

SIERRA MADRE FIRE DEPARTMENT



**ANNUAL
REPORT**
2025

**“But aloud the praises, and give the
victor-crown. To our noble hearted
Firemen, who fear not danger’s frown.”**

Author, Fredric G. W. Fenn.

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Message from Chief Bartlett

Fire service is more than a profession—it is a calling rooted in courage, compassion, and commitment. Every day, the men and women of the Sierra Madre Fire Department answer that call with strength and humility.

This past year reminded us that challenges will always arise, but so will opportunity. Opportunity to train harder. Opportunity to grow stronger. Opportunity to serve better. Whether responding to emergencies, advancing our paramedic services, conducting fire prevention inspections, or engaging with our community at public events, our firefighters rose to every occasion.

What inspires me most is not simply the number of calls we answered or the hours we trained—it is the character behind the badge. It is the firefighter who stays late to mentor a colleague. The paramedic who offers reassurance during someone's worst moment. The team that pushes one another to be better tomorrow than they were yesterday. That is the heart of Sierra Madre Fire.

We are a department moving forward—embracing innovation, strengthening preparedness, and continuously raising our standards. Our direction is upward because our people refuse to settle for anything less than excellence.

To our community: your trust and support mean everything to us. The partnership we share makes us stronger and reinforces the purpose behind our work.

To the members of this department: thank you for your sacrifice, professionalism, and dedication. I am proud to stand beside you. It is the honor of my lifetime to serve as your Fire Chief. I pledge to continue leading with integrity and to serve this department and our community with everything I have.

With respect and gratitude,



Brent Bartlett
Fire Chief



ABOUT THE COMMUNITY



Mayor
Kristine Lowe



Mayor Pro Tem
Gene Goss



Council Member
Edward Garcia



Council Member
Robert Parkhurst



Council Member
Kelly Kriebs

Sierra Madre, known as the Village of the Foothills, is a small, vibrant city nestled in the foothills of the San Gabriel Mountains between Pasadena and Arcadia. Its population of roughly 11,000 enjoys a rare blend of serene small-town charm and close-knit community spirit within Los Angeles County. The city's picturesque, tree-lined streets feature historic architecture and a walkable downtown filled with local cafés, shops, and cultural venues like the historic Sierra Madre Playhouse, giving residents a strong sense of place and connection to their shared heritage.

Residents of Sierra Madre take pride in a lifestyle that balances peaceful, community-oriented living with a deep appreciation for local history and nature. The city hosts beloved traditions and events—such as its annual Fourth of July parade and the Wistaria Festival celebrating its world-famous vine—and maintains robust resources for preserving the past through local archives and historic sites. Close access to hiking trails in the nearby mountains and a range of outdoor and cultural activities help foster a warm, engaged community that values both heritage and quality of life.

The Sierra Madre Fire Department is grateful for the continued guidance of the City Council, the leadership of the City Manager and staff, and the enduring trust of our residents. Your collaboration and support strengthen our ability to serve with professionalism, compassion, and dedication. Together, we remain committed to protecting our community and preserving the small-town character and quality of life that define Sierra Madre.



VISION

The Sierra Madre Fire Department is dedicated to remaining a progressive, cost-effective, and innovative fire department that ensures a safe and inclusive environment for our community through exceptional customer service.

MISSION

The Sierra Madre Fire Department is committed to protecting life, property, and our environment through compassionate service.

CORE VALUES

- Honor** – adhering to the highest standard, both morally and ethically.
 - Integrity** – based on trust and accountability through service.
 - Compassion** – treating everyone with kindness and empathy.
 - Respect** – to self and community, maintaining a department of teamwork and growth.
-

DEPARTMENT OVERVIEW

The Sierra Madre Fire Department (SMFD) operates from Station 41, located at 242 W. Sierra Madre Boulevard, providing comprehensive fire protection and advanced life support emergency medical services to residents, businesses, and visitors throughout the City. From its centrally located downtown station, the Department serves a primarily residential community spanning approximately 3.2 square miles, including areas within the wildland-urban interface (WUI). The Department protects a population of more than 10,000 residents and remains mindful of the unique wildfire risks associated with Sierra Madre’s foothill geography.

