

April 2017

Residents of the Mormon Lake Fire District,

First and foremost, I would like to thank the numerous volunteers and supporters that donate so many resources and time to the Mormon Lake Fire District. It is greatly appreciated! The Mormon Lake Fire District Auxiliary has done an outstanding job raising funds for much needed equipment this past year. The Auxiliary provided the District with a radio repeater on Mormon Mountain, dispatching services, reporting software, and applications. This has greatly improved our radio communications throughout the District and reporting incidents. We would also like to remind you to **DIAL 911 to report an Emergency**. The District no longer has an emergency phone line and the business line is not staffed.

This past July I was given the opportunity to lead the Mormon Lake Fire District. I have spent the last year meeting new faces, friends, visitors and looking forward to meeting many more! I have also spent the last year learning the district and its members while working towards acceptance as their leader. There have been challenging times, but I see a great deal of potential from within this community and its members. The volunteer members of this district do an outstanding job with the limited resources of our rural community and we are always looking for more volunteers.

As with anything, change is inevitable. We face numerous challenges, changes, and hazards within the fire service today and in the future. The Fire District has to respond to those changes proactively. We are currently developing a strategic plan for the District to assess community needs, goals, vision, and values. A committee of board members, citizens, and firefighters have rose to the challenge to start this process. During this process, we are finding areas where we can improve to maintain our standards of service that our residents and visitors have come to expect. We will explore every option to provide the best possible service to our residents and visitors.

I encourage the community to reduce the threat of wildfire on their property and improve access for emergency vehicles. I have had several people express to me that "if a fire were to occur, to save the trees". Honestly, if a large wild fire were to occur we would not be able to save most of the trees or your homes due to the current fuel load in and around most neighborhoods. Public and personnel safety are the first priority followed by preservation of property. Ingress and egress are also major concerns. We cannot access the majority of privately maintained roads with our large apparatus as most of the roads are narrow with low hanging branches and large rocks in the roadway.

Creating a defensible space around your property will help protect your home as well as your neighbors. I strongly recommend neighborhoods work towards achieving Firewise recommendations or recognition. Fire is a community threat and it takes the whole community to reduce the threat. It's been ten years since the Birdie fire and its destruction is still visible from the 91 road. Let's work together to keep a wildfire like that from happening again. The District can put in for a grant to thin the numbers of trees on private properties. If we are awarded a grant, it would significantly reduce the cost to the home owner and reduce the threat of wildfire. Please contact me if you are interested in this service.

It takes one person to start a movement. Will you be the one? Please help us help you! If you are interested in improving public safety in our community or your neighborhood the District will help in any way we possibly can. For more information on the Firewise program contact the District or visit <http://www.firewise.org/wildfire-preparedness/firewise-toolkit.aspx>

If you have any questions, interests, comments, or concerns please feel free to stop by the fire station, call me at 928-354-2231 or email me at chief@mormonlakefire.com The Fire District Board is also available for your comments, questions, or concerns. Current members are: Mary (Pinkie) Lockett – Board Chair, Steve Linck – Board Clerk, Clifford Ayres, Bob Blean, and Wiley Cline. We will be working on adding District e-mail accounts for each board member and their contact information will be on our website in the future.

On behalf of the Mormon Lake Fire District, we hope everyone has a safe year!

Kevin Schulte
Fire Chief