



# HIGHLANDS FIRE DRAGON

## INCLEMENT WEATHER

CAPTAIN KYLE ANTICEVICH

This winter season was the second snowiest on record for Flagstaff. This record snowfall resulted in an increase in call volume for the Highlands Fire District. From October 2022 to February 2023, Highlands responded to over 303 calls for service. This winter proved challenging with many responses for service occurring during or just after the storms. Crews spend a lot of hours training for responses during inclement weather to ensure we can reach you when there is an emergency. During these storms, crews utilized different options for ensuring a safe response. Engines were equipped with tire chains. A Type 3 4x4 Engine was placed in service to respond to difficult-to-reach areas and crews carried snow shovels and snowshoes to ensure they could make access to residences. We want to thank the county, who worked tirelessly to ensure the roadways were accessible to responding emergency vehicles.

During the winter months, Highlands responded to a variety of calls including four structural collapses, multiple motor vehicle accidents and slide-offs, medical calls, sledding injuries, fall injuries, CO alarms, and snow-covered vent/stove pipes. We were fortunate that no one was injured in the structural collapse. It serves as an important reminder to clear snow off of your roofs. Wet, packed snow can weigh over 20 lbs. per sq ft. When the snowpack builds up, these loads can easily exceed the weight rating of the roof. Clearing snow off of your roof will also ensure vent pipes are functioning properly. When water heaters and furnaces cannot vent, it can result in CO backing up inside your home, creating a deadly situation. It is also recommended to keep house numbers visible, have a clear access path to your home, and ensure fire hydrants on your property are accessible.

When the snow finally started to melt with the warmer days, we saw some flooding across the district. Units responded to several residential flooding calls. With the summer monsoon season fast approaching, we want to remind you that Highlands Fire does have sandbags available at Station 23, located in the South end of the parking lot.

We would like to thank the community for their efforts and resiliency during this last winter. It was great to see the community come together to help their neighbors.



2007 HME  
TYPE 1 PUMPER

## A MESSAGE FROM THE FIRE BOARD



**TOM HANECAK**  
BOARD CHAIR

Welcome to the 2022 Fire Dragon Newsletter and the annual Pancake Breakfast. It has been a couple of years since the District has been able to have this event – we are excited to have the opportunity to host the community once again. Please try to come and visit with District staff and Board members.

The District continues to embrace change over the last year and is keeping an eye on the future of the District and the needs of our community. The post-COVID world continues to pose challenges for all sectors of work, and Highlands Fire is not exempt from this. We are seeing the effects of inflation, continued increases in real estate costs, extended timelines and increased costs of goods and services, and reduced numbers of new recruits. Each of these factors create unique challenges on their own, but when

faced together they require the District to remain flexible and creative in our approach to delivering the services the community relies on. Rest assured that the District's path forward is set through a thoughtful planning process that has proven successful over the last 15 years.

District leadership is strong, District staff remains committed to the community, and the District Board of Directors continues to balance the needs of the community while providing support to the Chief and his staff. There has been some turnover, as expected, within the District. However, this turnover provided for promotional opportunities for existing staff as highlighted by Chief Miller in his remarks on the following page. This past year the District saw three firefighters leave that served close to two years with HFD. Additionally, I would like to thank Engineer Levi Gutierrez for the 10 years he committed to HFD and wish him the best in his new endeavor. The Board would also like to wish the best to Battalion Chief Mike Greenwalt on his retirement. BC Greenwalt committed the last 3 ½ years to HFD to wrap up a 22-year career in Fire service in the Flagstaff region. Congratulations to those that have been promoted to new positions – we look forward to seeing the great work and creativity they bring to the District.

We are excited for the opportunity to discuss the amazing work Highlands Fire does for you and the rest of the community. Come on by and say hi to the firefighters. They are here for you, your family, and our community. Experience for yourself their professionalism, pride, dedication, capability, friendliness, and genuine caring and can-do attitude.

Good day, I hope you and your family are well and enjoy this year's Pancake Breakfast with us!

Post-pandemic effects and the ever-changing societal and economic impacts challenge us to navigate solutions to an aging fleet of apparatus, a changing workforce, and a volatile economy. Staffing challenges include recruitment and retention, a paramedic shortage, and mental health challenges. We have experienced the highest attrition rate in one year the district has ever seen, at 30%.

The main source of our funding is from property taxes. To date, the property values in many fire districts have not recovered to pre-housing crisis levels (2008), and when combined with Prop 117 requirements, have left many fire districts with reduced operating capacity. Due to the property values, along with other economic and budget impacts, many other fire districts have had to reduce services, reduce staffing levels, close stations, enact "brown outs" (or temporary closures), or have been forced to consolidate or merge with other fire districts. In the worst cases, some have ceased to exist. Thankfully, due to our management and strategic planning over the years, even though we have experienced the same drop in property values and limitations in property taxes forced by Proposition 117, the Highlands Fire District has avoided these reductions in service levels. Even though the housing prices have started to recover recently, with Proposition 117 still in place limiting tax revenue year over year, our minimal revenue increase is not keeping up.