The Department operates on a three-platoon 48/96 schedule to ensure continuous 24-hour response coverage. Each shift is staffed by one Fire Captain, one Fire Engineer, and three Firefighter/Paramedics, providing consistent command presence and advanced medical capability on every response. Battalion Chief coverage for larger or more complex incidents is provided through a contracted incident management agreement with the City of Arcadia, ensuring enhanced command oversight when operational demands require additional leadership support.

Organizationally, the Department is structured into five coordinated divisions: Administration, Operations, Emergency Medical Services, Training, and Fire Prevention and Community Risk Reduction. This structure allows the Department to balance daily emergency response readiness with long-term planning, fiscal stewardship, professional development, and proactive wildfire mitigation efforts.

Regionally, SMFD maintains automatic and mutual aid agreements with the Los Angeles County Fire Department and the United States Forest Service. The Department also participates in coordinated dispatch and regional response through Verdugo Fire Communications Services, working alongside twelve neighboring fire agencies. Through this cooperative framework, jurisdictional boundaries are effectively eliminated during emergencies, ensuring the closest and most appropriate resources respond regardless of city limits.

Fire protection services in Sierra Madre date back to 1921, when the Sierra Madre Volunteer Fire Department was established. For nearly a century, the City maintained a proud volunteer tradition and was the last remaining volunteer fire department in the greater Los Angeles area before transitioning to a fully career, paid department in 2019. Today, the Sierra Madre Fire Department continues to honor that legacy through professional service, operational excellence, and a steadfast commitment to protecting the community.



Fire Chief Bartlett



EMS Captain Bustillos



Administrative Analyst Hsu



**Captain Ladd
A Shift**



**Captain Gacad
B Shift**

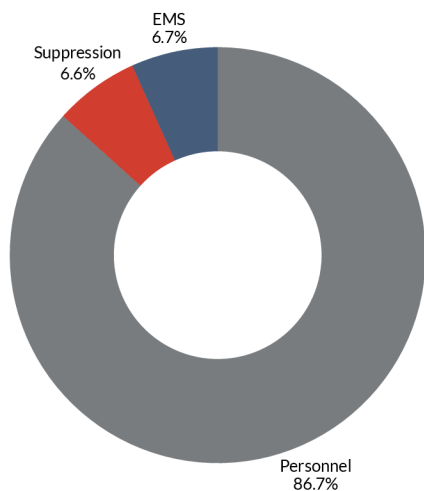


**Captain Bertrand
C Shift**

ADMINISTRATION



FY 25-26 BUDGET SUMMARY



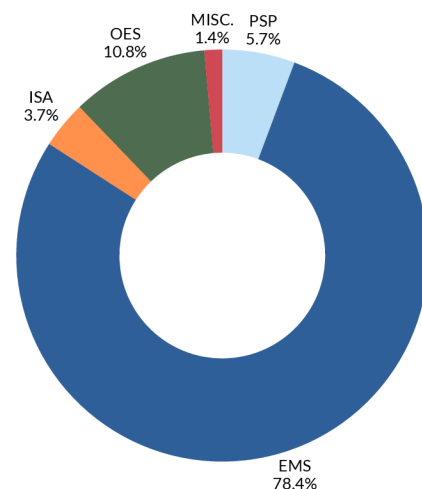
The Administration Division provides strategic leadership, fiscal oversight, and policy guidance for all operations of the Sierra Madre Fire Department (SMFD). The Division ensures compliance with federal, state, and local regulations governing fire suppression, emergency medical services (EMS), fire prevention, and emergency management. Administration works closely with the City Manager, City Council, and partner departments to implement policy initiatives, manage complex assignments, and align departmental goals with the City’s Strategic Plan—particularly in the area of Public Safety. Recent initiatives, including adoption of the updated Fire Hazard Severity Zone (FHSZ) Map and amendments to Chapter 10.52 regarding Red Flag parking prohibitions, reflect this coordinated approach to wildfire risk reduction and emergency access planning.

