

Stanislaus County Fire Authority
FY 2008-2009 Business Plan

The Stanislaus County Fire Authority is a joint powers agreement established in November 2005 by the fire agencies in Stanislaus County to administer the Less Than County Wide fire tax and establish a cooperative relationship among the parties to the agreement for the provision of these contracted services.

OVERVIEW:

Issues of mutual concern to the fire agencies of Stanislaus County were identified and through a work-group process, the Fire Authority came together for the following purposes:

- Facilitate cooperation among the Fire Agencies and the County related to the allocation and use of the Less Than County Wide Fire Tax.
- Provide a forum for discussion and study of countywide problems of mutual interest.
- Identify, inventory, and comprehensively plan for solutions to countywide problems requiring multi-jurisdictional cooperation.
- Facilitate cooperation among the Fire Agencies and the County for specific purposes, interrelated actions, and for the adoption of common policies with respect to issues and problems which are common to the parties.
- Develop countywide plans and policies for growth and development.

The following agencies are signatory to the joint powers agreement:

Burbank Paradise Fire District
City of Ceres
Denair Fire Protection District
Hughson Fire District
Keyes Fire District
City of Modesto
Mountain View Fire Protection District
City of Newman
City of Oakdale
Oakdale Rural Fire Protection District
City of Patterson
Salida Fire District
Stanislaus Consolidated Fire District
Stanislaus County
City of Turlock
Turlock Rural Fire District
Westport Fire District
Woodland Avenue Fire District
West Stanislaus Fire District
Cal Fire – Santa Clara Unit

The Stanislaus County Fire Authority Board is comprised of a representative from each agency that pays into the Less Than Countywide Fire Tax and the City of Modesto, the City of Turlock, Stanislaus County and the California Department of Forestry. Each individual agency must adopt a resolution to approve the Joint Powers Agreement in order to participate. Each representative is entitled to one vote. As outlined in the Joint Powers Agreement, the Stanislaus County Fire Warden's Office is the administering agency; however the membership may substitute any other agency to serve in this capacity. The Fire Authority may designate any representative of a member agency to serve as Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Secretary.

The membership of the Stanislaus County Fire Authority adopted formalized Board Policies and Rules of Procedure at their January 2006 meeting. These documents provide a framework for the Fire Authority to conduct business.

A quorum of at least one half of the member agencies is required for the Fire Authority to take action. A two-thirds majority of those members present are required to approve all fiscal matters, including the use of the Less Than County-Wide Fire Tax, but not including expenditures of less than \$500.

The Fire Authority conducted workgroup meetings to identify service priorities, performance expectations and funding allocations for those services. Services critical to the fire agencies in Stanislaus County were prioritized, and then, based on available funding, the group targeted achievable service levels. At that time there were services that were identified as necessary, but due to inadequate funding were placed lower on a prioritized list.

It is the intent and purpose of the Fire Authority to achieve the most efficient and effective use of the Less Than County Wide Tax revenues and to seek partnerships to advance our ability to provide fire and emergency services in Stanislaus County. Currently the Fire Authority is a Joint Powers Agreement, not an agency, and is therefore unable to employ individuals to provide the services we require. All prioritized services listed in the following section of the business plan must be provided through contracts with individual agencies.

CONTRACTED SERVICES:

The following services are currently contracted through Stanislaus County under the recommendation of the Fire Authority:

Service:	Provided By:	Contract Period:
Fire Prevention	Stanislaus County Fire Warden's Office	July 1, 2006 - June 30, 2011
Fire Investigation	City of Modesto Fire Department	July 1, 2006 - June 30, 2011
Fire Communications Coordination	Salida Fire Protection District	December 1, 2006 - November 30, 2011
Fire Training Coordination	Salida Fire Protection District	February 1, 2007 - January 31, 2012
Administration and Financial Management	Stanislaus County Fire Warden's Office	November 1, 2005 - Open
Special Operations Coordination	Stanislaus County Fire Warden's Office	May 1, 2007 - April 30, 2012

Each service has identified expectations that have been adopted by the Fire Authority. The awarding of services underwent a process which included a formal written proposal and presentation from all interested agencies to the full Fire Authority Board, followed by a minimum of a two-thirds majority vote to award the proposing agency the contract. Thereafter, a recommendation was made to the Stanislaus County Board of Supervisors to enter into a formal contract with the providing agency.

