

DISASTER AND FIRE SAFETY COMMISSION

REGULAR MEETING

September 25, 2024

7:00 PM

Fire Department Division of Training Classroom – 997 Cedar Street

Mayor's Appointee- Andy Katz

District 1 – Michael Wilson
District 2 – Weldon Bradstreet
District 3 – Todd Darling
District 4 – Robert Kinosian

District 5 – Shirley Dean
District 6 – Greg Murphy
District 7 – Vacant
District 8 – Theo Gordon

AGENDA

Preliminary Matters

Call to Order

Public Present:

Approval of the Agenda

Discussion –

Agenda approved as amended by Acclamation or Vote?

Public Comment on Non-Agenda Matters

public speakers:

1. Chairperson's Report –
2. Fire Department Staff Report*

REGULAR AGENDA MATTERS *All Regular agenda Matters are for discussion and possible action.*

3. Action:

Approve Minutes of August 7, 2024

Recommendation: Approve the draft minutes of the August 7, 2024 regular meeting.

Written Material: August 7, 2024 Draft Minutes

Presentation:

Motion to approve:

Second:

Vote: Ayes: Nays: Abstain:

4. Discussion/Action: Opt-Out Discussion (Murphy)

Recommendation: Discuss Opt-Out of AC Alert

Written Material: Resident Connection Life Safety Database

Presentation: PowerPoint Presentation

Motion to approve:

Second:

Vote: Ayes: Nays: Abstain:

5. Discussion: Update on Non-Ductile Retrofits (Murphy)

Recommendation: None

Written Material: None

6. Work Group Reports

Receive reporting on recent activities by the following work groups:

- Plan & Budget Oversight
- Home Hardening
- Wildland Urban Interface
- Safe Passages
- Community Outreach

7. Future Agenda Items and Next Steps

Adjournment

Motion to Adjourn:

Second:

By acclamation at [TIME]:

This meeting will be conducted in accordance with the Brown Act, Government Code Section 54953.

Any member of the public may attend this meeting. Questions regarding this matter may be addressed to Keith May, kmay@berkeleyca.gov 510-981-5508.

Communications to Berkeley boards, commissions or committees are public record and will become part of the City's electronic records, which are accessible through the City's website. Please note: E-mail addresses, names, addresses, and other contact information are not required but, if included in any communication to a City board, commission, or committee, will become part of the public record. If you

do not want your e-mail address or any other contact information to be made public, you may deliver communications via U.S. Postal Service or in person to the secretary of the relevant board, commission, or committee. If you do not want your contact information included in the public record, please do not include that information in your communication. Please contact the secretary to the relevant board, commission, or committee for further information.

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~~~~~  
I hereby certify that the agenda for this regular/special meeting of the Berkeley City's Disaster and Fire Safety Commission was posted at the front of the Division of Training, 997 Cedar Street, as well as on the City's website, three days prior to the scheduled Commission meeting.