FINANCIAL STEWARDSHIP & COST RECOVERY

SMFD operates with an annual budget of approximately \$3,989,000, with cost recovery offsetting roughly 22 % of total expenditures. The majority of this cost recovery is generated through Emergency Medical Services provided within the City and through mutual aid responses. EMS transport and treatment fees are established in accordance with Los Angeles County EMS Agency rate structures, ensuring consistency with regional standards and reimbursement practices.

Additional cost-recovery and revenue sources include CAL OES strike team reimbursements, Instructional Services Agreements (ISA), the Paramedic Subscription Program, fire and life-safety inspections, fire permit fees, and Fire Safety Officer services. Together, these revenue streams help reduce the impact on the General Fund while supporting the Department’s operational sustainability.

Through careful budget management, payroll oversight, accounts payable coordination, and strategic grant pursuit, the Administration Division maximizes available funding while maintaining a high standard of service delivery. The Department continues to actively pursue state and regional grant opportunities to support wildfire mitigation initiatives, community outreach programs, training advancements, and capital equipment replacement to ensure long-term operational readiness.



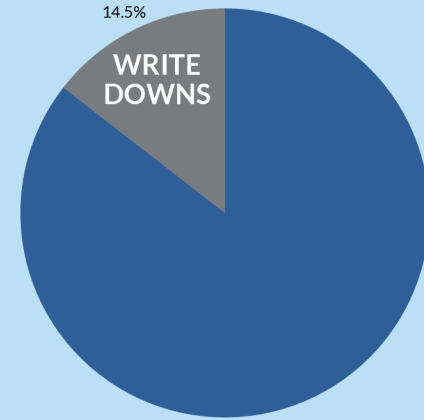
The Paramedic Subscription Program serves a dual purpose for the Sierra Madre community by providing financial protection during medical emergencies while generating supplemental revenue to support emergency medical services and public safety operations. This approach strengthens both household financial security and the Department’s ability to sustain high-quality response capabilities.

Since its launch in 2010, the program has steadily grown. Effective July 1, 2025, expanded options were introduced, including reduced-cost family plans, discounted plans for low-income households, and business coverage for employees during operating hours. The program currently has 568 subscribers, with 51 percent enrolled in the new family plan and 17 percent representing new or returning members following the recent expansion.

For enrolled members, any 911 response costs not covered by insurance are waived by the City, eliminating out-of-pocket expenses. Subscription fees also help offset EMS operational costs, supporting long-term program sustainability. Through careful financial management, the Department continues to maximize resources while maintaining a high standard of emergency medical care for the community.

City of Sierra Madre

PARAMEDIC SUBSCRIPTION PROGRAM



CAL OES MUTUAL AID & WILDLAND DEPLOYMENTS



Pre-Position Strike Team Deployment – August 2025

At the request of CAL FIRE, SMFD participated in a Verdugo Area five-engine strike team during extreme heat and low humidity conditions. Crews from Pasadena, West Covina, Monrovia, Arcadia, and Sierra Madre were pre-positioned in the foothills of the San Gabriel Valley for four days. Although only one small fire occurred during the deployment, the assignment strengthened interagency coordination, training readiness, and rapid-response capability during high fire weather conditions.

Blue Fire Deployment – September 2025

Engine 41 deployed as part of Strike Team 1205A (Area C Type 1 Strike Team) to the Blue Fire near the Klamath River region. This marked a significant milestone in the Department’s expanding wildland capability. Crews operated in steep terrain and dynamic fire conditions, supporting suppression and structure defense operations. This assignment demonstrated SMFD’s readiness to integrate into large-scale, statewide wildfire operations and reinforced regional mutual aid partnerships.