Through this all, the focus remains on maintaining outstanding service levels to our communities. While doing this we strive to strengthen community involvement and communication; maintain the highest standards; hire, promote, and retain quality people; develop and maintain strategic partnerships,

## A MESSAGE FROM THE FIRE CHIEF



**TODD MILLER**  
FIRE CHIEF

and position the district for fiscal sustainability now, and in the future. We appreciate your continued support.

Speaking of hiring and promoting quality people, we will be welcoming three new firefighters to our ranks when they finish the recruit academy on June 30th. Firefighter Faith Aguirre, Firefighter Louis Hawkins, and Firefighter Jacob McIntyre, welcome to the HFD family! I would also like to congratulate our newest Battalion Chief-Chris Pond, Captain-Bryan Monreal, Engineer-Lance Kohl, and Engineer-Chris Sanchez on their recent promotions. Their hard work and willingness to take on the next challenge is appreciated!

★HAPPY★  
*Independence Day!*



2003 PIERCE  
TYPE 1 PUMPER



1995 PIERCE  
TYPE 1 PUMPER

## HISTORY OF FIRE APPARATUS



**ERIC REED**  
ENGINEER/PARAMEDIC  
FLEET MANAGER

Fire engines are perhaps the most iconic symbol of the fire service. The fire apparatus has roots dating back to the 1700's as a replacement for the "bucket brigades" (where people would form a line and pass buckets of water from a water source to the building on fire). Since then, the fire apparatus has taken many forms; from horse-drawn carts with hand and steam pumps, to rudimentary gasoline powered engines and pumps, to diesel and now even electric fire engines of today.

## TYPES OF APPARATUS

Today, fire apparatus take on many shapes and sizes. As an "all hazards" fire department, Highlands Fire District utilizes 4 different types of fire apparatus and various other support vehicles to help achieve our mission of keeping you safe. The workhorse of our fleet are our Type 1 fire engines. These trucks are highly specialized apparatus that respond to most emergencies. The Type 1 fire engine carries 500 to 1,000 gallons of water, is capable of pumping 1250 gallons of water per minute and carries tools and hose for structure fires, search and rescue, vehicle fires, vehicle extrication, cold water rescue, EMS, wildland fire, gas leaks and more. We currently have 3 of these trucks in our fleet. Highlands Fire District also has 3 fire apparatus in our wildland fleet, one Type

3 and two Type 6 fire engines. These trucks are purpose built to aid in the suppression of wildfire. They are capable of bringing crews, tools and hundreds of gallons of water deep into the forest in areas that our Type 1's can't reach. Our Type 3 fire engine also has had the unique benefit of serving as a more capable "all hazards" response vehicle during big snowstorms that limit the effectiveness of our 2wd Type 1's. Lastly, because we don't always have a hydrant to access in some of our more rural communities and on the freeway, we also utilize a 2,000 gallon water tender out of Station 23. Though this piece of fire apparatus is intended mostly to deliver water, it still has a fire pump and enough hose to be used in suppression activities.

## FUTURE OF APPARATUS

Historically, Highlands Fire District has been able to extend the life of our fleet by having a robust maintenance program. This has been a vital cost-saving measure that has helped with fiscal stability. However, even with a longer service life these apparatus still need replacement. We are currently building a replacement for one of our

Type 6's, with another planned in a few years. Additionally, we are in the planning phase of replacing two of our Type 1 engines. We look forward to replacing some of our ageing fleet and having trucks that can better accomplish our mission of serving YOU!

### Inside a Fire Engine

A fire engine (also referred to as a "pumper") transports crew, supplies, and firefighting capabilities to the scene of an incident.

**Warning lights**  
Upper level lights, like the light bar on the cab roof, are for long distance warning. Lower level lights on the sides, fenders, and bumpers are for close proximity warning.

**Master stream**  
An engine-mounted master stream is capable of delivering huge amounts of water over long distances.

**Hoses**  
Various diameters and lengths of hoses are stored throughout the apparatus.

**Electronic sirens**  
The electronic siren uses a loud speaker to produce warning sounds.

**Storage compartments**  
The apparatus has ample storage space for essential firefighting tools and implements.

**Preconnect**  
A pre-connected hose reduces preparation steps at the scene.

**Air horns**  
Air horns use compressed air to create a loud warning sound.

**Pump**  
The pump is powered by the diesel engine through the drive shaft.

**Exterior paint**  
Retroreflective paint stripes on the sides and chevron markings at the rear are required by regulation. Retroreflective materials reflect light back to the source for high visibility.

