



CAL FIRE in cooperation with San Diego County Fire

# NEWS RELEASE



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## Local Agreement Expected to Improve Fire Safety

**El Cajon** – Although wildfire preparedness messaging is typically designed to provide helpful tips for local residents and homeowners, it sometimes reveals the steps being taken by local fire agencies to expand cooperation that will help improve public safety should a fire erupt in our unincorporated communities. Recently, CAL FIRE/San Diego County Fire and the Valley Center Fire Protection District (VCFPD) both entered into a cooperative agreement that is intended to further improve defensible space inspection operations as well as emergency response capabilities for the Valley Center area.

Centered around a CAL FIRE developed tablet based program, the new agreement will permit VCFPD and CAL FIRE/San Diego County Fire Authority inspectors to more efficiently share data about properties including inspection status and results, property access considerations, address signage, and other fire code related items.

This new agreement is expected to put another tool into the hands of inspectors and responding engine companies by providing them with valuable information about a given property before they arrive at scene of an emergency. In addition to pre-arrival information the partnership is expected to:

- Enable the Valley Center Fire Protection District and CAL FIRE/San Diego County Fire to complete thorough defensible space inspections within the District's Direct Protection Area
- Enable CAL FIRE/San Diego County Fire Authority and VCFPD to more efficiently identify and correct local code violations
- Improve data tracking and sharing between both agencies

"It isn't always apparent to the public but cooperative agreements like this between neighboring fire protection agencies are the backbone of small communities like Valley Center and can frequently mean the difference between tragedy and success during an emergency." Said CAL FIRE/San Diego County Fire Authority Chief Tony Mecham.

"We look forward to working in concert with Cal Fire / San Diego County Fire on this vital community safety program. This is a direct reflection of the Mission and Core Values of the Fire Service and will make an immeasurable impact on the quality of life in Valley Center." Joe Napier, Fire Chief, Valley Center Fire Protection District.

For tips on what you can do to prepare your families and homes for the coming wildfires, please visit [ReadySanDiego.org](http://ReadySanDiego.org) and [ReadyForWildfire.org](http://ReadyForWildfire.org).

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