service experience, including 23 years with CAL FIRE. Prior to being appointed, Pimlott was the Deputy Director of Fire Protection, responsible for CAL FIRE's statewide fire protection programs, including Command and Control Operations, Cooperative Fire Protection, Conservation Camps, Fleet Management, Aviation Management, and Training and Safety.

The men and women of the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) are dedicated to the fire protection and stewardship of over 31 million acres of California's privately-owned wildlands. In addition, the Department provides varied emergency services in 36 of the State's 58 counties via contracts with local governments. The Department's firefighters, fire engines, and aircraft respond to an average of more than 5,600 wildland fires each year. Those fires burn more than 172,000 acres annually.

CUEA has a strong and formidable working relationship with Chief Pimlott and CAL FIRE which positively affects all member utilities. We look forward to continued cooperation as the 2011 fire season progresses

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AS FIRES RAGE, CUEA MEMBERS RESPOND

Fire season is in full swing with two significant fires raging in Southern California over the Labor Day weekend.

The first, the Hill Fire, was located in the Cajon Pass along I-15 south of Oak Hills in San Bernardino County. At one point threatening 1,500 homes and structures, the Hill Fire ultimately charred 1,158 acres. Major traffic issues resulted from the closure of I-15 through Cajon Pass, the major route between Los Angeles and Las Vegas.

A second fire named the Canyon Fire, burned Tehachapi in Kern County after a private plane crashed. While 800 homes and structures were threatened, crews worked to control the blaze and in the end, lost only 62 residences and outbuildings and 38 vehicles. The total number of acres burned was 14,585, with seven injuries reported. Both the Kern County EOC and the Inland REOC were activated in response to this fire.

The CUEA staff was kept busy fielding calls and providing updates while members stood ready and willing to help with these fires during the first week of September. Verizon wireless volunteered to supplement wireless communications while the Southern California Edison Fire Manager responded to the scene of the Hill Fire.



DC-10 air tanker drops on the Hill fire in Cajon Pass on Sept 2. Photo: Irfan Khan, Los Angeles Times

MEMBERS INVOLVED IN HURRICANE IRENE RESPONSE

Category 3 Hurricane Irene made landfall over North Carolina on the morning of August 27 and then again August 28 over New Jersey. Over 65 million people on the East Coast were estimated to be at risk according to the initial path indications. This was the first hurricane to hit New Jersey since 1903. Though downgraded to a tropical storm, Irene continued to roll over New Jersey, New York, and Vermont, causing the worst flooding in New England in centuries. Roughly 7.4 million homes and businesses in 15 states lost power due to the storm. More than fifty deaths have been attributed to Irene and early damage estimates around \$10 billion.

Before Irene hit, Sprint staged portable generators to rapidly offset loss of commercial power to its cell towers and switches, as well as Cell Sites on Wheels (COWs) to provide immediate restoration of wireless service. AT&T stores in Manhattan, the Bronx, and Staten Island were open later hours for customers to purchase extra batteries and other items needed to prepare. Meanwhile, other AT&T stores were closed through the weekend to allow employees to be at home with their families.



Hurricane Irene

EXECUTIVE LEVEL SEMINAR: FIRE RESPONSE

On August 30, Executive Director Don Boland participated in an Executive Level Seminar on the topic of California Fire Response. The meeting at Cal EMA Headquarters allowed California fire representatives to explain California's fire mutual aid system, the role they play and their capabilities to the Executive level representatives of the California State Agencies.

This meeting provided the opportunity to educate those not directly involved in emergency response and planning on the capabilities of those presenting but to also to open doors for new partnerships and coordination.

Representatives from CAL FIRE, the California Wildfire Coordination Group, the California National Guard, and CUEA explained their roles and capabilities in fire response. An overview of the 2007 Southern California Fires was presented which applied California's fire response system to this event. The meeting concluded with a discussion on the current fire season and a fire/weather forecast for the upcoming season.

MEMBER AGENCY RESPONSE SYSTEM MEETING

Member Metropolitan Water District hosted the August 18th Member Agency Response System Meeting at their Operations Control Center in Los Angeles. System Operations Unit Manager George Del Toro conducted the meeting and CUEA Executive Director Don Boland was in attendance.

