

Montecito Fire Protection District



Strategic Plan

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Mission Statement

The Montecito Fire Protection District is a progressive organization committed to the protection of the people, property and the environment. We exist to provide a professional and timely response to the needs of the community in preparation for, during and in recovery from emergencies.

Organizational Values

We value our citizens' rights and quality of life.

We value our young and old alike.

We value our obligation and responsibility.

We value community support, input and participation.

Being a member of the Montecito Fire Protection District requires constant attention to the way we treat other members and the people we serve. It also means that we continuously strive to improve the services we offer.

The cornerstone of our beliefs begin with respecting each person's contributions to our organization or community, regardless of his or her political strength, personal appearance, economic status, ethnicity, cultural heritage or religious beliefs.

Because each of our fire stations is an "open house" that is ready to welcome our citizens, we work to demonstrate appreciation, support and tolerance in everything that we do.

Conflict within the organization or community is investigated thoroughly and viewed as an organizational "injury" that needs healing. We then take preventive measures to ensure it doesn't happen again. We look at mistakes not as failures, but as opportunities to improve.

As members we are responsible for our own lives and what we make of them. We celebrate the success of others. When we see an opportunity to assist someone, we offer before we are asked. Helping one another is the norm, not the exception.

Working together as a cohesive unit brings forth accomplishments that make our job worthwhile. The organizations "win-win" philosophy is the common denominator for tackling problems and creating solutions.

We pride ourselves on our professional demeanor and response to any incident, minor injury or major disaster.

Strategic Priorities

Priority #1 – Constant Improvement Driven by the Needs of the Community

Maximize the effectiveness of process, structure and operations to support timely delivery of citizen oriented and efficient community service.

Priority #2 – Innovative Service Delivery

Maximize opportunities to measurably improve citizen and community outcomes and leverage resources through the continuous integration of health, community and public safety services.

Priority #3 – Fiscal Accountability and Transparency

Strengthen and enhance the organizations fiscal accountability and transparency through proactive and prudent fiscal policies and stewardship.

The Plan: Goals, Outcomes and Tasks

Goal #1 – Achieve excellence in community service.

Outcome:

The Montecito Fire Protection District will be recognized for our excellence in community service.

1. Establish a stakeholder team that will provide vision, direction and support for innovative customer service.
 - 1.1. Develop a comprehensive District Community Outreach Plan that provides vision, direction and support for enhanced community relations and life-enriching educational/preparedness programs. Once approved, develop a comprehensive field training program focusing on purpose and scope of plan, as well as partnership development skills.
2. Enhance our community relations culture to inspire our operations personnel to engage with our community members.
 - 2.1. Encourage local fire stations to embrace their surrounding community and develop programs that result in the community embracing them.
 - 2.2. Provide residents the opportunity to interact with their firefighters through business inspections, home inspections and emergency preparedness presentations.
 - 2.3. Deliver monthly fire safety and emergency preparedness classes at the fire station to help accomplish the goal of providing community based public safety services.
3. Evaluate current community outreach, education and preparedness programs for effectiveness and value.
 - 3.1. Develop a system to catalog, identify, classify and evaluate for effectiveness and value of all current District programs.
 - 3.2. Review the current outreach materials found on the District website to ensure information is current, simplified and presented in a user-friendly format. This review should consider augmented video training, reducing excessive verbiage, utilizing links effectively, and utilizing photographs or graphics more effectively, with consideration of public service information, as well as existing business assistance information.
 - 3.3. Review the current Fire Prevention Bureau materials found on the District website to ensure information is current, simplified and presented in a user-friendly format.
4. Engineer innovative outreach programs that establish the District as a leader in education, preparedness and public safety programs.
 - 4.1. Through coordination with Operations, develop an all-encompassing fire safety educational program to be used for homeowners. Program topics should include home

self-inspection, defensible space inspection, electrical and furnace safety, smoke detectors, carbon monoxide detectors and fire extinguishers.

- 4.2. Develop an educational program focusing on community partnerships that supports our annual fire inspection program.
- 4.3. Review annual brush clearance program procedures and incorporate Ready, Set, Go into the process.

Goal #2 – Contain our Risks

Outcome:

Risk management in the organization will incorporate leadership strategy, professional development, performance appraisals, industrial relations and targeted action plans into the preparation, prevention and moderation of events, both anticipated and unanticipated, that will negatively impact community member safety, the District's financial status, reputation and/or operational effectiveness. Risk management practices will be consistent with the Montecito Plan. Risk management will focus on maintaining a fire safe community, healthy workforce and reducing organizational legal exposure by proactively addressing practices in order to prevent workplace injury and accidents.