The six services listed above were determined by the member agencies as prioritized, basic services. Within several categories there is a desire to expand the service by allocating additional funding in future years.

2007-2008 FISCAL YEAR BUDGET:

Revenues:

Less than County Wide Fire Tax 2007-2008 (projected)	\$ 1,236,854
Stanislaus County General Fund contribution	\$ 300,000
Fire Prevention revenues projected	\$ 125,000
MDC reimbursements	\$ 16,000
Total Revenues	\$1,677,854

Expenses:

Administration / Finance	\$ 146,840
Fire Communications	\$ 135,696
Fire Investigations	\$ 488,328
Fire Prevention	\$ 546,000
Fire Special Operations	\$ 147,475
Fire Training	\$ 161,976
Total Contract Costs 2nd ^t year	\$ 1,626,315

Other Expenses:

County Counsel	\$ 9,620
County Property Tax Administration	\$ 20,000
Other County Fees	\$ 1,015
Fleet services	\$ 5,744
MDC Program costs	\$ 16,000
Total Expenses	\$1,678,694

FIRE AUTHORITY GOALS:

(Definition: Something to accomplish in assisting the organization to move forward; an over-arching achievement developed by the member agencies to fulfill a mission.)

The following goals were adopted by the Fire Authority membership on January 5, 2006 and were revised and reaffirmed by the membership on February 7, 2008:

- Ensure an open environment that provides respectful and professional responsiveness to our community and agency partners.
- Adopt integrated, collaborative, and multi-disciplinary planning to ensure that our community and agency partners are served in an equitable, efficient and effective manner.
- Provide the highest quality of fire, life safety and all risk services through collaborative community and agency partnerships in the areas of fire prevention, fire investigation, training, finance/administration, fire communications and special operations.
- Improve the stability and sustainability of revenue sources to support and enhance the fire, life safety and all risk services on a countywide basis.

STRATEGIC PLAN:

(Definition: A plan or methodology developed by the member agencies to achieve stated goals.)

The strategy of the Stanislaus County Fire Authority is to represent the interests of all member agencies by focusing on organizational goals of both the Fire Authority and individual agencies. We believe this can be accomplished by maintaining each individual community's identity. The following strategies have been reaffirmed by the membership for FY2008/09:

- Expand and foster mutually beneficial relationships with internal and external fire agencies
- Enhance relationships between fire districts, cities, County agencies, and identified stakeholders
- Achieve a unified voice and strengthen the fire service to meet future challenges

- Be the spokesperson/organization for fire and emergency services countywide
- Support, develop, and sponsor a comprehensive countywide fire service study
- Provide strategic direction, leadership, and influence to coordinate professional standards
- Encourage member agencies to develop and adopt defined service levels based upon the standards of cover process
- Initiate and support efforts that assist in funding the fire service
- Improve financial stability of the existing programs and services
- Explore financial opportunities
- Develop / maintain analysis and reporting systems that allow effective monitoring of financial performance

ACTION PLAN:

(Definition: Specific activities and programs designed to make advances, especially for the purpose of creating a desired result. They are steps taken by the member agencies and associated organizations in realizing a strategy that achieves a goal.)

The action plans are defined in an effort to meet the adopted strategies stated above. The Fire Authority identified the six priority services, which are available to all agencies.

Following pages outline the provider's plans, based on the service priorities and expected funding, for the 2008-2009 fiscal year.

Funding the Fire Authority's programs for the fiscal year 2008-2009 is dependant upon the projected Less Than County Wide Fire Tax, projected prevention revenues, and the anticipation of a general fund contribution by Stanislaus County. The Fire Authority is seeking to form partnerships to achieve its goals. If these funding sources are not available, programs will be cut to a level commensurate with the funding.