SECRETARY SIGNATURE

*Keith May*      9/19/2024

## DFSC Staff Report

September 25, 2024

### 1. Measure FF Monthly Report

#### a. Budget Overview –

b. Quarter 1 (July, August, September) report due in November

Quarter 2 (October, November, December) report due in February

Quarter 3 (January, February, March) report due in May

Quarter 4 (April, May, June) End of Year Report **due in October**

#### i. Program Review

- **WUI Interns** – The Interns provide Berkeley Fire Department with a trained, mobile and mission-specific workforce that is principally assigned to monitor vegetative hazardous fuel on or near structures, collect data, and identify reduction activities
    - **Updates:** We graduated 11 new interns in June that brought our total number of working inspectors to 16. We are doing some fuel mitigation on public land, such as parks, paths, etc. The WUI team spent three days at the Berkeley’s Tuolumne camp doing inspections and fuel mitigation. The focus was on the light flashy fuels that abound due to the little tree cover following the Rim Fire.
  - **Wildfire Prevention / Mitigation – Vegetation Management Inspections** –
    - Updates:** We have soft-launched the Eucalyptus Understory Cleanup for the addresses off of Wildcat, and look forward to expanding the program to the rest of the VHFDSZ in the coming weeks. We have also run our inspection process all the way to citation in Panoramic, and will be continuing that final step in the remaining zones through this year.
  - **Safe Passage** - The Fire Department has contracted with a vendor to help the City of Berkeley meet requirements outlined in SB 99, AB 747, and AB 1409, provide City with professional services in the areas of traffic and evacuation modeling and planning, given various evacuation and/or emergency response scenarios as determined by the City.
    - **Update:** No New Updates.
- #### ii. Implementation & Metrics
- **Outdoor Warning System** – No updates.

2. Measure GG Monthly Report
  - a. Budget Overview – No new update
  - b. Quarter 1 (July, August, September) report due in November  
Quarter 2 (October, November, December) report due in February  
Quarter 3 (January, February, March) report due in May  
Quarter 4 (April, May, June) End of Year Report **due in October**
3. Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (LHMP):
  - a. **Update:** Staff has worked on incorporating all of the public comments into the Plan when appropriate. The plan has been submitted to Cal OES and FEMA. Once approved, staff will bring the Plan back to the Disaster and Fire Safety Commission and Planning Commission. We are hopeful to have the plan back from the Cal OES and FEMA in December or January.
4. Fire Facilities Master Plan (FMP): Berkeley Fire Department stations are undersized, in poor condition and in need of remodels or replacement. The Department initiated a long-term replacement planning process to better understand infrastructure needs. This process will provide the City leaders of today and tomorrow with actionable information ahead of future infrastructure bond measures. (*Measure FF has funded the study only*)
  - a. Update: **No new update**
5. Department Activities
  - a. **Fire Marshal:** Fire Marshal Steve Riggs retired from Berkeley Fire on September 14<sup>th</sup>. Steve has been an anchor of our Fire Prevention Division, known not only for his kindness but also for his encyclopedic memory and his unwavering commitment to applying the Fire Code with precision and fairness. He has been instrumental in every aspect of the Berkeley Municipal Code Adoption while serving as the Deputy Fire Marshal and finally as the Fire Marshal.  
After a lengthy recruitment process, Andrew “Drew” Whyte has joined our organization and started on September 16, 2024, as our new Fire Marshal. Drew has over 25 years of experience in the fire service. He was hired as a firefighter by the Austin (Texas) Fire Department in 1998 and then moved to San Jose Fire. After 15 years of experience in suppression, he moved into the Bureau of Fire Prevention, where he spent seven years in various roles. Then, for the past five years, he has been back in the firehouse as one of San Jose’s full time Arson Investigators and Peace Officers, during which time he conducted over 500 Origin and Cause investigations, wrote search warrants, effected field arrests, wrote substantial reports, testified in court and was an active member of the Santa Clara County Arson Task Force.
  - b. **Program Manager II (Street Trauma Prevention)**
    - i. We are working on completing the job description. There is an existing PM II recruitment, applications are being screened by HR.
  - c. **Emergency Medical Services –**
    - i. EMS 4 Academy candidates started the academy on September 16, 2024.