1. Enhance risk management procedures as recommended in the 2015 Citygate Standards of Coverage and Risk Assessment Study.
 - 1.1. Consider requesting an updated Protection Classification Community Survey from the Insurance Services Office.
 - 1.2. Ensure that all fire apparatus pumps are tested annually in conformance with NFPA 1911 Standard for the Inspection, Maintenance, Testing and Retirement of In-Service Automotive Fire Apparatus.
 - 1.3. Update pre-incident and target hazard plans every five years.
 - 1.4. Continue to advocate for meaningful reduction of existing access/egress impediments wherever possible.
 - 1.5. Actively seek water system improvements where available fire flow does not meet minimum District fire protection standards.
 - 1.6. Exercise emergency notification systems every 12-months.
 - 1.7. Exercise and test the District's evacuation plan every 36-months.
 - 1.8. Maintain existing vegetation reduction/modification projects to ensure sustained effectiveness.
 - 1.9. Actively seek additional landowner agreements for vegetation removal/modification projects, especially in those areas of the District adjacent to the native chaparral fuel beds to reduce wildland fire intensity/spread potential.
 - 1.10. Actively seek additional neighborhood vegetation removal/reduction projects that will reduce wildland fire intensity/spread potential.
 - 1.11. Actively seek additional vegetation removal, reduction and maintenance funding sources to reduce wildland fire intensity/spread potential.
2. Enhance risk management procedures as recommended in the 2016 Community Wildfire Protection Plan.

- 2.1. Work with Santa Barbara County and other adjacent agencies to develop higher resolution fuels data for fire modeling that will better define fuel model data not available in LANDFIRE.
- 2.2. Create community-specific evacuation brochures and website links for all populations (bilingual) but specifically vulnerable populations. Information should include the District's evacuation plan, personal preparedness planning, transportation planning, medical and prescription needs, short and long-term sheltering needs, shelter in place plans, disaster kits, etc.
- 2.3. Ensure schools and educational facilities have updated and adequate preparedness and evacuation plans.
- 2.4. Improve tracking of fuel treatment activities by establishing a fuel treatment database. Information to collect includes name of the project, project type, date planned, date accomplished, type of treatment, acres treated, project cost, equipment used and summary of ESHA or cultural resource issues.
- 2.5. Considering creating and maintaining a voluntary registry of mobility-limited/disabled vulnerable population.
- 2.6. Outreach to vulnerable populations and limited mobility individuals and work through established disability networks and facilities annually to assist them in developing evacuation and shelter in place plans.
- 2.7. Continue field evacuation drills every 36 months; document lessons learned from each exercise and incorporate lessons for future drills.
- 2.8. Consider establishing a fuel treatment monitoring program to ensure that fuel treatments activities remain effective. A suggested method for monitoring fuel treatments is photo point monitoring. Photo point monitoring is an easy and inexpensive, yet effective method of monitoring vegetation change. It consists of repeat photography of an area of interest over a period of time with photographs taken from the same location and the same field of view as the original photo. With appropriate site marking and documentation, different people can replicate photos many years apart.
3. Develop a dynamic risk profile that identifies the risks the organization is exposed to and includes the nature, frequency and severity of each risk.
 - 3.1. Develop a mitigation plan with short-term and long-term prevention strategies.
 - 3.2. Using the risk profile, analyze and prioritize each risk based on the potential impact on the community, the organization and the employee.
 - 3.3. Develop and implement risk mitigation strategies, with measurable matrices, for the most significant risk exposures.
 - 3.4. Monitor to ensure compliance, and evaluate the effectiveness, of risk strategies.
 - 3.5. Create a risk prevention culture, using active leadership and individual accountability.

Goal #3 – Mitigate Disaster

Outcome:

The District will maintain the highest level of preparedness for natural disaster by providing prompt, skillful and cost-effective fire protection and life safety services through the proper use of training, drills and equipment. Our workforce will be prepared, our community will be educated and prepared and the necessary equipment will be purchased and maintained.

