



# SONOMA VALLEY FIRE DISTRICT

Community Firewire Newsletter

First Quarter 2025

## Chief's Corner



Welcome to the inaugural edition of our quarterly newsletter! I'm Fire Chief Steve Akre, and I'm thrilled to have this opportunity to connect with you. This newsletter will serve as an important tool for keeping you informed about the latest developments within our fire department, upcoming safety initiatives, and key updates from our dedicated team. Our mission is to provide exceptional service and support to our community, and this publication will highlight the work we're doing to enhance public safety, respond to emergencies, and ensure the well-being of all residents. We'll also share valuable fire prevention tips, training opportunities, and ways you can get involved in making our community a safer place. As we continue to work together, I want to thank you for your trust and support. Your safety is our top priority, and we're committed to keeping you informed every step of the way. We hope you find this newsletter both informative and helpful. Sincerely, Steve Akre- Fire Chief

# Sonoma Valley Fire News



## Promotional Testing

We are excited to announce that the District has successfully completed an Engineer's promotion assessment, with seven candidates demonstrating outstanding performance. These individuals have

earned the opportunity to take the next steps in their careers with us, and we look forward to their continued growth and contributions to the team. Congratulations to all!

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## Prescribed Burning



We are proud to announce the successful completion of our first prescribed burn (18 acres) in the Diamond A area, organized and operations, in partnership with the Audubon Canyon Ranch Fire Forward program. This important project will help reduce fuel loads, improve local ecology, remove invasive species, and create a fuel break for resident evacuations. If you're interested in having a prescribed burn on your property, please don't hesitate to reach out to us.

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## 2024 October - December Call Volume

Our top priority is the safety and well-being of our community.

Medical- 761

Fire- 25

Public Assist- 298

False Alarms- 47

Total Calls- 1,171

# Training

## Total Training Hours

- October 2024-December 2024- 2,388
- YTD Total for 2024- 11,502

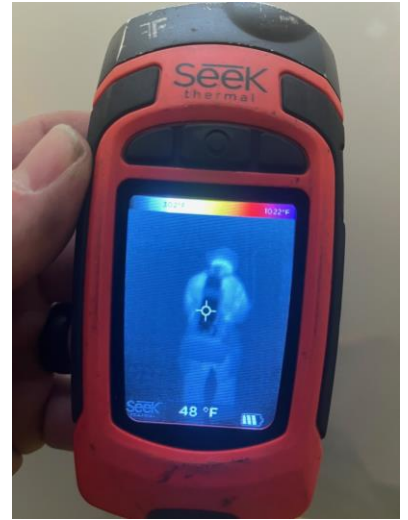
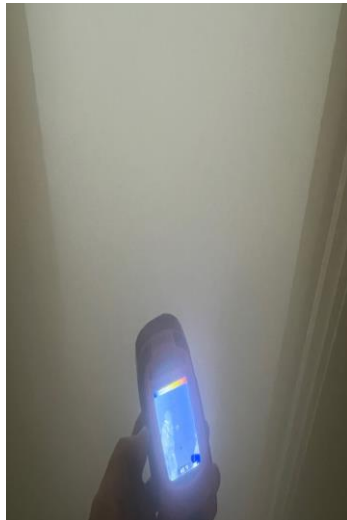
## Training Highlights

- Ladder truck operations
- Search drills
- Wildland training
- EMS symposium



## Training to rescue victims

Using the vacant buildings at the Sonoma Development Center, our crews conducted search drills to simulate real-life scenarios. Old furniture was brought in to recreate conditions typically encountered during actual emergencies. Wearing full personal protective equipment (PPE), including breathing apparatus masks to mimic blackout conditions, the crews trained in zero-visibility environments. They practiced navigating rooms on their hands and knees, using their bodies, ropes, and hand tools to locate potential victims effectively.



# Congratulations

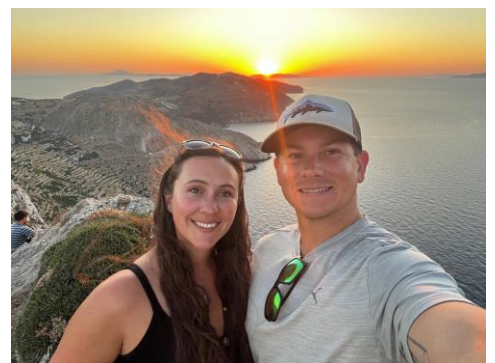
Sonoma Valley Fire District recently promoted these individuals for their dedication and service to our community. Fire Captain Rodd Kneeland, instrumental in revitalizing multiple stations throughout the years to provide a better environment for our crews. Fire Captain Ryan McCracken, a vital contributor to our Hands-only community CPR program as well as implementation into community AED's. Fire Captain Michael Montgomery, for his GIS skills to keep our mapping and programs up to date. These Captains will continue to serve our community with distinction as front-line supervisors.