2008-2009

FINANCE ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT SERVICES

Funding

Less Than Countywide Tax \$131,914

The 2008-2009 Finance / Administrative Support plan is to continue to support the Fire Authority and the fire agencies throughout Stanislaus County by providing oversight to the funding that the County provides for the services identified by the Fire Authority and responding to the requests and needs communicated by the individual agencies.

The plan assumes that the funding level will continue at expected levels, with the planned 4% cost of living increase. This will continue to fund one full time position and one half time position. The following priorities were identified through the adopted performance expectations and address needs that have been identified over the last 2 years.

- Administer the budget within the County guidelines and process and report to the Fire Authority
- Oversee contracts and contract payments
- Provide administrative support to the Fire Authority with agendas, board reports, minutes, conflict of interest statements, and information updates on Fire Warden web-site
- Administer MDC program including billing of participating agencies and processing of all related maintenance contracts and invoices
- Assist fire agencies with financial information, human resources, and administrative issues as requested
- Continue to seek opportunities to fund regional equipment
- Support contracted service providers
- Continue to keep Fire Authority members updated through annual report, business plan, and budget documents
- Attend weekly/ monthly Executive Committee meetings
- Communicate with county CEO staff and Board of Supervisors regarding the goals, priorities, needs and expectations of the Fire Authority
- Continue to support Fire Prevention Services with administrative and financial oversight

2008-2009

FIRE COMMUNICATIONS

Funding

Less Than Countywide Tax \$141,124

The Fire Communications Coordinator will continue to assist the fire agencies throughout Stanislaus County in the 2008-2009 by supporting and enhancing the many systems that provide critical communications capabilities. The action plan assumes that the funding level will continue at expected levels, with the expected 4% cost of living increase. The coordinator will continue to focus on programs that were identified as priorities through the performance expectations, as well as those issues that have become apparent through the past year and a half of experience. The following services will be provided:

- Represent fire service in CAD development
- Develop and implement radio operability and interoperability
- Continue to lead MDC workgroup as well and research new technology including AVL, and MDC connectivity
- Represent fire service in GIS map development for Stanislaus County
- Provide training for command unit operating group
- Continue development of fire frequency sharing including frequency realignment
- Evaluate alternative alpha paging technologies and manage system
- Continue to work towards a centralized countywide records management system
- Implement a countywide paging tone scheme
- Research and provide support for new voice paging technology
- Continue to write grants for regional communications equipment
- Represent Stanislaus County fire agencies in statewide communications groups (APCO,CALSIEC,CALNENA)
- Represent county fire agencies on SR911 Operational Technical Advisory Committee (OTAC)
- Provide recommendations for standardized radio equipment

2008-2009

FIRE INVESTIGATION SERVICES

Funding

Less Than Countywide Tax

\$507,861

The 2008-2009 Fire Investigation action plan assumes that the funding level from Less Than Countywide Tax will continue at expected levels with the addition of a 4% cost of living increase. This funding will allow the Modesto Fire Department to continue providing the same level of service while meeting the following objectives:

- Determine origin and cause of fires in compliance with NFPA 921 guidelines.
- Provide documentation and assistance to law enforcement agencies for follow up of criminal fire investigations.
- Provide documentation and assistance to District Attorney's office regarding criminal fire investigations.
- Provide documentation and assistance to private fire investigators and insurance industry representatives regarding civil fire investigations.
- Establish an effective training program for chief and company officers to conduct preliminary fire investigations and initial origin and cause determinations following NFPA 921 guidelines.
- Establish effective lines of communications with other agencies to promote information sharing.
- Provide training for fire investigation staff to increase their skills and proficiency in the field of fire investigation.
- Continue to provide a monthly report to the Fire Authority that outlines the number of fires investigated, case status, dollar loss, and number of arrests by jurisdiction.
- Actively participate in the Stanislaus County Arson Task Force.