1. Maintain the infrastructure, equipment, processes and staffing models to implement the Department Operations Center that will manage the response functions of a major or catastrophic emergency.
 - 1.1. Develop and implement a staffing plan for off-duty personnel reporting to duty at the Department Operations Center.
2. Review, update and implement comprehensive major or catastrophic emergency response plans.
3. Establish partnerships with our community to prepare them for their specific roles during disaster prevention, preparedness, response and recovery.
4. Expand the use of social media to effectively communicate with our community during all phases of a disaster.
5. Review and revise the District's Business Continuity Plan and revise to include provisions for supporting the needs of employee's families and sustainment needs for all personnel.
 - 5.1. Define, research, develop and implement a family welfare communication policy and procedure in the event of a major catastrophic natural disaster.

Goal #4 – Deliver Exceptional Emergency Service to our Community

Outcome:

The Montecito Fire Protection District will be an exceptional organization recognized for our regional reputation and hometown attentiveness as we provide fire and life safety services.

Tasks:

1. Monitor and maintain programs that result in employees understanding that our future success is based on exceptional customer service.
 - 1.1. Consistently analyze, evaluate and improve customer service.
 - 1.2. Reinforce strategies “above and beyond” the norm to promote and improve the services we provide, resulting in our organization remaining an integral part of our community.
 - 1.3. Celebrate and recognize employees who deliver outstanding customer service.
 - 1.4. Implement and monitor processes to measure and evaluate our effectiveness in providing exemplary, caring emergency services to our customers and the community.
 - 1.5. Conduct post-incident surveys and implement modifications based on survey results.
2. Capture fire service delivery best practices and lessons learned to create positive change in our organizational culture.
3. Initiate “closest, most appropriate resource” dispatch to enhance emergency services delivery.
4. Enhance emergency operations as recommended in the 2015 Citygate Standards of Coverage and Risk Assessment Study.
 - 4.1. Conduct a functional exercise with the Santa Barbara City Hazardous Materials Response Team at least annually.
 - 4.2. The District should adopt comprehensive performance measures for the major types of emergencies to direct fire crew planning and to monitor the operation of the organization. The measure should take into account a realistic company turnout time of 2 minutes and be designed to deliver outcomes that will save patients medically salvageable upon arrival, and to keep small, but serious, fire from becoming greater alarm fires.
 - 4.2.1. Distribution of Fire Stations: To treat medical patients and control small fires, the first-due unit should arrive within 7 minutes, 90 percent of the time from the receipt of the 911 call in the fire dispatch center. This equates to a 1-minute call handling time, 2-minute company turnout time and 4-minute travel time in the most populated areas.
 - 4.2.2. Multiple-Unit Effective Response Force for Serious Emergencies: To confine fires near the room of origin, to stop wildland fires to under three acres when noticed promptly, and to treat up to five medical patients at once, a multiple-unit response

of a least 15 personnel, including mutual aid resources, should arrive within 11 minutes from the time of 911 call receipt in fire dispatch, 90% of the time. This equates to a 1-minute call handling time, 2-minute company turnout time and 8-minute travel time spacing for multiple units in the most populated areas.

- 4.2.3. Hazardous Materials Response: Provide hazardous materials response designed to protect the community from the hazards associated with uncontrolled release of hazardous and toxic materials. The fundamental mission of the Fire District response is to minimize or halt the release of a hazardous substance so it has minimal impact on the community. The first company capable of investigating a HazMat release at the operations level should be available to respond within 7 minutes' total response time, 90 percent of the time. After size-up and scene evaluation is completed, a determination will be made whether to request additional resources from the District's multi-agency hazardous materials response partnership.
- 4.2.4. Technical Rescue: Respond to technical rescue emergencies as efficiently and effectively as possible with enough trained personnel to facilitate a successful rescue. Achieve a travel time for the first company in urban to suburban areas for size-up of the rescue within 7 minutes' total response time, 90 percent of the time. Assemble additional resources for technical rescue capable of initiating a rescue within a total response time of 11 minutes, 90 percent of the time. Safely complete rescue/extrication to ensure delivery of patient to a definitive care facility.
- 4.2.5. Staff one engine company at each fire station with a paramedic.

Goal #5 – Innovate Alternative Delivery Systems

Outcome:

The organization will have the foundational strategies it needs to go from where it is today to where it expects to be in the future.

