

A Day in the Life of a Groveland Firefighter

You would expect the Groveland Fire Department to respond to structure fire calls. But did you know that they also respond to wildland fires, vehicle fires and accidents including extrications, medical aids, rescues and public service assists?

In 2008, 60% of the Fire Department's 675 calls were for medical aids. All full-time Fire Department personnel are EMT's (Emergency Medical Technicians) who can provide basic life support, which is beneficial in a medical emergency, especially if the ambulance is off the hill.

When there is a medical emergency, the ambulance and Fire Department respond and are trained to work together through a First Responder agreement with Tuolumne County. The First Responder program was developed because Tuolumne County has several remote areas throughout the county. This program ensures that the Fire Departments are all trained to the minimum level of medical training. It also puts more medically trained people out in the field in remote areas to provide critical life saving measures. By working with the ambulance local jurisdictions can provide a higher level of service to the community and assure a more successful medical outcome.

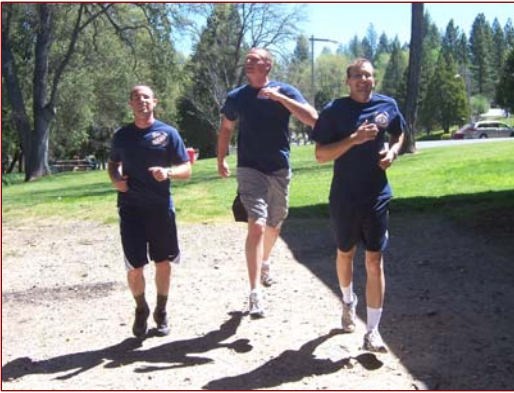


The fire station is open 24 hours, 7 days a week, working three shifts with, at the very least, an engineer, a firefighter and a reserve firefighter on duty at all times. Since the reserve program started there has been a marked increased participation from volunteer firefighters who are spending more time at the firehouse volunteering their time. This is critical because the more trained personnel at the firehouse the better service provided. Typically, with extra personnel two engines can quickly be staffed in response to incidents thus providing a more positive

outcome on an emergency incident. (Log on to our new web site at www.grovelandfire.com, click Department Info in the left column for more statistics on the Groveland Fire Department.)

Groveland Fire Department personnel do not just hang around the station waiting for 911 calls. There is station maintenance, pre-fire planning with local businesses, daily and weekly apparatus and equipment checks, fire prevention activities, and a minimum of two hours of training per shift. Of course, a call for assistance is given priority and is the reason emergency personnel are ready at all times. But our firefighters are also on a tight daily schedule.

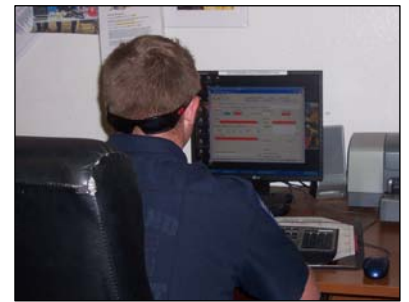




They wake-up at 6:00 am to be prepared for the shift change of the engineer and firefighter at 7:00 am. After a quick breakfast, they do daily and more comprehensive weekly engine checks and station maintenance. From 10:00 am until the noon lunch break, daily shift training is scheduled. From 1:00 pm to 4:00 pm, firefighters are required to do computer work, report writing, and special projects such as researching a purchase or fire prevention awareness and CPR instruction to community groups. This is

followed by an hour of physical training before dinner. This daily training is crucial for firefighters who must be ready to assist the public in physically demanding ways like climbing up ladders and onto roofs, carrying the injured and dragging hose into and around a fire.

Even after working 10 hours their work is still not done. After dinner the firehouse is cleaned to be ready for the next shift. Typically, the scheduled work day ends around 5:00 pm but often there are still reports to write and entries in the log book to complete during the evening hours. With 42% of the emergency calls coming in after regular business hours often the evenings and early mornings are used assisting the public. Since helping others is why these men and women became firefighters in the first place they are ready to assist the public at any time of day or night.



If you are between the ages of 18 – 55 and would be interested in becoming involved with the Fire Department, the Joint Basic Fire Academy begins each January for six months of First Responder and Firefighter 1 training.