



## FIREFIGHTERS SHOW SKILLS AT WILDFIRE AWARENESS PRESS CONFERENCE

The Orange County Fire Authority (OCFA) in partnership with the Orange County Sheriff's Department (OCSD) along with Orange County Parks announced their joint efforts in preventing man-made, arson, and wildfires within Orange County while placing an emphasis on OCFA's Ready, Set, Go! program.

The press conference began with a welcome by Fire Chief Richter, OCFA Operations Chief Thomas outlined what firefighters are doing to be prepared and how they will fight wildfires within our area. Sheriff Sandra Hutchens spoke about enlisting community members to be the "eyes and ears" in preventing wildland fires, and to report suspicious activity.

As we head into the warm summer months, everyone



needs to realize that fire is a severe hazard for

those communities that are built close to nature and residents need to be involved in order to prevent future blazes. Working together with partners and residents are among our best prevention tools. We want "would-be" arsonists to know that they will be seen.

To show the public how we fight wildfires OCFA's hand crew demonstrated how they cut line, while Engine 8 showed their mobile pumping capabilities. An OCFA helicopter conducted a coordinated water drop and Duke 1 showcased "video downlink" from their helicopter, which is a valuable resource on wildfires.

This was an important event that kicked off Wildfire Awareness week, which is May 1 - 7. Residents can be prepared by visiting [www.readyssetgooc.org](http://www.readyssetgooc.org).





## PET FIRST AID AWARENESS MONTH!

Pet First Aid Awareness Month is a great opportunity for pet owners to brush up on tips to keep their animals safe and healthy as we head into spring and summer. We gathered this information from the Red Cross at [www.redcross.org](http://www.redcross.org) or call 1-800-RED-CROSS.

**Heat stroke** is one of the most common problems pets face in the warmer weather when they are not yet used to the warm temperatures. Pet owners should remember that the inside of a car can quickly reach 120 degrees in warm weather and should not leave their animals in the car, even during short trips. This can quickly lead to heat stroke. The signs of heat stroke include:

- Heavy panting and being unable to calm down, even when lying down.
- The pet's gums may be brick red, they may have a fast pulse rate, or may not be able to get up.



If someone suspects their pet has heat stroke, they should take the pet's temperature rectally. If the temperature is above 105 degrees Fahrenheit, they should cool the animal down. The easiest way to do this is by using the water hose. Stop cooling the animal when the temperature reaches 103 degrees. Bring the pet to the veterinarian immediately as heat stroke can lead to severe organ dysfunction and damage.

Some plants and flowers can be hazardous. For instance, many lilies are very poisonous to cats. Visit [www.aspc.org/pet-care/poison-control/](http://www.aspc.org/pet-care/poison-control/) to find out which plants and flowers are poisonous to animals. If someone thinks their animal is ill or may have ingested a poisonous substance, they should contact their veterinarian.

Pet owners can follow these important steps to help keep their pet healthy:

- Give pets plenty of exercise.
- Make sure they have plenty of fresh, cool water.
- Make sure they get regular yearly checkups with their veterinarian, and are up-to-date on vaccines, especially rabies.
- Keep dogs on leashes outside.
- Know how to perform CPR and provide basic first aid until veterinary care is available.

Don't forget to include pets in planning for emergencies in your home or neighborhood:

- Make plans to take your pets with you if you have to evacuate.
- Most Red Cross shelters cannot accept pets because of health and safety concerns and other considerations. Know which friends, relatives, hotels, and boarding facilities that will accept pets in an emergency.
- Assemble an easy-to-carry kit with emergency supplies for pets:
  - Leashes, harnesses, and/or carriers
  - Food, drinking water, bowls, manual can opener
  - Medications and copies of medical records
  - Current photos of pets





## RECRUITS GRADUATE FROM FIRE ACADEMY 38

Thirty-four men with various backgrounds, previous job experiences, diverse family lives, and collegiate and professional sports experience marched into the OCFA drill grounds at their graduation ceremony on May 1st. The hour-long ceremony, that included speeches by Chairman Kelley and Fire Chief Richter culminated with an action-packed drill that showcased what the recruits have learned in the past few months. From firefighters cutting metal with chainsaws to rappelling down the tower, each recruit had a specific task to conduct in their live fire exercise. As the recruits head out to their first day on the job, they take with them a wealth of experience that was imparted on them during their 16-week journey.







Orange County Fire Authority

*On the Front Line*

## LEARN THE ABC'S OF WATER SAFETY

The hot summer months are upon us and now is the time when more people are gravitating toward the water. Children drown without a sound, learning the ABC's of pool safety could help prevent this senseless tragedy. Drowning is the nation's number one killer of children under the age of 5 and it's the second leading cause of death from unintentional injuries for ages 1 to 14. The majority of these accidents occur in residential swimming pools and spas, but we are seeing an increase in drownings at community pools. The OCFA along with the other fire agencies support the ABC's of pool safety. They include:

**"A"- Adult Supervision:** It is important that the "water watcher" is somebody who is capable of swimming. Try to have more than one water watcher, and make sure that there is a phone nearby to call 9-1-1 in an emergency.