- ii. EMS 5 Academy is in the recruitment phase and we are hoping to start that academy in December.
    - d. **Honeywell** - Phoenix G2 Station Ring Down system went live on September 3<sup>rd</sup>. The alerting system is a key link between the city's dispatch center and responders throughout the city. Its purpose is to visually and audibly alert responders in the firehouses and on their portable radios of emergency incidents they are due to respond to. The legacy system was having problems and then the company went out of business, leaving us critically vulnerable with a failing system and no one to work on it.
    - e. **New K9 Team Wheeler:** Wheeler was originally a service dog in training at Dogs for Better Lives in Oregon where they train and place service dogs with deaf or hard-of-hearing adults or children diagnosed with autism. However, Wheeler was released from the program because of his exuberant personality and endless drive. DBL trainers felt that Wheeler was more suited for a disaster search career and through their ties with the Search Dog Foundation, he was flown to the SDF campus in Santa Paula, California. There he learned the search game quickly and showed he had what it takes to be a disaster search dog. When it was time to select a handler, he chose Alyssa Corsa by showing everyone that he would do anything for her. To be deployable as a Canine Search Team, Wheeler and Alyssa need to go through two tests. The first is the Foundation Skills Assessment. Passing this test qualifies them to take the next test, but it also makes them qualified to respond within the state. This past Wednesday, Wheeler and Alyssa passed their FSA with flying colors! Berkeley Fire now has two qualified Canine Search Teams in service – Team Wheeler and Team Topa. And with the current US&R roster, Berkeley Fire is the only Alameda County agency with disaster canine resources. Wheeler and Alyssa will now train for their final test to be qualified for national deployment with FEMA.
    - f. **The BEAR Unit:** The Fire Department was approved by City Council to launch a new program to address the high demands of 9-1-1 call volume in the City of Berkeley. We designed a medical unit staffed with a Physician Assistant and a Senior Paramedic to provide a better and more effective service to the community by adding the benefit of being able to deliver primary health care to patients without having to transport them to the emergency department.
      - i. The BEAR Unit went in-service on September 9<sup>th</sup> and is on-duty Monday – Thursdays from 8:00 am – 5:00 pm. The goal of this pilot is to reduce the impact of low acuity incidents on the system.
6. Grants
- a. **CalFIRE Wildfire Prevention Grant:** CalFIRE awarded Berkeley Fire Department a grant to help fund and expand our Defensible Space Resident Assistance Program (RAP) in the VHFHSZ over a three-year period to interrupt the contiguous vegetative fuel in these pathways and inhibit the transmission of wildfires. The RAP will provide financial assistance to Berkeley Hills residents who are low-income, senior citizens 65 years or

older, and those with physical disabilities to help achieve defensible space within Zone 0, Zone 1 and Zone 2 on their properties in compliance with State law and best practice.

- i. **Update:** Drafted, published, selected, and contracted with eight vegetation removal contractors for the Grizzly Peak work. CEQA report has been completed. We are developing a multi-phase communication strategy for outreach.
- b. **SAFER Grant:**
  - i. Our Standards of Coverage and Community Risk Assessment (SOC) outlined specific staffing enhancements that need to be made so the Department is staffed to respond to the urban risk model that the community now presents after the development that has occurred and is yet to come. This week FEMA announced a \$7.7m SAFER grant award that will allow us to up-staff three engine companies to four-person staffing for three years. Along with internal staffing reconfiguration that has allowed us to up-staff one engine and both truck companies, we will have met a substantial portion of the staffing recommendations in the SOC without impacting the General Fund.

7. Call Volume Report

| <b>Fire Department Report by California Incident Type</b>                                                                   |     |  |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|--|
| <b>August 2024</b>                                                                                                          |     |  |
| <b>Fires – including Encampment Fires</b> (structures, mobile properties, vegetation, rubbish, equipment, cooking, chimney, | 46  |  |
| <b>Encampment Fires</b> (structures, warming/cooking, debris)                                                               | 39  |  |
| <b>Explosion - no fire</b> (overpressure ruptures, explosions)                                                              | 3   |  |
| <b>Rescue &amp; EMS</b> (medical assist, vehicle accident                                                                   | 851 |  |
| <b>Hazardous Condition - no fire</b> (combustible spills/leaks, chemical release, radioactive condition, electrical wiring  | 59  |  |

