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## Good News/Bad News MOFD awarded \$1.1 million; will lose \$100K

#### **By Nick Marnell**

he Federal Emergency Man- MOFD battalion chief Jerry Lee. agement Agency announced July 12 that the Moraga-Orinda Fire Protection District was awarded a District will receive a 2013 SAFER grant of \$1.1 million.

Fire and Emergency Response Act was created to provide funding to local fire departments and volunteer firefighter organizations to help them increase or maintain the number of trained, "front line" firefighters available in their communities. Outgoing MOFD Fire Chief Randall Bradley Frost, Contra Costa Health Services said that MOFD will use the funds EMS Director. over a two-year period to fund four firefighter positions.

mally accept the award, and according to Bradley, "there is no \$10 parcel tax has been used to supcompelling reason not to accept." grant, he said, because after two availability and subsidizing parayears, the district must maintain the medic-staffed fire engines. increased staffing level and the new firefighters cannot be laid off. Bradley added that the addition of four firefighters should save the district well over the \$1.1 million in overtime costs over the two-year period.

\$6.5 million SAFER grant in 2011.

On the downside for the district, The federal Staffing for Adequate the Board of Supervisors recently approved a new funding formula for the disbursement of Measure H funds that will reduce the MOFD's revenue by more than \$100,000 per year beginning in fiscal year 2015-16. The details of the new plan were presented at the board's July 9 meeting by Pat

In 1988, voters passed Contra Costa County's Measure H which The district has 60 days to for- provided for upgrades to the Emergency Medical Services system. The port fire-EMS programs, such as pro-Districts have refused the SAFER viding more paramedic ambulance

The new funding formula changes the paramedic-staffed fire engine funding subsidy from one based on the number of operational fire engines in a district to a formula based on population. Overall funding sub-The grant request was written by sidies to fire districts in Contra Costa

County will increase \$600,000 per The Contra Costa County Fire year under the new plan. But three fire agencies - MOFD, the Pinole Fire Department and the Rodeo-Hercules Fire District – will see a decrease in their allocations.

> MOFD's share of Measure H funding for the current fiscal year is \$199,000; it will drop to \$93,000 in two years.

The top beneficiary of the reallocation is the Contra Costa County Fire Protection District; the Board of Supervisors also functions as ConFire's board of directors. "With the cutbacks in engines subsequent to the fire station closures, (the engine-based formula) was going to hit ConFire extremely hard and reduce their revenues almost by half," said Frost. ConFire's distribution of the Measure H funds will increase more than \$350,000 per year beginning in 2015-16.

MOFD board president John Wyro said that this funding issue will be discussed at a future district board meeting.

# **11 Critical Home Inspection Traps to be Aware of Weeks Before Listing** Your Home for Sale

LAMORINDA - According to industry experts, there are over 33 physical problems that will come under scrutiny during a home inspection when your home is for sale. A new report has been prepared which identifies the eleven most common of these problems, and what you should know about them before you list your home for sale.

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Get your **FREE** special report **NOW** to learn how to ensure a home inspection doesn't cost you the sale of your home.

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**Burned-Out Fire District** 

#### **By Nick Marnell**

don't have enough revenue to Falk. do our job," said a weary Contra Costa County Fire Protection District chief Daryl Louder at the July 9 Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors meeting. Louder had just listened to a presentation by county tion stabilizes; he said he will request administrator David Twa who said a five-year waiver period. "I think it's that, even with the recent closure of a good proposal," said Twa. So did fifth fire station, the district will be the supervisors, who unanimously bankrupt in two fiscal years without passed a motion to allow the chief to an increase in revenue. Despite the bleak financial report, Louder made three operational re- it is a good proposal, board president quests of the board: He asked for John Wyro had no comment as he had \$170,000 to staff three 2-person not seen the new ConFire presentasquads to respond to emergency medical calls during the height of the wildfire season; a reduction in auto- passed a motion to add the three matic aid supplied outside the district; and authorization to renegotiate with the Moraga-Orinda Fire District on a joint fire station 46. was resurrected when the MOFD board voted to renegotiate with the owner of a parcel to be used for a joint fire station which would replace MOFD station 43 in Orinda and Con-Fire's closed station 16 in Lafayette. "My thanks to MOFD for looking at this once again despite our reluctance to enter into an agreement," said Supervisor Candace Andersen, whose trict at a time. district includes Lafayette, Moraga and Orinda. Tatzin and city manager Steven Falk have five engines and two ambualso supported the revised ConFire lances," he said later that day. "With station 46 plan. Though the city recently formed an Emergency Services Lafayette we can handle over 99 per-Task Force to investigate alternative delivery of its fire and emergency medical service, "Lafayette has no appetite for changing fire districts," said

Louder's new proposal for the fire station 46 consolidation included a major caveat: that MOFD waive Con-Fire's portion of the annual operating costs until ConFire's financial situa-



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renegotiate the deal.

As to whether MOFD also thinks tion.

The supervisors unanimously emergency medical squads from mid-July through mid-October, over the objection of the firefighters' union. Vince Wells, president of Local 1230, The station 46 consolidation plan wanted the money used to reopen ConFire station 87 in Pittsburg, which closed July 8.

> Though no motion was passed, the directors also agreed with Louder's proposal that automatic aid to neighboring fire districts be restricted to a hard cap of four ConFire units at one time, with a maximum of two units deployed into any one dis-

MOFD fire chief Randall Bradley did not think that this restriction will Lafayette council member Don adversely impact his district. "We an additional two engines from cent of our calls. If we need additional resources we can get them from Berkeley and/or Oakland."

### MOFD Board Meeting July 15

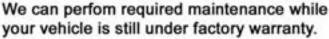
The Moraga-Orinda Fire District board of directors met July 15 after press deadline. The agenda included the appointment of an interim fire chief to replace Randall Bradley; the possible appointment of one of three applicants for the board seat vacated by Frank Sperling; and discussion about entering a joint powers agreement with the city of Lafayette to purchase a property for the construction of the proposed fire station 46. Check our website for updates, www.lamorindaweekly.com. N. Marnell

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