**"B"- Barriers:** You should have multiple layers of protection such as safety covers, door alarms, gate alarms, and motion detectors to warn you of possible problems. On toilets you can purchase a toilet latch so that children cannot lift the cover.

**"C"- Classes:** Learning CPR is very, very important. What is also important is learn to swim classes for children. Lastly, stay calm when calling 911 and make sure to clearly and calmly state the information and listen for instructions. Inform your children of the dangers and of water safety rules.

One last thought, drownings happen not only in pools and oceans, but also in areas such as bathtubs, mop buckets, toilets, and even in standing water as shallow as 2 feet. They also happen year round! Please be diligent not to have unattended children around the water. Looking away for just a few seconds could be worth a lifetime of regret.



### OCFA OFFERS CHILDHOOD DROWNING PREVENTION & WATER SAFETY CLASSES

OCFA offers drowning prevention and water safety classes for children and adults, featuring *Stewie the Duck* - a fun and colorful book – along with instruction from an Education Specialist. For more information or to schedule a class, contact the Community Relations and Public Information Section at (714) 573-6200.



## WILDFIRE AWARENESS IT'S YOUR PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY!

Orange County's long, hot, and dry summers make us vulnerable to severe wildfire conditions. It's not a matter of "if" but "when" the next major wildfire could happen. That's why the most important person in protecting your life and property is not the firefighter, but yourself! May is the perfect time to "get ready!" You can do this through advanced planning and preparation.

In Orange County, wildfires are fueled by dry vegetation and driven by hot, dry winds, making them extremely dangerous and difficult to control. It is important to take every precaution to help protect you and your property from wildfire, because firefighting resources are stretched thin during wind driven events. Many residents have built their homes and landscaped without fully understanding the impact that could result from a wildfire. Few have adequately prepared their families for a quick evacuation, and many don't know the potential consequences of choosing to ignore an evacuation order until it is too late.

This year's Wildfire Awareness Week Theme of, "Ready, Set, Go!" emphasizes the importance of being Ready – Prepare your home; Set – Prepare your family; Go – Leave early! Take the steps necessary to protect you, your family, property, and community from a devastating wildfire. For more information, visit [www.readysetgooc.org](http://www.readysetgooc.org).







## HELP PREVENT CHILD SPORT RELATED INJURIES

Participation of children in organized and informal sports continues to grow. Nearly three quarters of U.S. households with school-age children have at least one child who plays organized sports.

Sports participation is beneficial to children in many ways. It can improve physical fitness, coordination, self-discipline and teamwork, as well as promote a sense of personal satisfaction and accomplishment.

However, growth in sports participation has contributed to an increase in sports related injuries. The risk of physical injury is inherent in sports participation. Furthermore, children are more susceptible to these injuries because they are still growing and gaining motor and cognitive skills. Most organized sport-related injuries occur during practice rather than games.

Did you know that each year, more than 3.5 million children ages 14 years and under receive medical treatment for sports injuries. More than 90% of sport-related concussions occur without the child losing consciousness. The most common types of sport-related injuries in children are sprains, muscle strains, bone or growth plate injuries, repetitive motion injuries, and heat-related illness. The four activities with the most injuries to bones and muscles include bicycling, basketball, football, and roller sports.

Before any type of sports activity, make sure your child is hydrated and that they stretch their muscles. Proper warm up and conditioning can prevent minor strains and sprains.



## ARE YOU READY FOR A DISASTER?

More than three-quarters of Orange County residents are aware that emergency preparedness is important. Yet, most have made little, if any, actual preparations! What about you? Are you ready?

From the Yorba Linda fires to the Laguna Beach landslides to the ever-present threat of earthquakes, our county continuously faces emergency situations. We know that the next emergency is coming. We just don't know when or what kind it will be. But we can – and must – prepare now for the next emergency.

Being prepared can reduce the fear, anxiety, and losses that accompany disasters. Communities, families, and individuals should know what to do in the event of an earthquake and where to seek shelter during a fire. They should be ready to evacuate their homes and take refuge in public shelters, and know how to care for their basic medical needs. Making an emergency kit, having an escape plan, and practicing the plan will alleviate stress associated with disasters.

Every family should be ready to be self-sufficient for at least three to seven days. This may mean providing for your own shelter, first aid, food, water, and sanitation. Taking pre-emergency precautions such as flood proofing your surroundings, securing items that might shake loose in an earthquake, and having an extensive kit can reduce the impact of disasters. For more information on getting ready visit [www.readyoc.org](http://www.readyoc.org), [www.readyssetgooc.org](http://www.readyssetgooc.org), or [www.ocfa.org](http://www.ocfa.org).

You can also get messages via AlertOC, which is a mass notification system designed to keep residents and businesses informed of emergencies and certain community events. You can visit <http://bos.ocgov.com/alertoc/alertoc.asp> to sign up.