



Press Release

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14000 City Center Drive, Chino Hills, CA 91709

CONTACT: Denise Cattern
Ph: (909) 364-2615

Valerie McClung
Ph: (909) 364-2618

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CITY OF CHINO HILLS TESTS PREPAREDNESS WITH MAJOR DRILL

Chino Hills, CA – On Wednesday, February 17th, the City of Chino Hills had a challenging day – but it was only a drill. Employees from the City of Chino Hills, the Chino Hills Police Department, the Chino Valley Fire Department, CalFire, several representatives of the Chino Valley Unified School District, and a member of the volunteer ham radio team known as CHART (Chino Hills Auxiliary Radio Team) participated in an activation exercise of the City’s Emergency Operations Center (EOC) and Incident Command Post in response to a “practice” emergency.

“The City of Chino Hills made a significant commitment to conduct this multi-agency drill because we place a high priority on our responsibility to be ready to respond,” said Konradt Bartlam, City Manager. “We also stock emergency supplies such as cots, blankets, and rations to support our disaster service workers who would be responding during a crisis.”

The City’s Emergency Services Analyst, Bonnie Michaels, has been organizing, planning, preparing, testing equipment, and conducting training sessions to prepare for the big drill. The EOC is organized by “sections” named for their area of responsibility such as “Logistics” and “Planning.” Approximately 55 employees attended a two-hour session that covered their assigned area of responsibility as a refresher before the drill.

“In an emergency, we would expect to have 12-hour shifts so our training included a primary and an alternate person for each role,” said Bonnie Michaels, Emergency Services Analyst. “This is the first time the “alternate” employees have been included in a major drill.”

According to Ms. Michaels, this multi-agency functional exercise provided an opportunity for employees to identify issues, set priorities, and execute emergency management activities.

“During the exercise, the Incident Command Post notified the EOC with specific details about a wildfire that was threatening Chino Hills,” said Ms. Michaels. “The EOC had to react to and analyze the information, request resources, and communicate information both inside the EOC and to the public.”

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“EOC staff rehearsed ways to gather and analyze information and then distributed that information appropriately,” she said. “They also had to track, prioritize, request, and distribute resources to support response and recovery objectives.”

Employees had the chance to demonstrate their understanding of their responsibilities/functions and practice using the EOC forms, checklists, and equipment that is stored in preparation for an emergency. Communication was tested and the EOC functional areas worked together to get the City through the emergency, according to Michaels.

“This functional training allowed our employees to actually experience an active EOC, and put their training to use which will be very helpful during an actual emergency,” said Ms. Michaels. “I’m excited that our employees really took this training to heart and they are already thinking of ways they can improve their skills.”

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