



HUNTINGTON LAKE FIRE DEPARTMENT

SUMMER 2023

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LETTER FROM THE CHIEF



As I enter my second year as your fire chief, I want to thank you for your support and welcome. Born and raised in Kingsburg, I really appreciate the small-town community feel of Huntington Lake. Your hard work at creating defensible spaces and being alert to fire hazards goes a long way to protecting yourself and everyone at the Lake. One of my goals this year is to bring on more volunteers that can respond to medical calls. If you're not too sure about battling a fire, but you have the background to help someone experiencing a medical emergency, let's talk. Email me at chief@hlvfd.org. Be safe, Larry Day

PANCAKE BREAKFAST & SILENT AUCTION

JULY 2nd, 2023
8:00am—11:00am

China Peak Mountain Resort

On Sunday July 2nd, our famous Pancake Breakfast will again include the HLVFD's Annual Silent Auction. Last year we auctioned off 96 items donated by our wonderful community and local businesses in Huntington, Shaver Lake, Prather and the Valley. It's fun for the entire family. Keep your eye out for our Silent Auction Flyer with items to be auctioned and directions on time and place! We are grateful to China Peak for hosting this event. You will enjoy great pancakes, an opportunity to go for a ride on Gary Castro's Antique fire engine! (If you would like to donate for the auction, please contact Phyllis Thomas @ (818) 324-0301 or pumpkinthomas7@gmail.com)

HUNTINGTON LAKE UPDATE

Over the last several seasons we have all wished and prayed for more snow. All of those wishes, each and every one of them, seem to have been answered at once. We have received lots and lots of snow! As of March 30th, China Peak reports receiving 546" of snow at the base of the mountain this year! Rest assured, as all the snow melts and summer begins, your fire department will be ready to respond to anything that occurs on or around the lake.

VOLUNTEER TODAY!

Huntington Lake Volunteer Fire Department is a 100% volunteer force that is 100% supported by your donations. Your continued support has helped us become one of the best volunteer departments in the Sierras, if not the state. We at HLVFD are always looking for quality, motivated individuals to help. We would be happy to talk to you about becoming a first responder, but our needs go beyond waving from a big red engine. We also need help with writing and managing grants, database systems creation and management. Equipment and station maintenance would be a great volunteer role for those mechanically inclined and would help us immensely. If none of these roles seem to fit the bill for you, smiling faces to man our booth at events are a big help, as are monetary donations! Let us know if you'd like to help!

IMPORTANT INFORMATION WHEN CALLING 911

In order to facilitate a fast response from 911 you need to supply the appropriate information. *Please post this information, for yourself and for your visitor, at every cabin/condo to ensure that responding units receive the correct information.*

Example:
12345 Huntington Vista Road
Home Creek Tract, lot #999



Take care when entering your cabins! If you smell propane call 911 and leave the area.

A MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

It is with great pleasure that we reach out to you through this newsletter to highlight the outstanding work and commitment of our local fire department. As the board of the Huntington Lake Volunteer Fire Department, we are honored to serve alongside the brave men and women who make up our team, and we take great pride in their accomplishments. Our fire department has been dedicated to serving the Huntington Lake community for over 50 years, and we believe that this community service is at the heart of what we do. We are committed to ensuring the safety and well-being of our residents, and we work tirelessly to ensure that we are always prepared to respond to any emergency situation. As you know, Huntington Lake experienced record snowfall this year. This challenging weather presented unique difficulties for our local cabin owners and the fire department alike. Between the Creek Fire and the heavy snowfall, many in our community are currently in the process of rebuilding their cabins. As I lost my own cabin to the Creek Fire, I know on a personal level that the rebuilding process can be difficult and time-consuming, but we want to assure you that our fire department is here to support you every step of the way. We want to take this opportunity to express our sincere gratitude for the generous donations that we have received from our community. These donations have enabled us to purchase new equipment and gear, and they have helped to ensure that our firefighters have the tools and resources that they need to do their jobs safely and effectively. We are humbled by the support that we have received, and we promise to continue working hard to earn your trust and confidence. In conclusion, we want to thank you, the members of our community, for your continued support and for the trust that you place in our fire department. Together, let's make our community a safer and better place for all. Steve Soares, President

CHIMNEY SAFETY & CLEANING

Not many things are more relaxing than sitting by crackling fire with your favorite beverage. Before you light up that fireplace, however, think about the last time the chimney was cleaned and inspected. Chimney cleaning should be done regularly, as soot buildup can catch fire and damage the chimney and/or could cause the whole building to burn down. With modern technology, chimney cleaning entails more than running a brush down the chimney and vacuuming. Now a video inspection of the chimney should occur. Most buildings at the Lake are 50 to 100 years old. Things shift, move and deteriorate over time, changes which may not be visible to the naked eye. Be fire safe. Protect yourself and the Huntington Lake community by getting your chimney cleaned and inspected.

In addition to having your chimney cleaned, ensure that snow is not blocking the chimney before you start a fire. The heat from a fire will not melt heavy snow covering a chimney stack. At best, it could lead to a cabin or condo full of smoke. The worst case scenario, however, is that the chimney may be partially blocked, meaning that the visible smoke could leave, but harmful carbon monoxide gas could remain in the structure. Everyone should have working smoke detectors and should also have a properly installed carbon monoxide detector (note: proper installation is NOT on the ceiling)! This should not be an optional item when you have gas appliances or a fireplace.

EQUIPMENT UPDATES:

HLVFD is currently experiencing a "best-by date" dilemma. Just like that can of food in your cabin, our firefighting gear ("turnouts") and our breathing devices that we use when fighting vehicle and structure fires have labels with "best-by dates." The cost to fully equip a firefighter with turnouts and the breathing air devices (called an SCBA – self-contained breathing apparatus) is about \$9,500. Unfortunately, most of our gear has met its best-by date. To update our gear for the entire department will cost us about \$110,000. This is an additional cost beyond our normal operating expenses. If you decide to help support us by donating enough to equip two or more firefighters we will give you a unique personalized gift as our thank you for going above and beyond to keep your department as the best around.

Your Annual Fire Prevention Checklist

- Property cleared of fire fuels
- Batteries in the smoke detectors working
- Fire extinguishers fully charged & date validated
- Chimney cleaned within the last 5 years

WATER SAFETY

The hundreds of inches of snow this year will result in a late spring and a summer with lots of water and snow melt. Creeks and waterfalls will be moving swiftly with large volumes of water. A creek that you may have been able to easily cross over the last several years, may this year be moving swiftly enough for you to lose your footing and get swept into the current. The results may be a catastrophic end to your enjoyment of the Sierras. Please exercise caution when crossing creeks and streams. Be extra careful around water features in burn scar areas as they are more prone to mud slides and uncharacteristic behavior.