



V LAFAYETTE VISTAS

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AFTER SUCH A WET WINTER, LET'S BE FIRESAFE!

Nestled between the urban areas of Walnut Creek and the Oakland hills, the city of Lafayette is a beautiful and thriving community with lush open spaces, scenic ridgelines, and a busy downtown that easily connects residents to BART and Highway 24.

It's also in an area prone to wildfires that burn during the hot summers and equally warm falls. These fires are fueled by the native grasses, shrubs, brush and trees that thrive in the city's mix of hot and arid woodlands and hills.

The heavy rains that doused Lafayette and other parts of the state last winter and spring haven't lessened the fire danger. In fact, while rain has left trees less prone to fueling wildfires, the wet weather has produced a bumper crop of flammable plant, weed, and grass growth. In some areas, the annual grass is almost six feet tall and very thick, and there's more grass per acre than in previous years, according to fire officials.

All the vegetation "causes great concern," says Lewis Broschard, Deputy Fire Chief of the Contra Costa County Fire Protection District. "These grasses are very easily ignited and they are the primary fuel sources for fires to escalate from small, simple grass fires into larger and more dangerous fires involving brush and trees."

Add the dry and hot "Diablo" winds blowing from the north in late autumn when the soil is parched and plants are dry, and it's a volatile mix.

Vegetation fires have already left their mark in other parts of the county this season. Firefighters recently battled significant blazes everywhere from Rodeo to Brentwood, including a fire in Antioch that damaged multiple buildings and one that burned over 500 acres of grass and woodland. On June 19th, a fast-moving wildfire charred sixteen hillside acres behind Campolindo High School in Moraga before firefighters extinguished it.

Like the rest of the county, there's an increased chance in Lafayette that wildfires will become larger more rapidly than in previous years.

Because there is more fuel 'available to burn,' there's a higher chance fires will happen and grow hotter and faster than those during the drought, Broschard said.

As destructive as they can be to lives and homes, wildfires are a natural part of the environment. Native plant species have adapted to the inevitable fires and depend on them to clear

surface plants, germinate seeds and remove dead material.

But non-native vegetation brought into the area may not be adapted to the fire cycle and can ignite and easily burn. This foreign vegetation may also prevent the flowering of native plants.

To address the excess growth and minimize the potential spread of fire, CCCFPD is continuing to enforce weed abatement in open spaces, vacant parcels, and privately owned parcels of land. The enforcement — with the cooperation of land owners — has resulted in many disced and mowed parcels and less fuel for fire.

The District is also staffing an additional wildland fire engine for 24 hours during "Red Flag Warning" days, which are issued for weather events that can result in extreme fire behavior. Bulldozer staffing during "Red Flag Warning" days is also

being ramped up from 12 hours to 24.

The District has also amplified its aerial response by partnering with the County Sheriff's office to provide a fire captain and water-dropping bucket on the Sheriff's STARR3 helicopter, which is flown out of Buchanan Field in Concord. According to fire officials, it's the first full fire season where the helicopter is equipped with water dropping capability and the certifications to engage in aerial fire suppression. Only

10 miles away from Lafayette, the aircraft can provide swift and valuable fire suppression when a blaze is threatening homes.

Neighborhoods near open spaces can be especially vulnerable to an approaching wildfire, and development and other activity does play a role in how large a fire can spread. Firefighters see it every year: structures that catch fire from burning vegetation can spread fire to other structures. Numerous burning buildings devastate communities and they're also very difficult for firefighters to put out.

There are other factors that make fighting a wildfire difficult such as narrow roads that are tough for fire engines to access, and terrain — including ridges and canyons — that can hasten a fire's spread and make it more challenging to reach. But there are things residents can do to make their homes and neighborhoods fire safe. After all, houses aren't just threatened by flames but also embers cast onto roofs, under eaves, into attic spaces and under wood decks.

You can make your home safer by following the **Firesafe Checklist** on page 2.



