

GLOSSARY OF FIRE PROTECTION TERMS

TERM	EXPLANATION
Advanced Life Support (ALS)	Highest level of pre-hospital care, normally provided by paramedics
Amador Plan	A local option contract by which Cal Fire will staff outside of the fire season and respond to structure fires, automobile accidents, medical emergencies, and other emergencies.
Automated External Defibrillation (AED)	Use of a small, portable machine that automatically determines if defibrillation is appropriate, and if so, administers the appropriate defibrillating shock.
Automatic Aid (Auto Aid)	System whereby two or more agencies are automatically dispatched simultaneously to predetermined types of emergencies.
Automatic Fire Sprinkler System	A system designed to activate when exposed to heat, dispensing water to control a fire and prevent it from spreading and reaching flashover.
Basic Life Support (BLS)	The lowest level of pre-hospital care, normally administered by First Responder or EMT-B.
Battalion Chief (BC)	A mid-level management position.
Boundary Drop	A dispatch convention in Santa Cruz County whereby the closest fire company is dispatched to a call even if the call is located outside the company's jurisdictional boundary.
CAIRS	California All Incident Reporting System is a statewide emergency incident data program that collects, compiles, analyzes, and distributes statistical information reported by the California Fire Service. It is integrated with the National Fire Incident Reporting System
CAL FIRE	As of 2007, the new name of the State Fire Department, formerly known as "CDF."
Cal Star	One of the nonprofit air ambulance companies operating helicopters in the Monterey Bay region.
Call Stacking	Two or more emergency calls dispatched either at the same time or while the engine company is committed to another incident.
CalOSHA	California Division of Occupational Health and Safety Association.
Code 2	Travel protocol for a non-emergency response--observe all traffic signals.
Code 3	Travel protocol for an emergency response--flashing lights, sirens, etc.
Combination Fire Department	A fire department staffed with volunteer and paid firefighters.
Community Emergency Response Team (CERT)	Residents trained for basic disaster preparedness and response.
Company	A group of firefighters who respond together on a piece of apparatus.
Containment	A wildfire is contained when it is surrounded on all sides by some kind of boundary but is still burning and has the potential to jump a boundary line.
Control	A wildfire is controlled when there is no further threat of it jumping a containment line.
County Fire	The Santa Cruz County Fire Department, as operated under contract by Cal Fire.
CPR	Cardiopulmonary resuscitation.

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County Service Area 48 (CSA 48)	The funding mechanism used by the County of Santa Cruz to fund County Fire.
County Service Area Law	The California state law governing county service areas, beginning at Section 25210.1 of the Government Code.
Crew	A minimum group of 30 trained and equipped wildland fire fighters. CAL FIRE crews are housed in Conservation Camps located throughout the state.
Crew Strike Team	A strike team leader and two fire crews who respond to wildland fires.
Defibrillation	The delivery of a direct current of electrical shock to the chest over the heart. It is used to "shock" the heart back into normal rhythm.
Dispatch Time	The time to relay the emergency message from the first receipt by the communications center to the responding company.
Dozer Strike Team	Two dozers, a dozer tender, and a leader who respond to wildfires.
Education Revenue Augmentation Fund (ERAF)	Legislation enacted in the early 1990's that authorized the State to shift property tax revenues from fire districts to public education.
Emergency Medical Care Commission	An advisory body to the Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors regarding emergency medical care issues.
Emergency Medical Dispatch (EMD)	A system whereby 9-1-1 operators/dispatchers evaluate patient symptoms and help the calling party administer first aid treatment according to predetermined protocols, thus providing care at the earliest possible moment.
Emergency Medical Services (EMS)	The organized system of delivering pre-hospital care.
Emergency Medical Services Integration Authority (EMSIA)	In Santa Cruz County, a joint powers authority of fire agencies that performs planning and quality assurance for pre-hospital emergency medical care.
Emergency Medical Technician (EMT)	A member of the EMS system, trained and certified to provide advanced first aid.
Emergency Medical Technician-Defib (EMT-D)	An EMT who has additional training and is certified to operate an automated external defibrillator (AED).
Engine Company	The staff assigned to a fire engine.
Engineer/Firefighter	A firefighter trained to drive fire engine and operate fire engine pumps, analyze water flow requirements and other hydraulics, and perform traditional firefighting/fire suppression activities.
Engine Strike Team	Five fire engines of the same type (Type 1 or Type 3) and a lead vehicle. There are three or four personnel on each engine and one or two personnel in the lead vehicle. The strike team leader is usually a captain or a battalion chief.
Extended Attack	As used in wildfire response, extended attack means that the fire has burned beyond the area or building of origin upon which the initial attack was made, and additional resources are needed for a long-term response and logistical support.
Extrication	Removal of a patient from an entrapment situation.
Fire Captain	A fire officer who is the highest ranking member of the engine company.
Fire Engine (different from a "fire truck")	A vehicle typically outfitted with ground ladders, water, hose, and a pump.