Garnet Fire Deployment – September 2025

Firefighter/Paramedic Knapp was deployed on a 14-day assignment as a Fireline Paramedic Trainee to the Garnet Fire in Fresno County, serving in a specialized single-resource role providing medical support to firefighters in the wildland environment. This marked the first time the Sierra Madre Fire Department assigned a Fireline Paramedic to a state wildfire incident, expanding the Department’s operational capability and statewide representation. The assignment reflects the Department’s commitment to professional development, interagency collaboration, and advanced wildland fire operations.

OPERATION

FIRE

168

SERVICE CALL/
PUBLIC
ASSISTANCE

106

MOUNTAIN
RESCUE

66

ALARM/SMK
DETECTOR

49

POWER LINE
DOWN

43

HAZARDOUS
CONDITIONS
/GAS LEAK

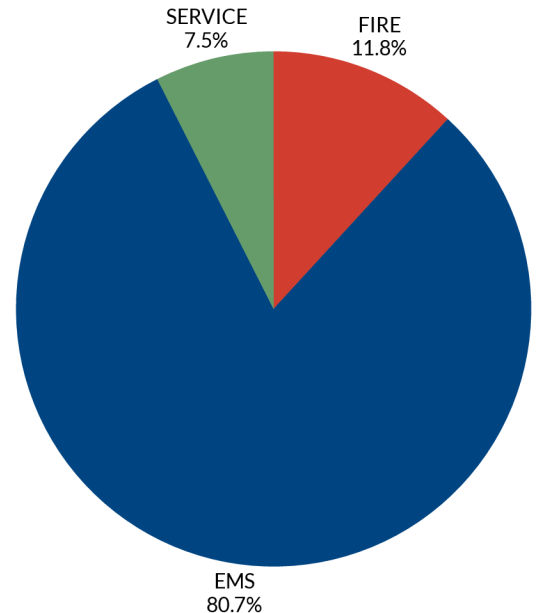
30

**Note: The figures listed above reflect the primary incident categories during the reporting period. EMS responses and other call types are not individually itemized here but are included in the summarized totals below.*

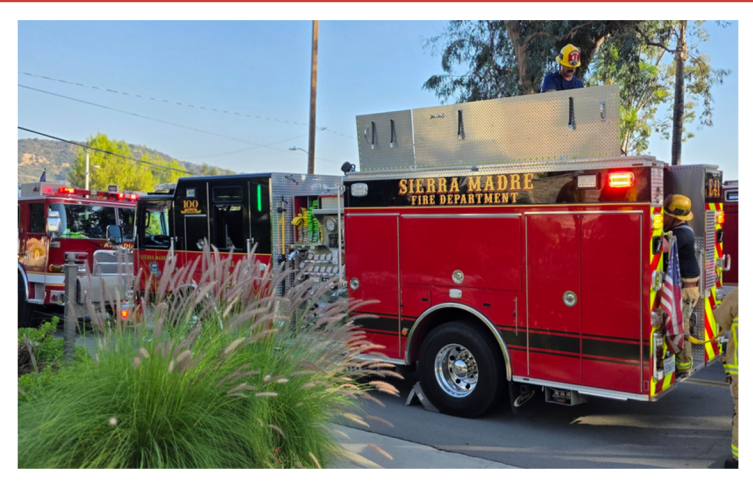
TOTAL INCIDENTS: 1,495

The Operations Division is responsible for delivering 24-hour emergency response services to the community, including fire suppression, advanced life support emergency medical care, rescue operations, hazardous materials response, and wildland fire operations. Operating from Station 41, personnel are assigned across three platoons on a 48/96 schedule to ensure uninterrupted readiness and consistent command presence. Each shift is staffed with a Fire Captain, Fire Engineer, and Firefighter/Paramedics, providing immediate access to leadership, apparatus operation expertise, and advanced medical capability on every response.