1. Enhance delivery systems as recommended in the 2015 Citygate Standards of Coverage and Risk Assessment Study.
 - 1.1. Improve service delivery to the East side of the District by locating a third fire station in Eastern Montecito.
 - 1.2. Consider a long-term strategy to operate a three fire station model in the shape of a triangle, relocating fire station 1 closer to the coast. Doing so would best fit the topography.
2. Analyze emerging demographics and research public safety service delivery trends to identify opportunities for competitive service and product innovations.
 - 2.1. Research national best practices and innovations in fire and life safety service delivery and identify those that might best meet our needs.
 - 2.2. Research health care trends and demographics, and how these trends like Nationalized Health Care and massive retirement of the baby boomer generation will impact health care delivery systems.
 - 2.3. Research fire protection and suppression trends and demographics, and how those trends, such as residential fire sprinklers will impact service delivery.
 - 2.4. Analyze the cost, operational impact, potential system savings and patient care impacts from a tiered dispatching model.
3. Identify and develop the products and services our customers will want and need in the next 5-10 years.
 - 3.1. Using inputs from item 2 above, develop proposals for the prioritized service delivery innovations which will include costing models, outside revenue streams and innovative staffing models.
4. Develop tools to measure the effectiveness of new programs.
5. Develop efficient, cost-effective, data-driven methods, models and strategies for deploying and responding public safety services.
 - 5.1. Research nationally effective methods of evaluating service delivery, response times, deployment costs, event-driven deployment, cost-benefit analysis, benchmarking, readiness costs and cost accounting.
6. Engineer innovative programs that uphold our organization as our community's best option for creative public safety services.

Goal #6 – Strengthen our Infrastructure

Outcome:

The District will have all the necessary infrastructure to carry out the mission of protecting lives, the environment and property.

1. Using innovative strategies, assess, evaluate and maintain District facilities to provide a safe, efficient, functional and compliant workplace.
 - 1.1. Develop and maintain a preventative maintenance program to include scheduled maintenance, financial planning and fixed item replacement.
 - 1.2. Inventory existing sites and enter comprehensive site information into a computer based tracking system to assist with resource deployment and fixed item procurement.
2. Develop, procure and maintain computer and telecommunications required for internal and external communications.
3. Develop, procure and maintain a fleet of vehicles that meets the needs of the organization for the next 20 years. This plan should incorporate projected evolution of our service and innovations in apparatus and fleet operations.
 - 3.1. Develop and implement a light duty vehicle policy to include replacement guidelines, regulatory compliance, budget forecasting, monitoring of usage and fiscal responsibility.
 - 3.2. Develop and implement a fire apparatus policy to include replacement guidelines, regulatory compliance, budget forecasting, monitoring of usage and fiscal responsibility.
4. Seek opportunities to develop a training facility inside the Fire District.

Goal #7 – Develop Exceptional Employees

Outcome:

The organization will be recognized as a high performing team that fosters a culture of inclusion, capitalizing on each employee's strengths while respecting individual differences, in pursuit of workforce excellence.

1. Enhance employee development systems as recommended in the 2015 Citygate Standards of Coverage and Risk Assessment Study.
 - 1.1. Future job descriptions and recruitments for the Fire Chief or Division Chief positions should consider including a requirement for possessing a combination of a Bachelors or Master Degree in Public or Business Administration along with a Chief Officer certification from the California Fire Service Training and Education System, or its equivalent; Fire Chief and Division Chief should also be encouraged and supported to attend appropriate professional training, including National Fire Academy classes and/or its Executive Fire Officer Program.
 - 1.2. The organization should consider encouraging and supporting the District Mechanic to attain professional certification as recommend by NFPA 1071 Standard for Emergency Vehicle Technician Professional Qualification.
2. Create and foster trust in each other by implementing excellent, transparent, two-way communication and fairness in developing and applying policy and procedures.
 - 2.1. Improve the organizations policy manual.
 - 2.2. Implement policy education and understanding at all levels of the organization.
3. Develop and promote programs that exemplify the key characteristics of an effective team which includes caring, mutual respect, transparent communication, pride, mentoring others, rewarding good performance and collective responsibility.
 - 3.1. Incorporate ongoing education for all personnel in the area of diversity to increase employee awareness regarding the benefits of a diverse workforce and how to create and maintain a culture of mutual trust and respect.
 - 3.2. Implement Professional Development Program for all ranks below Division Chief to create a logical course of progression for employees seeking greater organizational responsibility.
 - 3.3. Implement Higher Education Reimbursement Program to incentivize attainment of higher education.

Goal #8 – Prevent Injury and Illness

Outcome:

The District will make every effort to protect, educate, promote and inspire all safety members to pursue a safe, healthy and active lifestyle; a lifestyle that reduces injuries and illnesses, increases job performance and provides a foundation of behavioral wellness for the duration of each employee's life.