Chamber of Commerce fire, July 13.

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"All the vegetation
causes great concern"
.....

FIRE SAFE CHECKLIST

What You Can Do to Protect your Home from a Wildfire!

According to fire officials, residents should take immediate steps to create “defensible space” in two zones around homes and structures on their property.

Zone 1 extends 30 feet from buildings, structures and decks.

- Remove all dead plants, grass and weeds.
- Remove dead or dry leaves and pine needles from yards, roof and rain gutters.
- Trim trees regularly to keep branches a minimum of 10 feet from other trees.
- Remove branches that hang over roofs and keep dead branches 10 feet away from chimneys.
- Relocate wood piles at least 30 feet away from buildings and decks.
- Remove or prune flammable plants and shrubs near windows.
- Remove vegetation and items that could catch fire from around and under decks.
- Create a separation between trees, shrubs and items that can catch fire, such as patio furniture, wood piles, and swing sets.

Zone 2 overlaps Zone 1 and extends a total of 100 feet out from buildings, structures and decks:

- Cut or mow annual grass down to a maximum height of 4 inches.
- Create horizontal spacing between shrubs and trees.
- Create vertical spacing between grass, shrubs and trees.
- Remove fallen leaves, needles, twigs, bark, cones and small branches.

Finally, have a neighborhood plan. Know primary and secondary evacuation routes (see next page) and have a ‘go bag’ full of important documents. And don’t forget to set family meeting places outside potential fire zones where you can meet up with your loved ones.

FIRE STATION 16 PROJECT MOVING AHEAD

Plans to rebuild Fire Station 16 on Los Arabis Drive are on track with a targeted completion date of mid-2018, according to Contra Costa County Fire Protection District officials. The facility at 4007 Los Arabis Drive has been closed since 2012.

Despite what’s seemed like a lengthy pre-construction process, there are no delays in getting the project built next year, fire officials say.

The Planning and Design Review Commissions have approved permits and plans for the reconstruction, which calls for a new 3,823-square foot fire station. The facility will have a 1,100 square foot apparatus bay for one fire truck and 2,713 square feet of living quarters for three firefighters.



The new station replaces the double-wide trailer firefighters had been using instead of the original fire station, which went out of service in the 1990s because of safety issues. Firefighters vacated the trailer more than five years ago after mold contamination and a rat infestation. Then county supervisors, who double as the district’s governing board, closed the station and others in Walnut Creek, Martinez and Clayton following the defeat of a parcel tax.

The district submitted the project in June for city building permit plan review. A contractor pre-qualification process is complete and the actual bid process will start once plans are approved.

Administrators anticipate being able to award a bid for construction in September after a two to three month review process.

CITY CONDUCTS FIRST-EVER WEB-ENABLED EMERGENCY SIMULATION



At least once each year, the city practices how it will respond to a major emergency using Lafayette’s Emergency Operations Plan.

The most recent drill occurred June 29 at the Lafayette Library and Learning Center Community Hall, which doubles as the city’s Emergency Operations Center. The exercise simulated an airplane crash in

the south-eastern portion of Lafayette and a resulting wildland fire. It also marked the city’s first use of WebEOC, a state-adopted emergency management software system.

The new software marks a departure from how information has been communicated in the past, according to Lafayette Police Chief Eric Christensen. Gone are the days of hand-written messages passed from person to person.

Using the web-based technology “we can get a to-the-minute update of what’s going on and can see what people are doing,” Christensen said.

The system is shared with the County and other cities can provide and view information as an event is unfolding.

The June drill included representatives from the Contra Costa County Fire Protection District, the Red Cross and the Lamorinda Community Emergency Response Team.

Another emergency simulation will be held in October.