In 2025, the Sierra Madre Fire Department responded to 1,495 incidents, including structure fires, brush fires, hazardous conditions, public assists, and alarm activations. Fire-type incidents totaled just over 100 for the year, with a notable concentration in January associated with the Eaton Fire and related wildland activity. The department also handled a significant number of dispatched-and-canceled responses and public service calls, reflecting the broader role SMFD plays in community safety beyond emergencies. Average turnout time was 69 seconds, and average response time was 273 seconds, demonstrating prompt deployment from dispatch to arrival on scene. Overall, 2025 saw a manageable but important volume of fire and hazard incidents and continued all-hazards service to Sierra Madre and its neighboring communities.



OPERATION



EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES

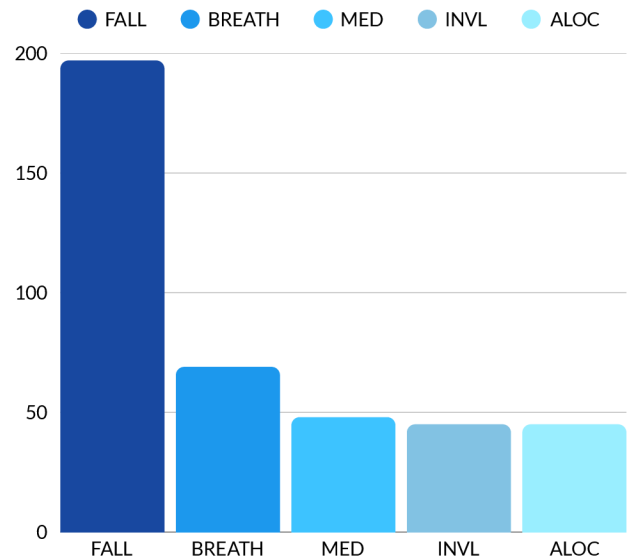
TRAUMA: FALL 197	GENERAL MEDICAL 87
GI/GU 48	ASSESSMENT 43
SYNCOPE 37	ALTER LEVEL OF CONSCIOUSNESS 27

*Note: The figures listed above represent the primary EMS call categories during the reporting period. Additional call types are not individually itemized here but are included in the summarized totals below.

EMS RESPONSES: 1,148

The Emergency Medical Services Division oversees the delivery of advanced life support care to residents and visitors, ensuring that all medical responses meet or exceed the standards established by the Los Angeles County EMS Agency. EMS personnel respond to a significant percentage of the Department’s total call volume, providing rapid assessment, stabilization, life-saving interventions, and coordinated transport to receiving hospitals. The division maintains strict adherence to clinical protocols, documentation standards, and quality improvement measures to ensure optimal patient outcomes and accountability.

Beyond daily response operations, the EMS Division focuses on continuous clinical advancement and innovation. This includes participation in pilot programs such as prehospital point-of-care ultrasound (POCUS), expanded paramedic training opportunities, and data-driven quality assurance initiatives. The division also administers the Paramedic Subscription Program, which provides financial protection for enrolled residents by waiving out-of-pocket emergency response costs not covered by insurance. Revenue generated through the program contributes to sustaining advanced life support operations and equipment upgrades. By combining clinical excellence with proactive program management, the EMS Division ensures the community receives high-quality, compassionate, and technologically progressive medical care.



TOP FIVE CODE TYPES

EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES



TRAINING

COMPANY
TRAINING

5,479

EXISTING
DRIVER
/OPERATOR
TRAINING

1,626

EMS
CONTINUING
EDUCATION

300

FACILITY
TRAINING

72

LEADERSHIP

308

HAZMAT

438

TOTAL TRAINING HOURS: 8,223



The Training Division is responsible for maintaining operational readiness, professional competency, and regulatory compliance for all sworn personnel. Through structured programs, the Division ensures firefighters and paramedics remain proficient in fire suppression, emergency medical response, rescue operations, hazardous materials response, and wildland firefighting. Company-level drills reinforce core skills and teamwork, while specialized training addresses emerging risks and evolving best practices.

