

South Placer Fire Department

by Alexandra Hruz



Since the 1950s, the South Placer Fire District (SPFD) has offered fire suppression and emergency response services and provided educational resources to increase safety consciousness in the community. Recently, members of the SPFD lent their assistance in Southern California to battle historic and devastating wildfires. Whether close to home or helping neighbors down the road, the SPFD is dedicated to its mission, proudly carrying on with nearly 75 years of exceptional service to the community.



The SPFD was established more than 70 years ago, in 1952. At that time, it was managed as part of the Citrus Heights Fire District (CHFD); in 1962, SPFD terminated its agreement with CHFD. It was during this time that the SPFD also began offering ambulance transport services to local hospitals for community members, a service it still offers. South Placer and Loomis merged in 2017 to become one district serving Granite Bay, Loomis, and areas of Penryn, Newcastle, and unincorporated Placer County.



Through four fire stations, the SPFD serves nearly 35,000 people across 43 square miles, protecting nearly \$10 billion in assessed property value. It provides fire suppression services for both structural and wildland operations. The organization also works in a proactive capacity: It offers fire prevention services, which includes plan review, building inspections, public education, and community outreach. The SPFD also conducts hazardous material response, responds to traffic collisions for entrapments, medical aid, and fire suppression, and offers emergency medical services for both basic and advanced life support. The SPFD is one of only three fire agencies in Placer County that provides ambulance services.



Mark Duerr has served as SPFD fire chief for three-and-a-half years. He says that, as a community-centered organization, the SPFD is intent on its mission of better serving the local people. But, as he explains, their mission involves more than putting out fires and responding to calls, although that's a vital aspect of the work. "Traditionally, fire districts have been recognized for their reactive responses; whenever you call, we promptly respond," Chief Duerr says. "However, we are striving to pave a new path toward proactive engagement, educating our community about various risks and sharing strategies to mitigate them. Our goal is to protect not just property but

the lives and hearts of everyone we serve." The SPFD offers several regular activities, including hosting quarterly open houses at their fire stations where the community is invited to meet their firefighters and learn about their daily activities. Representatives from SPFD regularly attend local meetings with homeowners' associations, the Chamber of Commerce, Loomis Town Council, Public Safety Committee meetings, various community events, and more. Further, through their public education and safety efforts, SPFD members will visit local schools or have students come to their stations to discuss fire safety topics, including "stop, drop, and roll" and exit drills in the home (EDITH). They also



PAUL MESA HANDYMAN SERVICES
ELECTRICAL, CONSTRUCTION & HOMEOWNER EXPERIENCE

30 YEARS OF QUALITY & RELIABLE SERVICES
NO JOB TOO BIG. NO JOB TOO SMALL.

LICENSE: 112191 | PLACER COUNTY | GRANITE BAY | Paulmesa332@gmail.com | (916) 301-3922

to page 28

MAKING A DIFFERENCE | SOUTH PLACER FIRE DEPARTMENT

work with their partners at Sutter Hospital System to provide CPR and “stop the bleed” training to all high school freshmen in the community and offer fall-risk education as well. Through these activities, the SPFD helps equip both the young and young-at-heart with the knowledge and skills to stay safe. “The dedicated

men and women of the South Placer Fire District play a vital role in our community,” Chief Duerr says. “We train tirelessly and prepare ourselves for the various emergencies that life throws our way—whether it’s a raging fire, a sudden flood, or urgent medical situations. We know that getting it right means ensuring the safety and well-being of you, your loved ones, and your property.” One activity the SPFD looks forward to all year is their annual tradition of lending Santa Claus their emergency vehicles to drive through neighborhoods and collect toys for donation.

But there are challenges that the SPFD faces that can stand in the way of better serving the community. As Chief Duerr explains, the organization’s expenses exceed its revenue, which resulted in the district closing one of its stations about two



years ago. “We have stabilized our budget and increased some areas of revenue like ambulance transport revenue, but our main funding mechanism, property taxes, has not grown at the same rate as inflation, and our operations continue to be impacted by this shortfall,” he says. For the SPFD to remain a viable entity in the community, changes may need to be made to help keep this service running.

In January 2025, a SPFD crew were sent to help contain the Eaton Fire in

Southern California, where they joined crews from all over the nation helping save lives and preserve property. Through a sharing of knowledge and dedication to helping others, the SPFD showed its heart. “It is important to know that the members of the Fire District are always here for our community, and it is truly a privilege to serve,” Chief Duerr says. “South Placer Fire prides itself on providing exceptional customer service at all times and is always here to help.”

WE Alliance Wealth Advisors

Do you help make your neighborhood a better place? We’d love to hear about it! Email heather.dailey@localprintmedia.com today!

You relax... We paint

Quality you can afford and trust



Lic #11110360



Call or Text
530-937-2468

- www.happyhousepaint.com
- happyhousepaints@gmail.com
- [happy_house_painting](https://www.instagram.com/happy_house_painting)