Public

|                                                                                                                                   |              |  |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|--|
| problem, biological hazard, potential accident w/ building/aircraft/vehicles)                                                     |              |  |
| <b>Service Calls</b> (person in distress, water issue, smoke/odor problem, animal issue, public assist, cover assignment/standby) | 85           |  |
| <b>Good Intent</b> (canceled en-route, wrong location, nothing found, steam mistaken for smoke)                                   | 106          |  |
| <b>False Alarm Calls</b> (malicious, malfunction, unintentional, biohazard scare)                                                 | 183          |  |
| <b>Severe WX</b> (lightening, wind storms)                                                                                        | 0            |  |
| <b>Special Incidents</b> (citizen complaints)                                                                                     | 6            |  |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                                                                                                                      | <b>1,339</b> |  |
| <b>Apparatus Count</b>                                                                                                            |              |  |
|                                                                                                                                   | <b>3,117</b> |  |

**DFSC Action Tracker**

| Date of DFSC Action | Description                                                                                                                                                                                                                | Status                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|---------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>10/25/2023</b>   | Provide a recommendation to City Council on the development of a plan that includes a feasibility study and identification of funding sources for constructing an emergency secondary access/egress road on Panoramic Hill | At the 9/10/2024 Regular City Council Meeting. Fire Department to reach out to other impacted landowners to determine interest in pursuing, and coordinate costs sharing to conduct a feasibility study to identify a safe secondary evacuation and access route for the access impaired Panoramic neighborhood. |
|                     |                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |

# MONTHLY DASHBOARD | August 2024

Prepared for the Disaster and Fire Safety Commission by the Berkeley Fire Department



## Defensible Space Inspections

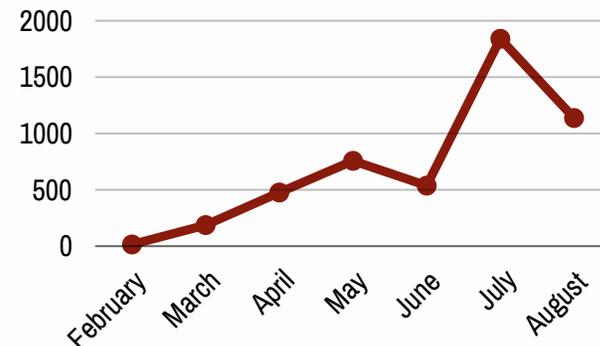
### Significant Statistics

### Year to Date - 2024

**5,092** Total Inspections  
**1,854** Violations  
**537** Re-Inspections  
**0** Citations  
**566** Resolved Violations

**1,270** Inspections    **106** Re-inspections  
**943** Discoveries    **201** Resolved Items  
**370** Violations    **173** Resolved Violations  
**0** Citations    **27%** Full Inspection Access

### Inspections Access Over Time



## Open Vegetation Program

### Chipping

2024 Program Data

**381** Cubic yards of flammable material removed  
**147** Completed pickups city-wide  
**19** Weeks Completed  
**82** % of surveyed residents stated that the chipping program caused them to remove vegetation on their property

## Eucalyptus Understory Program

2024 Program Data



**13**

# of applications



**7**

Properties Scheduled



**2**

Properties Completed

## FireWise

2024 Program Data

### Application Status

**9** FireWise Communities (Recognized)  
**4** Pending Applications  
**17** In-Progress Applications

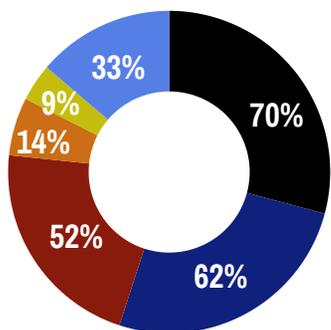
## Special Announcements

**Eucalyptus Program-** The Wildland Division extended an invitations to 8 neighborhoods in Fire Zone 3 to participate in the Eucalyptus Understory Program.

**RAP Grant -** The Berkeley Fire Department was awarded a \$1 million grant to fund the Resident Assistance Program.

**Grizzly Peak-** Berkeley Fire will collaborate closely with the City of Berkeley Transportation Department to remove hazardous vegetation and enhance street safety on Marin Avenue. This will be the first treatment area utilizing the Grizzly Peak grant. Project start date will be announced soon.