**Extended front bumper**  
Spacious front bumpers provide convenient access to essential tools and connections, especially in confined environments like small streets where only the front of the engine can face the scene.

**Federal Q siren**  
The Federal Q is a traditional electro-mechanical siren (sound is produced by an electrically driven metal rotor) that produces a characteristic "wail" sound. It's controlled by a driver-side left foot switch in this instance.



2001 INTERNATIONAL  
TYPE 3 PUMPER



**KYLE ANTICEVICH**  
CAPTAIN/PARAMEDIC  
PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICER

## SUMMER SAFETY TIPS

When you picture your family's summer plans, do they include a backyard BBQ or sitting around the fire, telling stories, helping the kids roast marshmallows or making s'mores? These are all things that make great summer memories. But fire-related injuries are not the types of memories you want to have when you reflect on summer vacation. Follow these safety tips to prevent fires, burns, injuries, and property damage when grilling, or enjoying a campfire or fire pit.

"Permit to burn" is require for open burning in Highlands Fire District. A campfire permit may be obtained free of charge, visit the fire station or contacting us at (928) 525-1717 for more information. Fire personnel will inspect the burn area for safety. Once you have your annual permit, call the fire department to let us know you are burning. We'll inform you of any restrictions. Keep in mind, if we get a call about a fire on your property we will come out.



## Planning a Cookout?

- Propane and charcoal BBQ grills should only be used outdoors.
- The grill should be placed well away from the home, deck railings and out from under eaves and overhanging branches.
- Keep children and pets at least three feet away from the grill area.
- Keep your grill clean by removing grease or fat buildup from the grills and in trays below the grill.
- Never leave your grill unattended.
- Place the coals from your grill in a metal can with a lid once they have cooled.



Keep a 3-foot safe zone around your grill. This will keep kids and pets safe.

## Toasted Marshmallows Anyone?

- Use chimneys, outdoor fireplaces, and fire pits outdoor at least 10 feet away from any thing that can burn.
- Turn off or put out fires before you leave the backyard.
- Closely watch children when the fire pit is in use.
- Store fire pit materials like matches and lighters out of children's reach.
- Keep a water source, bucket of water or fire extinguisher nearby.
- Keep your fire constrained to an appropriate size.
- Never burn when it's windy or restricted.



Place the coals from your grill in a metal can with a lid once they have cooled.



Keep an eye on your grill, fire pit or patio torches. Don't walk away from them when they are lit.

## SIGN-UP FOR EMERGENCY NOTIFICATION SYSTEM



*Michael Greenwalt  
Congratulations on your Retirement!  
Thank you for 22 years of Public Service*



# MESSAGE FROM SUPERVISOR RYAN

Here to wish everyone a wonderful 4th of July. Thank goodness that we can celebrate it together. We are so grateful for all the firefighters here in Highlands. They know this area and how recent fires behave and that is why they preach to you about making your properties Firewise. There is still a lot of work to do in your communities and it starts with you on your own property.

Your Highlands Fire District can advise you on best practices. It is important to follow this advice as it will help you retain insurance for your home. Insurance companies are starting to reject coverage for homes that are not Firewise. It has always been my hope that we continue to work on developing a program of urban forestry, now called "Resilient Communities." This approach is combining the efforts of our Fire Districts with the County and other agencies working together with private property owners to make their properties Firewise. We continue to work together with Highlands Fire District on developing this concept. I am a firm believer in incrementalism, and we have a good start. We must keep up with this effort and continue to build on our successes. We have worked well together, and the County will continue to work with Highlands Fire District to keep your communities clean and Firewise, but we can't do it without you.

The County will continue to keep Willard Springs open as a green waste site where you can dump your green waste for FREE. We need you to bring your green waste to Willard Springs. We will continue the voucher program where once a year Mountaineire and Kachina Village resident's can access the Cinder Lake Landfill to dump bulk items, while also keeping Willard Springs open. I encourage neighbors working together with neighbors to help keep our communities clean while also reducing out fire danger. We



need you to use your voucher and haul off your bulk waste items. The County will continue to support the work of the Bear Jaw Fuels Reduction Crew and their Annual Spring Clean Up which was successful this year. Thank you Bear Jaw you did a fantastic job in April picking up many bags of pine needles and many piles of green waste throughout Mountaineire and Kachina Village. Additionally, together we are exploring ways to help provide digital information boards that can provide public service messages as well as emergency information as needed. Let's all continue to work together to be proactive to protect our beautiful communities.



**HAVE A HAPPY & SAFE 4TH OF JULY...AND THANK YOUR HIGHLANDS FIRE DISTRICT.**