Lafayette 50th Anniversary Logo Contest

The City is turning 50 next year and it's marking the occasion with a logo celebrating Lafayette's incorporation. But it isn't just any logo. The sleek image of the city's rolling hills and reservoir tower was designed by Acalanes High School student Sofia Cruz! Cruz's design beat out more than a hundred others submitted by Acalanes, Campolindo and Bentley high school students. It also snagged Cruz a \$50 prize. The logo will appear on T-shirts, stickers, banners, mugs and other items commemorating the city's incorporation. Congratulations, Sofia! The winning logo and other entries are on display at the Lafayette Library Gallery through the summer and will be formally introduced at the September Art & Wine Festival.

New EV Stations Powered Up!

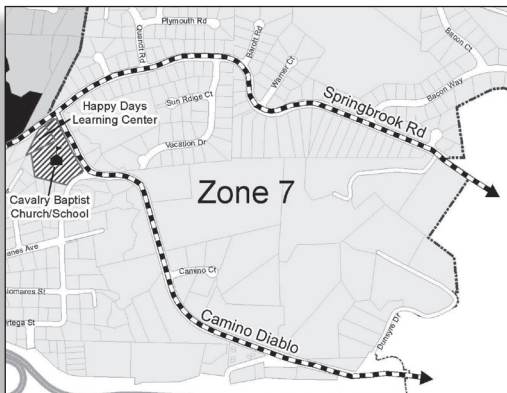
Do you own an electric vehicle? If so, there are three new public ChargePoint Electric Vehicle Charging Stations at the City parking lots at the intersections of Mt. Diablo Blvd & Risa Road and Mt. Diablo Blvd & Oak Hill Road. These stations were partially funded by a grant from the Bay Area Air Quality & Management District, whose goal is to expand access to EV charging stations and accelerate the Bay Area's adoption of EVs. Go check them out, use them if you have an EV, and help spread the word.



EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS COMMISSION RELEASES WILDLAND FIRE EVACUATION PLAN

Living in an area prone to wildfires, you may be wondering what would happen if a raging fire or other natural disaster forced necessary evacuations.

The Emergency Preparedness Commission has been working in partnership with police on a plan for a safe and effective community response to a wildland fire or other event requiring evacuation.



Sample neighborhood evacuation map.

In the works for more than a year, the *Wildland Fire Evacuation Plan* is part of Lafayette's Emergency Operations Plan and describes the steps that should be considered and then taken if an evacuation became necessary.

"It's a play-book," said Police

Chief Eric Christensen about the document. "If (something) happens, we go to the playbook and say 'Here's what we're going to do.'"

The plan details how the city should set up its response and

get the evacuation plan in motion. During a wildfire, Unified Command will establish "evacuation triggers" and responders will direct residents out of sections of the cities designated "tactical zones."

The document includes highly detailed evacuation routes and maps for 16 locations within the city. It lists special concerns such as roads that can't be blocked by responders, and descriptions of the evacuation zone, including the terrain and whether a road is susceptible to closure. It also notes alternate routes to evacuation sites

Critical locations such as schools, camps, churches and senior living facilities are noted. So is a PG&E gas pipeline control point and an East Bay Municipal Utility District filtering station.

Chief Christensen likened the plan to a checklist that improves emergency response during a time of crisis and stress.

"It's designed to help people remember how to do these things when this kind of thing happens," he said.

The plan has already been put to the test, albeit in practice. Last year, the city used the plan in a drill to simulate the evacuation of a neighborhood during an emergency.

This October, police plan to bring in the County Sheriff's Search and Rescue Team to participate in a drill.

To view the plan and see the evacuation routes for your neighborhood, click **Hot Topics** at the City's lovelafayette.org homepage.