### Types of Vegetation Removed by Residents



- Lower Tree Limbs
- Dead Vegetation
- Vegetation in Zone Zero
- Bamboo/Palms
- Cypress/Juniper
- Other

# DISASTER AND FIRE SAFETY COMMISSION

## REGULAR MEETING

August 7, 2024

7:00 PM

Fire Department Division of Training Classroom – 997 Cedar Street

Mayor's Appointee- Andy Katz

District 1 – Michael Wilson  
District 2 – Weldon Bradstreet  
District 3 – Todd Darling  
District 4 – Robert Kinosian

District 5 – Shirley Dean  
District 6 – Greg Murphy  
District 7 – Harrison Raine  
District 8 – Theo Gordon

### AGENDA

#### Preliminary Matters

##### Call to Order

*Meeting called to order at 7:02pm*

*Present:* Bradstreet, Murphy, Kinosian, Gordon, Katz (7:02), Darling (7:03)

*Absent:* Dean

*LOA:* Raine, Wilson

##### Approval of the Agenda

*Discussion –*

Motion to approve: Murphy

Second: Gordon

Vote: Ayes: Katz, Bradstreet, Darling, Kinosian, Murphy, Gordon

Nays: 0

Abstain:0

Approved by vote

**Public Comment on Non-Agenda Matters**

*2 public Comments.*

1. Chairperson’s Report – No Chair Report
2. Fire Department Staff Report\*

**REGULAR AGENDA MATTERS** *All Regular agenda Matters are for discussion and possible action.*

- 3. Action:** Approve Minutes of June 26, 2024  
**Recommendation:** Approve the draft minutes of the June 26, 2024 regular meeting.  
**Written Material:** June 26, 2024 Draft Minutes

**Presentation:**

1 Public Comment

Motion to approve: Katz

Second: Darling

Vote: Ayes: Katz, Bradstreet, Darling, Kinosian, Murphy, Gordon

Nays: 0

Abstain:0

Approved by vote

- 4. Action:** Discuss and approve DFSC feedback on LHMP (Bradstreet)  
**Recommendation:** Submit Feedback to [Mitigation@berkeleyca.gov](mailto:Mitigation@berkeleyca.gov)

**Written Material:**

**Presentation:**

Motion to approve as amended: Katz

Second: Gordon

Vote: Ayes: Katz, Bradstreet, Darling, Kinosian, Murphy, Gordon

Nays: 0

Abstain:0

Approved by vote

- 5. Discussion/Action:** Changing registration with AC Alert to an “opt out” System (Murphy)

**Recommendation:** 1. The DFSC proposes to the City Council that they

Recommend a change in the registration, testing, and operations of the AC Alert System to the Alameda County Board of Supervisors.

The changes the DFSC would like the City to propose to the Alameda County Board of Supervisors are similar to the policy recommendations proposed by the Contra Costa County Civil Grand Jury to the Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors on May 31, 2024.

2. Form a working group to draft a Council Report based on the recommendation discussion.

3. And, to draft a Memo from the DFSC to East Bay Wildfire Coalition of Governance.

**Written Material:**

1. Email of proposal to the DFSC from the Berkeley Fire Safe Council dated June 26, 2024

2. Attachment to the email of summary revised by the Berkeley Fire Safe Council from material originally Produced by Sheila Bana, Chair, West Contra Costa Fire Safe Council

3. Summary of recommendations from the Contra Costa Civil Grand Jury to the CCC Board of Supervisors dated May 31, 2024

**Presentation:**

Working Group formed – (Murphy)

1 Public Comment

*Motion to approve: Bradstreet*

*Second: Katz*

*Vote: Ayes: Katz, Bradstreet, Darling, Kinosian, Murphy, Gordon*

*Nays: 0*

*Abstain:0*

*Approved by vote*

**6. Work Group Reports**

Receive reporting on recent activities by the following work groups:

