

PIPELINE

NEWS ABOUT CONTRA COSTA COUNTY'S REFINERY INDUSTRY

WINTERSPRINGSUMMERFALL 2012

"WE CAN ALWAYS COUNT ON THEM"

□ When city and county firefighters need help with hazardous spills or chemical fires requiring specialized training and equipment, they call on the Petrochemical Mutual Aid Organization (PMAO).

PMAO is a partnership between the emergency response units from Contra Costa County's four refineries — Chevron, ConocoPhillips, Shell and Tesoro — and the county's local fire departments. Founded 30 years ago, PMAO meets once a month and trains four times a year, building relationships among the departments and preparing for emergencies requiring a coordinated response.

"We have a cooperative working relationship with the refinery fire departments," says Keith Cormier, Battalion Chief for the Contra Costa

County Fire Protection District, a PMAO member. "When incidents occur, either party can request assistance and receive equipment and personnel to aid in stabilizing the emergency."

This cooperation improves public safety while conserving local revenue, since city and county fire departments don't need to buy and maintain expensive equipment that's seldom needed.

"Equipment is not unnecessarily duplicated for these high-risk, yet low-frequency emergencies," says Cormier. "And public safety is improved because our agencies have a 'game plan' for an efficient response."

"The refineries have specialized emergency response equipment, materials, training and expertise," says Greg Clayton, Emergency Response Manager/Fire Chief at Tesoro's Golden Eagle Refinery in Martinez. "We're committed to sharing these special capabilities with one another and with the community at large, so emergencies can be mitigated as quickly as possible."

"WE HAVE A COOPERATIVE WORKING RELATIONSHIP WITH THE REFINERY FIRE DEPARTMENTS."

Keith Cormier
Battalion Chief
Contra Costa County
Fire Protection District

"The refineries may be competitors in the business world, but when one of us needs help, the others are always there," says Clayton. "The only competition is to see who arrives first."

Clayton has worked at the refinery for 30 years, where he's been Emergency Response Manager since 1999.

"The PMAO is just part of what we're doing to increase cooperation and

see **COUNT ON THEM**, page 2



"If we need help, we can always count on them."
— Richmond Fire Chief Michael Banks

COUNT ON THEM
CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1



safety in the county,” says Mark Ayers, Chief of Emergency Services at the Chevron refinery. Before joining Chevron 25 years ago, Ayers was a police officer and firefighter in Sunnyvale.

“We routinely open our training facilities to other departments in the area,” says Ayers. “Our work requires a very high level of specialized skill, which we readily share with other departments and academies.

“We also bring local firefighters with us to Texas three times a year, where we train at the largest and most specialized industrial training facility in the world,” says Ayers. The facility is operated by Texas A&M.

**“THIS COOPERATION
IMPROVES SAFETY
WHILE CONSERVING
LOCAL REVENUE.”**

“We pay all of their travel and facility costs,” says Ayers. “They gain new skills and knowledge, so they’re better prepared to help us if needed. It’s a good investment that benefits



“Our work requires a high level of specialized skill, which we readily share,” says Chevron Fire Chief Mark Ayers.

them, benefits us, and benefits the community.”

Chevron also maintains a “volunteer brigade” consisting of refinery operators and mechanics who’ve been trained to help respond in emergencies.

Ayers said the refinery’s relationship with the Richmond Fire Department is especially strong. “We have an extremely close relationship,” says Ayers, whose refinery is located in Richmond. “They respond when needed here, we respond when needed there. We spend many hours every year working and training together.”

“We’re glad they’re here,” says Richmond Fire Chief Michael Banks,

who has been with the Richmond Fire Department for 28 years. “We’ve been working together for a very long time. If they need us, we’re there. If we need help, we can always count on them. We appreciate that, and we appreciate what they do for this community in so many other ways.”

Banks said his department is now working with Chevron’s emergency services department and other fire departments in the county to assemble an Urban Search and Rescue Team for local emergencies. “It’s another way we’re working together to protect the people of this county,” says Banks.

“By working together with our local fire departments, we raise the level of safety for everyone,” says



“Emergency prevention is our number-one goal,” says Shell Fire Chief Tom McKnight.



“We know and trust each other, and that makes for a much smoother response,” says ConocoPhillips Fire Chief Les Miller.



“By working together, we raise the level of safety for everyone,” says Tesoro Fire Chief Greg Clayton.

Tesoro’s Clayton. “And that’s always our number-one goal.”

“From a fire and emergency response standpoint, we have a good working relationship with the Contra Costa County Fire Protection District,” says

Les Miller, the Safety and Emergency Response Supervisor at the ConocoPhillips refinery, agrees.

“We’ve worked and trained together with the Rodeo/Hercules/Pinole district people for many years,” says Les, who has worked at the refinery for 35 years. “We know and trust each other, and that’s a big benefit. They know we’re capable, and we know they’re capable, and that makes for a much smoother response.”