Those involved toured both the Operations Control Center and the Emergency Operations Center. Jonathan Bartlett from FEMA made a presentation on the Southern California Catastrophic Earthquake Plan. Katy Gibson from Metropolitan provided information on ARkStorm, Golden Guardian 2012, and also Water Sector Unit Leader Training. The safety of dams was addressed by Chris Hill of Metropolitan.

GOLDEN GUARDIAN 2012 OVERALL PLANNING CONCEPT

In 2012, the annual Golden Guardian exercise planning team will be taking a different approach than seen in the past. The Golden Guardian 2012 will be a series of tabletop exercises involving impacted Operational Areas that will involve Cal EMA, FEMA Region IX, and other stakeholders as appropriate. The exercise is designed to test and validate the Southern California Catastrophic Earthquake Plan by conducting educational seminars exercising the task force working group meetings that work up to seminars and table top exercises. Cal EMA Exercise Division and FEMA Region IX will partner and collaborate in planning and conducting the Golden Guardian 2012 event series. CUEA will play a part in the series at all levels of planning and execution.

Golden Guardian will be comprised of three phases. Phase one will be to conduct Subject Matter Expert seminars with a panel discussion to set baseline understanding of the Southern California Catastrophic Earthquake Plan and existing doctrinal systems articulated therein.

Phase two will conduct task force working group meetings: mass care (added for the exercise), Cajon Pass infrastructure, water conveyance, and port reconstitution. These meetings will engage the whole community for incident response, facilitate problem solving, and develop a detailed course of action briefing outlining facts assumptions, and selection criteria.

Phase three will consist of a series of coordinated OA, state, and federal exercise to validate Southern California Catastrophic Earthquake Plan concepts and decision cycle. CUEA will continue to be heavily involved in all facets of Golden Guardian 2012. As part of Phase Two, CUEA will head the Water Conveyance Task Force Working Group with participation from Cal EMA, California Department of Water Resources, Metropolitan Water District, Los Angeles Water and Power, and FEMA. Additionally, CUEA will head the Cajon Pass Task Force Working Group with Cal EMA, FEMA, and USGS.

In May 2012, Phase Three will bring in CUEA to the Unified Coordination Group tabletop exercise with Cal EMA, FEMA, and National Guard. Also participating will be eight Operation Area Emergency Operation Centers from Ventura, Kern, San Bernardino, Riverside, Los Angeles, Orange, San Diego, and Imperial Counties. The GG2012 Exercise Planning Team Leader is Jim Woodward, the Southern California Lead Planner is MAJ Rich Mifsud, and the State Agency Lead Planner is Elaine Viray. The FEMA Region IX lead planner is Charles Srioudom.

CUEA ATTENDS DISASTER RECOVERY JOURNAL'S FALL WORLD

The second week of September was the 45th Disaster Recovery Journal Conference: Fall World. The speakers and topics of presentation were just as engaging as always. The general session speakers represent some of the most knowledgeable subject matter experts in the business continuity field. They addressed current issues in the Emergency management arena of the Japan earthquake and tsunami and the lessons learned from the business continuity plans for the affected area infrastructure.

Industry experts lead break out groups on communication issues, including the 4g network capabilities and downfalls and the Government communication programs of GETS and WPS. In another breakout group, the concept of Incident Command System and the process of implementation into the private sector was broken down for attendees. Those in attendance left with a great understanding of the benefits of a standardized response.

The conference provides many opportunities for networking with those in the business continuity and disaster response field from many different disciplines and locations throughout the United States. It also provided great exposure for CUEA and the large strides we are taking to promote the organization throughout the State. As always, the conference proved to be a great tool and opportunity for the CUEA staff to further the value for our membership.



PLEASE SUBMIT ARTICLES AND/OR PICTURES FOR
NEXT QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER DUE BY 12/20/11:

EMILY.NOURSE@CALEMA.CA.GOV

NEXT BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

December 14, 2011
9:30 am -12:30 pm

location:

Shepherd Grille
11275 Folsom Blvd
Rancho Cordova, CA

followed by:

Holiday Lunch
12:30 pm - 2:30 pm