Capt. Kneeland



Capt. McCracken



Capt. Montgomery

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## Completion of Probation

The Sonoma Valley Fire District proudly congratulates Firefighter/Paramedic Hunter Van Emmerik and Firefighter/Paramedic Varian Bartolini on successfully completing their probationary period. Please join us in celebrating these exceptional individuals as valued members of our SVFD family!



# Fire Prevention

The Sonoma Valley Fire Prevention Bureau reminds everyone to prioritize safety as we ring in the New Year. Simple precautions like keeping flammable materials away from heat sources, ensuring smoke alarms are functioning, and properly disposing of fireplace ashes can prevent accidents and save lives. Residents are encouraged to review their emergency plans and clear defensible space around their homes to reduce wildfire risks. By staying vigilant and responsible, we can all contribute to a safer, more enjoyable start to the year.



Use a metal bucket to safely store ashes. Fill the bucket with water and let the ashes soak for at least three days before disposal. Avoid placing ashes in plastic garbage bins, as they can easily ignite. A safe alternative is to spread the fully cooled ashes in your garden.

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## **New Regional Vegetation Management Coordinator**

Thanks to your support in approving the County-wide sales tax for fire services, we are excited to announce the hiring of our first Vegetation Management Coordinator. This new position is dedicated to handling all aspects of wildland fire preparedness. Responsibilities include working with Firewise and Fire Safe Councils, securing grants and managing projects, overseeing the SVFD chipper program, coordinating prescribed burns, conducting defensible space inspections, and providing public education. This role is vital in enhancing our community's resilience to wildfires.



# Firehouse Favorites: Recipes Straight from the Crew



TITLE: Peruvian Chicken

By: Firefighter Ortiz

PREP TIME: 2 hours

COOK TIME: 40

SERVINGS: 2-4

#### INGREDIENTS:

2 lbs. chicken  
1 lime  
3 cloves garlic-grated  
¼ Tbsp. cumin  
¼ Tbsp. paprika  
¼ Tbsp. ground thyme  
¼ Tbsp. oregano  
1 Tbsp. soy sauce  
1 Tsp. Dijon  
1 cup sweet chili sauce

#### DIRECTIONS:

In a large bowl combine mustard, lime juice, soy sauce, garlic, spices, sweet chili sauce. Add chicken and marinate for a few hours. Oven to 450 degrees. Place chicken on a baking sheet with parchment paper and drizzle olive oil over chicken.

Serve over rice with green sauce.

Green Sauce- Bushel of cilantro, ½ cup sour cream, ¼ cup of mayo, 1 serrano pepper, 1-2 garlic cloves, S&P to taste, 1 lime juice. Blend all ingredients. Chill in refrigerator to thicken.

## New Fire Station #2

We are thrilled to announce the purchase of land for our new Fire Station #2, made possible by your support in approving the county-wide sales tax for fire services (Measure H). This new station will significantly improve response times in our District 2 response zone and include a department training facility and a community hall. This marks our first new station in over 25 years, and we look forward to keeping you updated throughout this exciting project!



## Upcoming Events

**April: Hands-Only CPR trainings– Sonoma Station**

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**May 11<sup>th</sup> : Mother's Day Breakfast- Glen Ellen Station**

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**June 15<sup>th</sup> : Father's Day Breakfast- Kenwood Station**

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**July 4<sup>th</sup> : Sonoma's Fourth of July Celebration & Parade**

## Thank you!

The Sonoma Valley Fire District extends our heartfelt gratitude to our incredible community for your continued support. As we launch the first edition of our newsletter, we are excited to keep you informed about our projects, services, and initiatives. This platform will allow us to share updates, celebrate milestones, and connect with you on the work we do to keep Sonoma Valley safe. Thank you for being an essential part of our journey, and we look forward to staying connected!

*Thank  
you*



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