Emergency medical services training remains a central focus. Ongoing EMS education includes EMT recertifications, paramedic and CPR renewals, and continuing education courses through the UCLA Center for Prehospital Care. These programs ensure personnel remain current with state licensure requirements, clinical protocols, and advancements in prehospital medicine while maintaining high standards of patient care.

The Division also oversees driver/operator certification, leadership development, and continuing education to promote safe apparatus operation and effective incident management. Emphasis is placed on command and coordination through Incident Command System (ICS) training, Emergency Operations Center exercises, and scenario-based simulations. Training records are maintained to ensure compliance with state mandates and professional standards, reinforcing the Department's commitment to safety, preparedness, and service excellence.

FIRE PREVENTION



The Fire Prevention and Community Risk Reduction Division focuses on proactive strategies to reduce fire hazards, improve code compliance, and enhance overall community resilience. This division conducts comprehensive fire and life-safety inspections of commercial properties, multi-family dwellings, schools, and places of worship to ensure adherence to the California Fire Code and local ordinances. In the City's wildland-urban interface areas, personnel perform defensible space inspections and enforce brush clearance requirements to reduce wildfire risk and improve emergency access during high fire danger conditions.

In addition to enforcement responsibilities, the division reviews development plans, issues operational permits, and ensures compliance with state-mandated programs such as AB-38 defensible space inspections. The division also plays a central role in public education and outreach efforts, providing wildfire preparedness guidance, home hardening information, and community risk awareness presentations. Through participation in Fire Prevention Week events, school programs, and community forums, the division promotes a culture of prevention and shared responsibility. By integrating regulatory oversight with education and engagement, the Fire Prevention and Community Risk Reduction Division strengthens the City's long-term safety and preparedness posture.

BRUSH ABATEMENT INSPECTION

1,500+

MULTI-RESIDENTIAL INSPECTION

145

SCHOOL & CHURCH INSPECTION

19

PLAN REVIEW

62

FIRE SPRINKLER INSPECTION

37

AB 38 INSPECTION

27

**Note: The figures listed above represent the majority of inspection and activity counts during the reporting period. Additional variances are not itemized here but are included in the summarized totals below.*

TOTAL INSPECTIONS: 1,895

COMMUNITY OUTREACH



The Sierra Madre Fire Department prioritizes proactive community engagement as a key part of public safety and disaster preparedness. Through ongoing outreach, the Department provides residents with practical education on fire safety, wildfire risk reduction, emergency preparedness, CPR, and first aid. Fire personnel visit public and private schools throughout the City to deliver age-appropriate safety presentations, host station tours, and offer interactive demonstrations that promote prevention, early reporting, and personal responsibility.

Outreach extends beyond schools into neighborhood-level engagement. The Department participates in citywide events and partners with local organizations to promote home hardening, defensible space, evacuation planning, and enrollment in emergency notification systems. During National Fire Prevention Week, SMFD collaborates with the Sierra Madre Public Library and regional partners to host events such as the Big Pumpkin Smash and the annual Fire Prevention Festival. Through consistent communication, social media outreach, and in-person interaction, the Department strengthens community resilience and ensures residents are informed and prepared before emergencies occur.