Tasks:

1. Provide quality care to our workforce through our Worker's Compensation provider when they have become injured or ill, and facilitate their return as a healthy and productive member of our organization.
 - 1.1. Improve return to work efficiencies by linking injured employees with the process of utilizing the proper forms, reporting the injuries and receiving the appropriate medical treatment. Ensure that each employee receives a light-duty assignment and/or fully recovers and returns to work.
 - 1.2. Evaluate and revise policy and procedure if needed when industrial injuries occur.
2. Implement injury and illness prevention and protection programs and practices.
 - 2.1. Establish a safety committee to reduce injuries and illnesses through prediction, prevention and preparedness.
 - 2.2. Review and develop policy and procedures for reporting of industrial and non-industrial injuries of all employees to ensure timely medical care.
 - 2.3. Establish an accident review process to analyze, review, recommend and determine cause, costs and prevention measures relating to accidents.
 - 2.4. Based on causal factors, develop injury and illness prevention programs and practices.
 - 2.5. Develop tools to measure the effectiveness of injury and illness prevention programs.

Goal #9 – Ensure Financial Accountability & Transparency

Outcome:

Ensure we provide the best possible value for the taxpayer's dollar by continually scrutinizing the District's use of funding and resources.

1. Develop a financial strategic plan that integrates innovative delivery strategies, future service expansion and infrastructure replacement needs.
 - 1.1. In support of the District's Financial Plan, ensure proper communications and coordination regarding timely updates and assess the District's budgeting and procurement processes to safeguard appropriate efficiencies and the delivery of accurate management information.
2. Enhance fiscal accountability and transparency by developing and implementing effective training tools and fiscal management systems.
 - 2.1. Develop and conduct a management training course to enhance organizational fiscal accountability.
 - 2.2. Develop a uniform expenditure tracking program for better accounting by budget managers.
3. Develop programs with input from all District members that emphasize the importance of fiscal accountability and transparency to ensure cost-effective service delivery.
 - 3.1. Evaluate the District's process for procuring service and supplies and make recommendations for an alternative purchasing process.
 - 3.2. Evaluate the District's process for surplus equipment and materials disbursement.

Goal #10 – Communicate our Value to the Community

Outcome:

Our community can rely on our services and trust us to keep our word. Our communications will offer a vivid portrait of our strategic directions and outcomes that the organization wants and believes it can accomplish.

1. Establish a strategic stakeholder team to shape and preserve favorable public opinion, utilizing strategic internal and external communications.
 - 1.1. Build a cohesive and effective Communications Team for the District that is responsible for creating and disseminating communications to our stakeholders.
2. Develop a strategic marketing plan which communicates the District's value, cost effectiveness, quality service and innovative public safety solutions.
 - 2.1. Develop a marketing plan template for use in developing marketing campaigns that position the District as a leader in the fire service.
 - 2.2. Create and deliver an internal marketing campaign to help all personnel understand the importance of public opinion, the importance of an organizational shift to marketing-focused activities and the importance of a personal sense of pride that is reflected in our everyday operations and actions.
3. Implement a strategic communications plan which identifies methods, content, delivery systems and measurements of success.
 - 3.1. Expand the District's use of social media in educating and informing the community.
 - 3.2. Expand the District's use of existing personnel in speaking to community based organizations, schools and other groups targeted in the strategic communication and marketing plans.

Implementation, Monitoring, Measures and Maintenance

The District has created a layered approach to Strategic Plan oversight. At the helm of this effort is Fire Chief Chip Hickman. Each Strategic Plan goal has been assigned to a member of the organization; they become the “goal owner” and are responsible for the implementation, monitoring, measurement and maintenance of the specific goal. Each of the ten goal owners translate the assigned strategic goals into detailed, 24-36 month initiatives.

Strategic Plan updates are included as part of the agenda in monthly staff meetings and chief officer meetings. Each agenda item on every Board of Directors Meeting Agenda will include a reference to the specific goal the agenda item is related to. Specific Strategic Plan accomplishments and challenges will be reported on at these meetings. Additionally, the Strategic Plan goal number will be identified for each budget expenditure in our annual budget.

The plan is accessible to all members on the District’s intranet data site. Employees can access the most recent version of the plan, learn about progress made and provide feedback to goal owners. The District realizes how important it is for all its stakeholders to see its achievements as they happen. Part of the implementation strategy includes frequent communications to ensure that all employees, the command team and especially the public are informed about the Strategic Plan. A copy of the latest version of the strategic plan will be posted at the District’s website.

The District plans to release an annual update of the Strategic Plan to reflect achievements and new areas which need to be addressed to meet emerging needs and service demands.