- Plan & Budget Oversight
- Home Hardening: Update from Murphy
- Wildland Urban Interface
- Safe Passages
- Community Outreach

7. Future Agenda Items and Next Steps

- Non-ductile concrete program
- Potential evacuation issues for tenants in FZ 2

**Adjournment**

Motion to approve: Bradstreet

Second: Gordon

Vote: Ayes: Katz, Bradstreet, Darling, Kinosian, Murphy, Gordon

Nays: 0

Abstain:0

Approved by vote at 8:06 pm

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SECRETARY SIGNATURE

Resident Connection



Extend your Community Lifelines by maximizing the Whole Community approach to emergency communications. When life safety communications matter most, reach your residents and businesses across landline, VoIP, and mobile phone numbers.



Deliver a Whole Community approach to emergency communications

Public safety and emergency management agencies need ways to maximize their reach when delivering life safety messages to their communities.

What is the challenge?

- + Landline emergency telephone databases have lost over 50% of residents due to mobile phone adoption.
- + Jurisdictions may struggle to drive subscriptions to resident notifications or see low opt-in and adoption rates.

Everbridge's **Resident Connection** provides public authorities with direct access to the largest localized database of US residential and business phone numbers for official life safety communications. The solution provides additional contact to your current Everbridge opt-in subscriber database to ensure maximum reach.

Resident Connection utilizes Everbridge's National Life Safety Database, which contains over **265 million** landlines, VoIP, **AND mobile phones** in the United States.

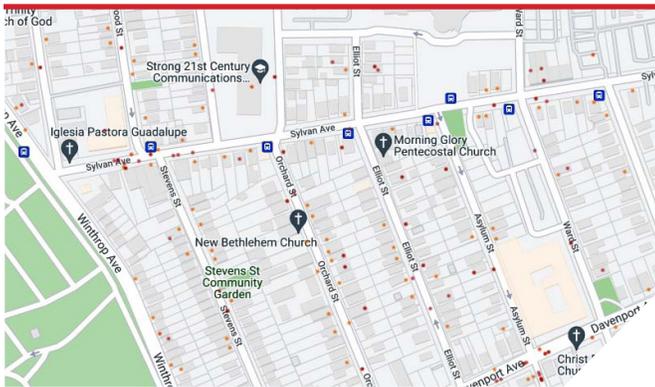
Enhancing your emergency communications by adding Resident Connection to your current opt-in subscriber database creates a more informed and aware community during public safety emergencies.



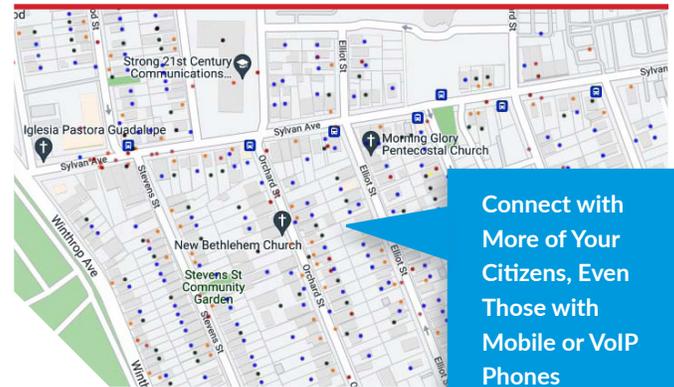
VISIT WWW.EVERBRIDGE.COM
CALL +1-818-230-9700

See How Resident Connection Increases Your Reach:

BEFORE RESIDENT CONNECTION



AFTER RESIDENT CONNECTION



Connect with More of Your Citizens, Even Those with Mobile or VoIP Phones

FEATURES AND CAPABILITIES

Expand Your Reach to More Residents and Businesses Instantly:

- + Resident Connection is an automated data feed added to an existing Everbridge account.
- + Geo-target communities for distribution of emergency communications and instantly know who, and how many residents you can notify.