COMMUNITY
EVENT

15

STATION
TOUR

15

SOCIAL MEDIA
FOLLOWER

5,000+

TOTAL
ENGAGEMENT

6,000+

COMMUNITY OUTREACH



EATON FIRE

ONE YEAR AFTER

The Eaton Fire marked a turning point for the Sierra Madre Fire Department and our community. One year later, the department has deliberately shifted from response-focused operations to a more balanced model that places prevention and long-term community resilience at the forefront of our work

THE EATON FIRE BEGAN ON JANUARY 7, 2025, DURING EXTREME SANTA ANA WIND CONDITIONS AND QUICKLY SPREAD INTO THE WILDLAND-URBAN INTERFACE ABOVE SIERRA MADRE. THE FIRE BURNED FOR 24 DAYS AND WAS FULLY CONTAINED ON JANUARY 31, SCORCHING MORE THAN 14,000 ACRES. IT DESTROYED 14 HOMES AND 25 OTHER STRUCTURES AND CAUSED SIGNIFICANT DAMAGE TO THE SIERRA MADRE HISTORICAL WILDERNESS AREA AND THE MOUNT WILSON TRAIL.



Strengthening Fire Prevention and Defensible Space

In the year since the Eaton Fire, SMFD has significantly expanded its fire prevention and hazard abatement efforts, with a particular focus on Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone (VHFHSZ) neighborhoods.

Key efforts include:

- Conducting thorough defensible space inspections in hillside and canyon areas, emphasizing vegetation clearance, access, and home hardening in accordance with state Fire Hazard Severity Zone mapping and local code.
- Strengthening brush abatement compliance through consistent follow-up inspections, timely correction notices, and close coordination with Code Enforcement, with more than 1,500 defensible space inspections completed in 2025.
- Actively pursuing grant funding to support green waste disposal and fuel reduction, including community chipper events and contracted fuel-reduction work in foothill areas.

Working with City leadership to develop and justify an additional fire prevention-focused position to support inspections, plan review, and community risk reduction

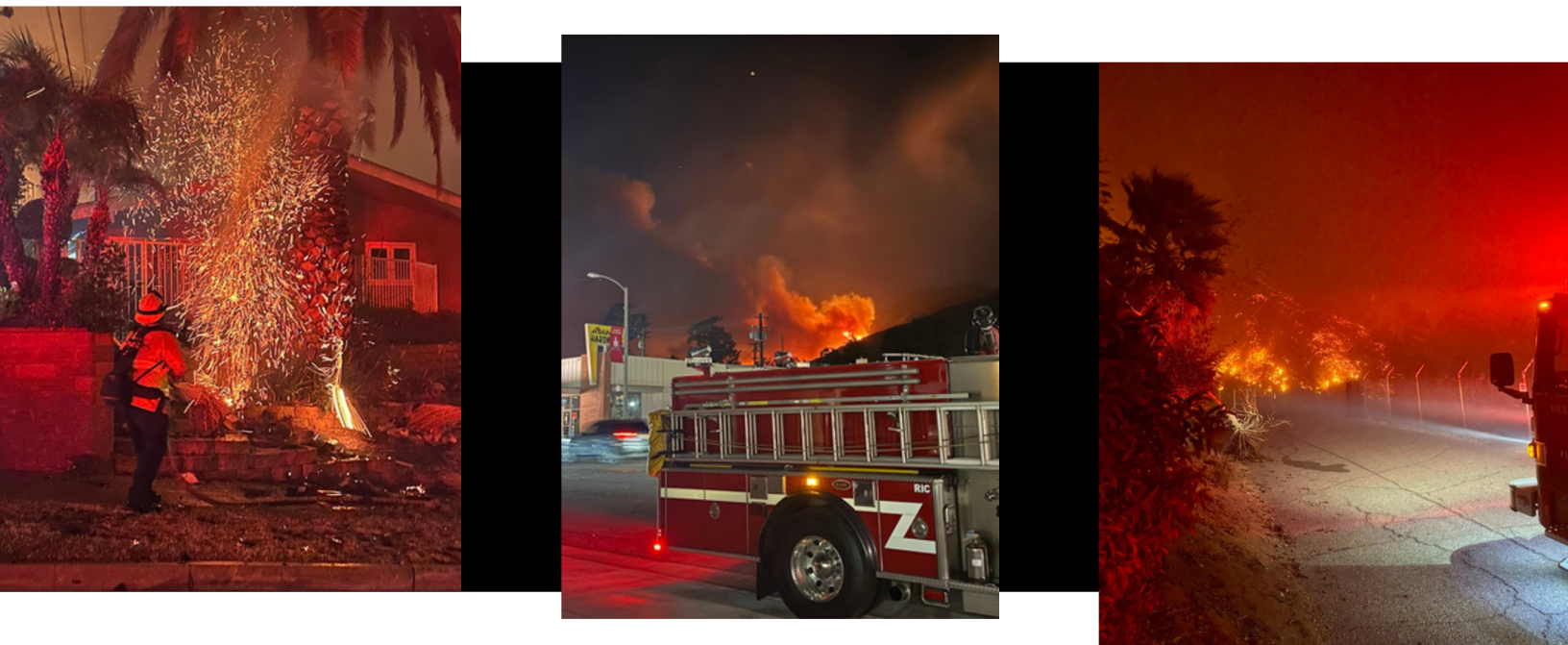
Investing in Community Risk Reduction and Partnerships