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Fire Flow	The amount the water a distribution system is capable of delivering, usually expressed in gallons per minute.
Fire Marshall	An administrative staff position assigned to fire prevention and fire code enforcement.
Fire Protection District	A special district, formed pursuant to state law, responsible for providing fire and other emergency response services within its district boundaries.
Fire Protection District Law	The state law governing fire protection districts, found beginning at Section 13800 of the California Health and Safety Code.
Fire Safety Council	A voluntary organization in a community that provides leadership and support to mobilize residents to protect their homes, communities, and environment from wildfires.
Fire Suppression Assessment	A special levy collected on the property tax bill. Pursuant to Proposition 218, assessments require a 2/3's vote.
Fire Truck	Usually the largest vehicle in the fleet, it must be outfitted with an aerial ladder or platform to be considered a "fire truck," as opposed to a "fire engine."
Firefighter	Entry-level firefighting position.
Fire Weather Watch	A National Weather Service alert that weather conditions could exist in the next 12-72 hours which may result in extreme fire behavior.
First Due	In Santa Cruz County, another name for "boundary drop"--a dispatch convention whereby the closest fire company is dispatched to a call even if the call is located outside the company's jurisdictional boundary.
First Responder	The lowest level of provider in the EMS system trained and certified to provide basic first aid. They are also the first emergency
Flashover	The point at which everything in the room reaches ignition temperature (1200-1800 degrees) and begins to burn. Once flashover occurs, little, if anything can be saved.
Golden Hour	The first 60 minutes following a traumatic, shock-inducing injury which is the most critical treatment period.
Hand Crew	A CAL FIRE Captain and 15 to 17 firefighting inmates of Conservation Camps located throughout the State.
Hazardous Materials	Chemicals that are explosive, flammable, or otherwise capable of causing death or destruction when improperly handled or released. Includes such materials as household bleach, paint, motor oil, etc.
Haz-Mat	Emergency services term used to refer to incidents involving hazardous materials.
Incident Command System (ICS)	A management system designed to maintain order and assure optimal deployment of resources at an emergency scene.
Initial Attack	As used in wildfire response, initial attack means the resources sent on the first dispatch.
Insurance Service Office (ISO)	Private organization that formulates fire safety ratings based on fire threat and the responsible agency's ability to respond to the threat, from one (excellent) to ten (no fire protection). Most insurance companies use ISO ratings to set insurance premiums.