Reach More by Landline, VoIP and Mobile Phones:

- + Reach beyond your opt-in and 911 databases.
- + Notify the right people for both emergency and non-emergency public safety communications
- + Leverage pre-loaded jurisdiction boundaries and POI data

- + Enable inclusions and exclusions area for targeted communications
- + Visualize selected contacts on a map before sending out communications

Get Reliable, Accurate and Secure Information for your Internal Stakeholders:

- + System safeguards built in to prevent non-emergency messages to be sent through channels that are only for “Imminent Threat to Life”
- + Contact database is refreshed monthly, for the most up to date contact information
- + Data is secure, protected and complies with FCC guidelines for usage



Let's Chat

Do you have questions? Would you like to know more about Critical Event Management? Get in touch or just call us at +1-818-230-9700 to learn more.

ABOUT EVERBRIDGE

Everbridge, Inc. (NASDAQ: EVBG) is a global software company that provides enterprise software applications that automate and accelerate organizations' operational response to critical events in order to Keep People Safe and Organizations Running™. Everbridge serves 8 of the 10 largest U.S. cities, 9 of the 10 largest U.S.-based investment banks, 47 of the 50 busiest North American airports, and 9 of the 10 largest U.S.-based health care providers. Everbridge is based in Boston with additional offices in 25 cities around the globe.

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City of Berkeley
Office of Emergency Services



Berkeley's Emergency Alerting Toolkit

Disaster and Fire Safety Commission

September 25, 2024



City of Berkeley

Office of Emergency Services



Agenda

- What is alert and warning?
- Alert and warning approach
- Berkeley's Alerting Toolkit:
 - Primary systems
 - System strengths



What is an alert and warning message?

	Alert & Warning Message	Public Information
Content	Protective action instruction for the message recipient to take, ex: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Evacuate• Shelter in place	Important information for the community.
Authority	Incident Commander, ex: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Fire Battalion Chief• Police Watch Commander• Health Officer	Public Information Officer



Berkeley's Alert & Warning Approach

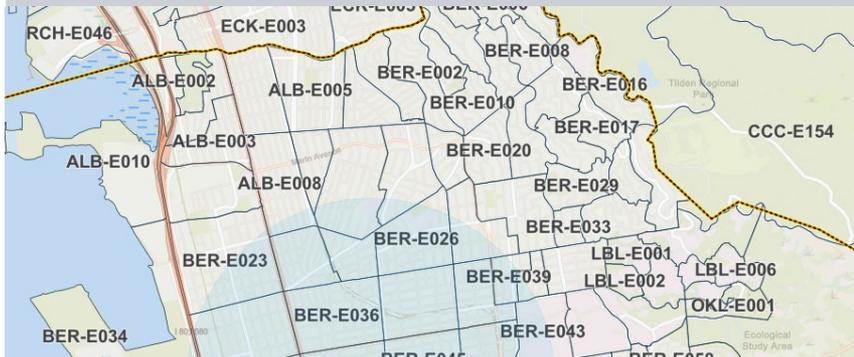
- Redundancy in **systems** and in **messages**
- Understand “milling” behavior
- Consistent messaging across multiple platforms
- Expect operational challenges during emergencies – do not rely on 1 technology



Berkeley's Alerting Toolkit:

Primary Systems

Berkeley Emergency Map



AC Alert



Outdoor Warning System



IPAWS





Berkeley Emergency Map

(aka Genasys Protect, aka Zonehaven)

genasys Protect
ZONENAVEN AWARE

Search

Fires

About

Download App

< Back

Zone
BER-E045
West of Martin Luther King Jr. Way. North of Bancroft. East of Sacramento. South of University Ave.

Status
NORMAL

No current knowledge of active incidents in your area.

