

Monthly Message from the Chief

July 2012

As we approach peak fire season months and the end of July, it is apparent that the 2012 fire season is in sharp contrast to those of the last two years. We have already seen twice as many fires as we did last year at this same time. You only need to listen to the number of initial attack dispatches or receive my Reports on Conditions (ROCs) for wildland fires every afternoon to know we are busy. I have been asked a number of times why I personally send out the ROCs. As the Chief of the Department, it is important to me to stay in touch with our operational activities. Additionally,

ROCs are a valuable tool that allow me to share CAL FIRE's emergency activities with the Administration, valued stakeholders and our cooperators who might not otherwise be aware of the size and scope of CAL FIRE's emergency response activities. Most importantly, they provide a situational awareness throughout the Department as to fire and other significant emergency activities.

We are all excited to be doing the job we are trained for, including me. The excitement of increased radio traffic, strike team assignments, and news media coverage creates a buzz that only we can truly appreciate. It is critical that we stay focused on the job at hand. We must continue to train and focus on pacing ourselves. We have already had several major fires and still have a long fire season ahead, with the most intense fire behavior yet to come. Remember, every CAL FIRE employee, from the seasonal fire fighter to me, is responsible for safety. I want everyone to make it through this fire season safely.

Chief Ken Pimlott
CAL FIRE Director