SMFD has initiated efforts to re-establish and actively support the Sierra Madre Fire Safe Council as a resident-driven partner in fuel reduction, home hardening education, and grant-funded mitigation projects. Community outreach efforts have been expanded through neighborhood block captain initiatives to strengthen two-way communication, preparedness, and coordination before and during emergencies. Public education has also increased, with focused messaging on wildfire risk, post-fire flood and debris-flow hazards, and alerting tools such as Nixle, Genasys Protect, and Smart911, integrated into community events including the Public Safety Open House and the Annual Fire Prevention Festival. In addition, collaboration with the City's CERT program has been strengthened to support evacuation readiness, sandbag operations, and neighborhood preparedness, particularly in burn-scar and debris-flow-prone areas.

EATON FIRE ONE YEAR AFTER

, the Sierra Madre Fire Department is deliberately aligning operational and outreach improvements with major citywide planning efforts. Eaton Fire impact data, hazard rankings, and community feedback are being incorporated into the City's 2025 Hazard Mitigation Plan, which identifies wildfire, flood, landslide, and power outage as high-priority hazards for Sierra Madre. At the same time, After Action Review findings from critical incidents such as the Eaton Fire are being used to refine pre-fire plans, update target hazard lists, and track corrective actions for future large-scale incidents.

At the one-year mark, the City and SMFD are also pursuing grant funding to develop a comprehensive Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) for Sierra Madre. The CWPP will conduct a detailed wildfire risk assessment that incorporates updated Fire Hazard Severity Zones, topography, fuels, and access constraints in the wildland-urban interface, and it will identify and prioritize fuel reduction and home hardening projects in key areas such as canyon corridors, unprotected watersheds, and primary evacuation routes. The plan will further strengthen evacuation planning and public warning strategies by integrating lessons from the Eaton Fire's multi-zone evacuation operations and the subsequent flood-related evacuations, while positioning Sierra Madre to compete more effectively for future implementation grants by linking projects to measurable risk reduction and benefit-cost outcomes. More than a technical document, the CWPP is envisioned as a community-shaped roadmap guided by local experience, expert analysis, and broad public input, representing a shared investment in the safety of our homes, our open spaces, and our community's long-term resilience.



A Community Effort

None of this progress would be possible without the sustained support of Sierra Madre residents, community volunteers, and the City Council. Their engagement in public meetings, hazard mitigation surveys, budget decisions, and neighborhood preparedness efforts has enabled the department to move quickly from response and recovery to a stronger, prevention-focused posture after the Eaton Fire.

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<https://www.sierramadreca.gov/safety-resilience/fire-department/>

Contact Us

For emergencies, please dial 9-1-1

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