In addition to his refinery duties, Miller teaches at Solano College’s fire tech program, and worked for the California State Fire Marshall’s fire training division, where he wrote a manual on flammable liquid and gas firefighting. “I’ve trained a lot of firefighters over the years.”

ConocoPhillips has provided the district with funding for turnout gear, vehicles and other equipment. In addition, like Chevron, the refinery pays training costs for the district firefighters who join them at the Texas A&M firefighting school for one week every other year. In other years, they train together for a week at the refinery.

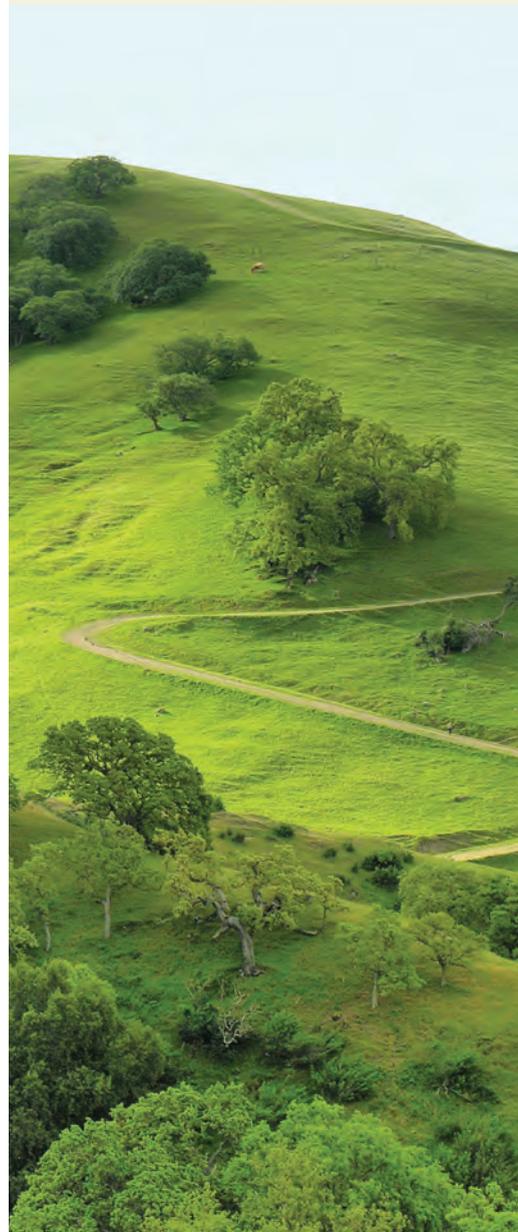
In addition to training and responding together, Hanley’s department and the emergency unit at ConocoPhillips share resources and work jointly on local projects like the Community Emergency Response Team and the Christmas Coalition. “We’re also

REFINERIES JOIN FOR PARK PROTECTION

□ The East Bay Regional Park District has more than 1,100 miles of hiking, biking and horseback trails — trails kept safe by the district’s Volunteer Trail Safety Patrol. Major funding for the program is provided by the county’s Chevron, ConocoPhillips, Shell and Tesoro refineries.

“We appreciate their dedication to safety,” says Beverly Lane, president of the district’s board of directors.

You can learn more about park activities and volunteer opportunities at www.ebparks.org. In addition, the Regional Parks Foundation offers information on how you can help support our local parks at www.regionalparksfoundation.org. ■



“TRAINING TOGETHER PROVIDES A SAFER WORKING ENVIRONMENT FOR RESPONDERS.”

Rodeo/Hercules/Pinole
Fire Chief Charles Hanley

Clayton. “Even though our refinery is located just outside the district, we get active emergency support when requested. And of course, we’re always standing by to provide response support for the county if needed.”

Rodeo/Hercules/Pinole Fire Department Chief Charles Hanley says his department works closely with the emergency unit at the ConocoPhillips refinery.

“Interagency cooperation leads to better communication,” says Hanley, “and training together provides a safer working environment for emergency responders.”

COUNT ON THEM

CONTINUED FROM INSIDE

working to develop a Fire Explorer Post and community college outreach for local high school students," says Hanley.

"Emergency prevention is our number-one goal, but we're always prepared," says Tom McKnight, Health & Safety Supervisor and Fire Chief at Shell's Martinez Refinery. "As a good neighbor and part of the firefighting brotherhood, we're happy to lend our assistance and expertise to other facilities and local fire departments.

"While we're active in PMAO and are always ready to lend a hand anywhere in the county, we mainly work with the local battalion chiefs and engine companies near our facility," said McKnight, who has been with Shell for thirty years. "They've joined us for training exercises and tours of our facility. Our door is always open to them." ■



Contra Costa County's four refineries have specialized training and equipment that they readily share when local fire departments need help.