2008-2009

FIRE PREVENTION SERVICES

Funding

General Fund	\$300,000
Less Than Countywide Tax	\$142,840
New Development Cost Recovery – (Old Fees)	\$100,000
New Development Cost Recovery (New Fees)	<u>\$ 50,000</u>
	\$592,840

The 2008-2009 Fire Prevention action plan assumes that the funding level from Less Than Countywide Tax and General Fund will continue at expected levels, with the expected 4% cost of living increase. This funding, combined with the increased recovery of costs associated with new development, will allow the following objectives to be addressed:

- Enhanced cooperation and communications between the Fire Marshal and Fire Districts regarding impacts of new development projects
- Assist districts with fire prevention needs assessment to determine appropriate service level option from “Service Level Option / Funding Source” table.
- Expansion of state mandated inspection program
- Increased target hazard and business inspection programs
- Continuously evaluate local fire and life safety codes and ordinances as they apply to current and proposed projects
- Active involvement in the code hearing process to ensure that Stanislaus County may have input in the next code adoption cycle.
- Continue with cooperative vegetation/ force clean program with the districts
- Implementation of a fire records management system for enhances reporting processes and fee tracking
- Continue training program to increase knowledge and proficiency of Fire Prevention Specialists
- Continue to advocate a new business license process for the unincorporated area of the County that includes a fire prevention component
- Enhance partnerships with business community, groups and county departments
- Perform annual review of cost recovery fees

2008-2009

SPECIAL OPERATIONS

Funding

Less Than Countywide Tax \$153,374

The 2008-2009 Special Operations action plan is to continue to develop information gathered with respect to local resources and standards and provide a resource to the fire agencies in Stanislaus County in the area of specialized services. The plan assumes the funding will continue at level projected in original business plan.

- Continue to identify the Special Operations components and operate as a liaison to the various special operations committees, teams and programs.
- Identify Standards and training requirements for all special operations fields using NFPA and FIREScope as resources.
- Develop and special operations guidelines and procedures for the fire agencies to adopt.
- Develop and coordinate train the trainer courses for all awareness levels.
- Act as a technical resource to all fire agencies and assist in the delivery of special operations on a regional platform.
- Manage the development, implementation and maintenance of operational agreements for all special operations programs.
- Act as a technical expert under a unified command and function as part of the incident management team either at scene or in the Emergency Operations Center.
- Seek funding opportunities supporting equipment, training and operational needs.

2008-2009

FIRE TRAINING

Funding

Less Than Countywide Tax \$168,455

The Fire Training Coordinator will continue to assist the fire agencies throughout Stanislaus County in the 2008-2009 fiscal year by supporting, coordinating and enhancing the training opportunities offered to local agencies. The action plan assumes that the funding level will continue at expected levels, with the expected 4% cost of living increase. The coordinator will continue to focus on programs that were identified as priorities through the performance expectations, as well as those issues that have become apparent through the past year and a half of experience. The following services will be provided:

- Further develop countywide training program in response to identified needs
- Offer enhanced regional training events
- Further develop and maintain training standardization throughout the county
- Strengthen partnerships both locally and with statewide organizations to broaden training curriculum
- Develop a cadre of local and regional instructors
- Enhance training opportunities to meet CICCS requirements in accordance with NWCG and State CICCS
- Represent fire agencies as liaison to RFTC

SERVICE	2008-2009 Projections
FINANCE / ADMINISTRATION	\$ 131,914
FIRE COMMUNICATIONS	\$ 141,124
FIRE INVESTIGATIONS	\$ 507,861
FIRE PREVENTION	\$ 592,840
FIRE SPECIAL OPERATIONS	\$ 153,374
FIRE TRAINING	\$168,455
County Fire Service Fund expenses	\$ 37,480
Regional Equipment Maintenance	\$15,000
TOTAL OPERATIONS	1,748,048
Total Annual Cost	\$1,748,048
Revenues	
Less Than Countywide Tax	\$ 1,298,048
Fees	\$ 150,000
Total Taxes and Fees	\$1,448,048
General Fund Request	\$ 300,000
Total	\$1,748,048