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LAFAYETTE TIDBITS

Creek Master Plan Unveiled

A plan that could help shape the future of Lafayette's downtown creeks is in the spotlight. Council members are reviewing the *Downtown Creeks Preservation, Restoration and Development Plan*, which will guide the long term vision for enhancing downtown's mostly privately owned creeks. The council recently discussed the plan and recommendations made by the Planning Commission and continued the matter to Sept. 25 to allow further review. Any implementation would occur gradually over the next two decades as creekside properties are redeveloped. The plan calls for improvement of creeks owned by the city or within the public right of way, including restoration and beautification of a section of Lafayette Creek across from the Veterans Hall on Mt. Diablo Boulevard. The ultimate goal, according to city planning staff, is to add to downtown's character by protecting the natural resources of its creeks.

PG&E Pipeline Protection Plan Lawsuit

Residents dissatisfied with a PG&E plan to remove hundreds of trees as part of a pipeline safety project have filed a lawsuit. The July 26th complaint alleges that the city should have undertaken an environmental review of the proposal before lawmakers approved an agreement allowing the tree removals as part of the utility's Pipeline Protection Plan. The petitioners include the group Save Lafayette Trees. The lawsuit names Lafayette as the respondent and PG&E as the real party in interest. The city is reviewing the legal challenge and will convene with the petitioners in a mandatory settlement meeting to be held by August 11.

UHV Will Be Resurfaced. . .Next Year!

The thousands of Lafayette residents who live along the Upper Happy Valley Road corridor have been pretty darned patient over the last year while East Bay MUD has replaced its main water line underneath that street. The work has required tunneling, which has in turn required traffic controls and metal street plates, and the end result is a street that has seen better days. Well, fear not, because the road will be fixed! The water utility is responsible for restoring the street to at least as good a condition as it was prior to the commencement of the project. So, once the pipeline work is completed, EBMUD will do significant asphalt patching and repair. This work will likely occur in the autumn. The City will follow up, next spring or summer, by treating the entire road from top to bottom with a black slurry coat and new paint job that will give the road a new look. Questions can be directed to City Engineer Tony Coe at Tcoe@lovelafayette.org.

Gogo Grandparent Pilot Program

Lafayette seniors who need a ride now have another way to get around. The City has partnered with GoGoGrandparent, a Mountain View-based startup that arranges rides for seniors through Uber or Lyft. Users call GoGoGrandparent and request a ride, and the service arranges and monitors the trip. A 19 cent-per-minute surcharge is added to the cost of the Uber or Lyft ride and the city is providing a 50 percent subsidy on GoGoGrandparent rides up to a maximum of \$50 per month. To qualify for the pilot program, participants must be 70 years or older and live in Lafayette. They also need to be registered by a Lamorinda Spirit Van Program dispatcher. To register, call 925-283-3534.

CITY DIRECTORY

For Council Members call: 284-1968

Council Members

Mike Anderson	Mayor
Don Tatzin	Vice Mayor
Cameron Burks	Council Member
Mark Mitchell	Council Member
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Messages to **all** Council Members:
cityhall@lovelafayette.org

Administration

General Reception and	284-1968
Steven Falk, City Manager	Fax: 284-3169
Tracy Robinson, Admin. Srv. Dir.	299-3227
Jennifer Wakeman,	
Financial Srv. Mgr.	299-3213
Joanne Robbins, City Clerk	299-3210
Tony Coe, City Engineer	299-3203
Niroop Srivatsa,	
Planning & Building Dir.	299-3206
Mike Moran, Public Works Dir.	299-3214
P.W. Hotline (to report problems)	299-3259

If you observe illegal dumping in creeks & storm drains or accidental spills on roads, call Contra Costa Hazardous Materials Division 646-2286.

Lamorinda School Bus Program

Juliet Hansen, Program Mgr.	299-3216
	or 299-3215

Parks, Trails and Recreation 284-2232

Jonathan Katayanagi, Director

Senior Services 284-5050

Police Services

Emergency: 24 Hours	911
Police Dispatch: 24 Hours	284-5010
Police Business Office:	283-3680

Anonymous tipline, traffic enforcement, suggestions & LEARN (Laf. Emergency Action Response Network), 299-3230

Fax 284-3169

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