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Local Responsibility Area (LRA)	Lands in which the financial responsibility of preventing and suppressing fires is primarily the responsibility of local jurisdiction.
Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)	An agreement between a fire agency and an employee group addressing pay, working conditions, and related issues.
Mutual Aid	A reciprocal aid agreement between two or more agencies, defining what resources each will provide to the other to respond to certain predetermined types of emergencies.
Mutual Threat Zone	A geographical area between two or more jurisdictions into which those agencies would respond on initial attack. Also called mutual response zone or initial action zone.
National Fire Protection Association (NFPA)	An international nonprofit organization whose mission is to reduce the worldwide burden of fire and other hazards on the quality of life by providing and advocating scientifically-based consensus codes and standards, research, training, and education.
Netcom	The short name for the Santa Cruz Consolidated Emergency Communications Center.
NFPA 1500	National Fire Protection Association standard on occupational health and safety for firefighters.
NFPA 1710	National Fire Protection Association standard for fire suppression operations, emergency medical operations, and specialized operations for the public by career (paid) fire departments.
NFPA 1720	National Fire Protection Association standard for fire suppression operations, emergency medical operations, and specialized operations for the public by volunteer fire departments.
Occupational Health & Safety Administration (OSHA)	The federal agency, under the Department of Labor, that is responsible for employee occupational safety.
Pager	An electronic device used to notify volunteer and off-duty firefighters when there is an emergency call.
Paid Call	Paid Call firefighters respond as needed on a part time basis to all types of emergencies. Paid Call firefighters are utilized in three different ways. "First Responder" call firefighter units are those units that are staffed entirely by paid call firefighters. These firefighters respond to all emergency incidents within their jurisdictional areas and are supported by full-time companies from adjoining jurisdictions.
Paramedic (EMT-P)	Member of the emergency medical services team, trained and certified to provide the highest level of pre-hospital care.
Pre-Alert	A page sent by a dispatcher to firefighter or medic units that there is a call being triaged and coded. Responders utilize the time between the pre-alert and the dispatch to prepare. Paid call responders can utilize this time to begin traveling to the station or the scene.
Proposition 172	A 1993 proposition approved by the voters of California to dedicate a 1/2 cent sales tax to support local public safety.
Proposition 218	The Right to Vote on Taxes Act approved by the voters of California in 1996.

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Red Flag Warning	A National Weather Service alert that weather conditions are expected in the next 24 hours which will result in extreme fire behavior.
Reflex Time	The period between the time an emergency response unit receives the dispatch from the emergency communications center and the time the unit leaves the station.
Remote Automated Weather Station (RAWS)	An interagency network of over 350 automated fire stations in California that transmits weather conditions to fire agencies.
Rescue Squad	A fire department vehicle designed to carry equipment related specifically to rescue: scene lighting, cribbing, air bags, and other equipment used for incidents such as extrication of victims in crushed vehicles, structure collapse, ground cave-in, etc.
Residential Firefighter	An unpaid firefighter who is assigned to a regular 6:00 p.m. - 8:00 a.m. shift. (Also known as a "sleeper.")
Response Time	The amount of time between when a call is dispatched and when emergency responders arrive on the scene.
Santa Cruz Consolidated Emergency Communications Center (SCCECC)	The joint powers authority that operates police and fire dispatch to most responders in Santa Cruz County. (Also known as "Netcom.")
Schedule A	A Cal-Fire employee whose salaries and benefits are funded by local government.
Schedule B	A Cal-Fire employee whose salaries and benefits are funded by the State of California.
Sleeper	A volunteer firefighter who stays at a fire station at night in order to provide staffing for emergency responses. A sleeper shift is typically 6 p.m. to 8 a.m.
Sphere of Influence	As adopted by LAFCO, the potential future boundary or service area of a city or district.
State Responsibility Area (SRA)	Areas of the State in which the financial responsibility of preventing and suppressing fires has been determined by the State Board of Forestry pursuant to Public Resources Code 4125 to be primarily the responsibility of the State.
Strike Team	See "Engine Strike Team".
Tender	A vehicle that hauls a large amount of water to use in suppressing a fire.
Transport	The service of transporting a victim via a motor vehicle to a hospital or to a rendezvous with an ambulance.
Travel Time	The time between leaving the station and arriving at the scene.
Truck Company	Staff assigned to a fire truck whose duties include ventilation, forced entry, search, and rescue, etc.
Two-In/Two-Out	The safety rule requiring a minimum of two firefighters to enter a burning structure and a minimum of two firefighters to stand by outside to be available to rescue the firefighters inside the structure.
Type I Engine	Fire engine equipped primarily for urban firefighting.
Type II Engine	Water tender.
Type III Engine	Fire engine equipped primarily for wildland firefighting.
Uniform Fire Code	A commonly used fire code that has been adopted by agencies in Santa Cruz County.
Volunteer Fire Department	A fire department that is fully staffed by volunteers.

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Volunteer Firefighter	A firefighting professional who receives no pay for services rendered.
Wildland Urban Interface Areas	Areas mapped by the State as a severe fire hazard that include both wildland vegetation and urban or suburban housing densities.
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