CRITICAL NOTIFICATIONS

Never miss an alert, and receive critical notifications on the go with the Genasys Protect mobile app

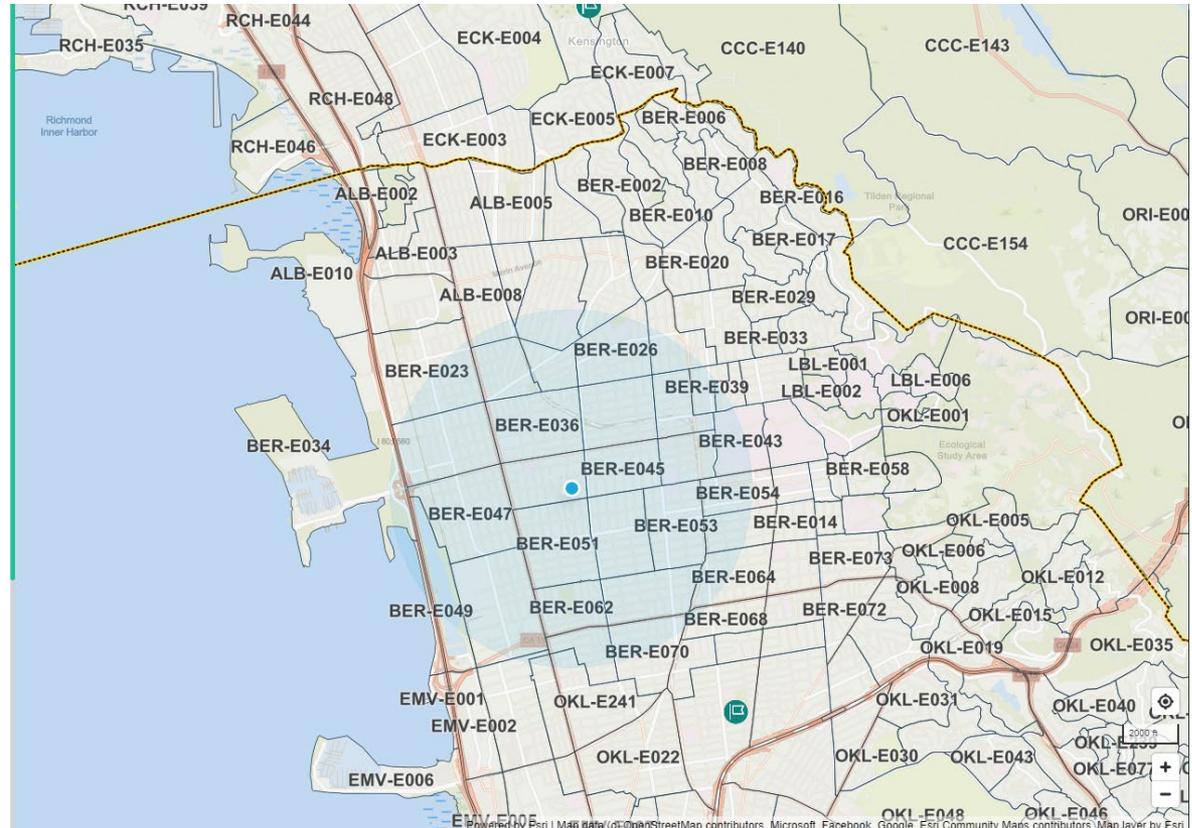
[Download app now](#)

ZONE INFORMATION

West of Martin Luther King Jr. Way. North of Bancroft. East of Sacramento. South of University Ave.

NORTH OF Bancroft Way
SOUTH OF University Avenue
EAST OF Sacramento Street
WEST OF Martin Luther King Jr Way

61.7°F
Cloudy





Berkeley Emergency Map

(aka Genasys Protect, aka Zonehaven)

Capabilities

- Online map
- Displays emergency information by zone (evacuation, open shelters)
- **New App** to notify users of changes to zone status
 - Up to 5 zones, and/or
 - Real-time tracking

Community Preparedness

- Bookmark [Protect.Genasys.com](https://protect.genasys.com)
- Download the Genasys Protect App



City of Berkeley

Office of Emergency Services



AC Alert

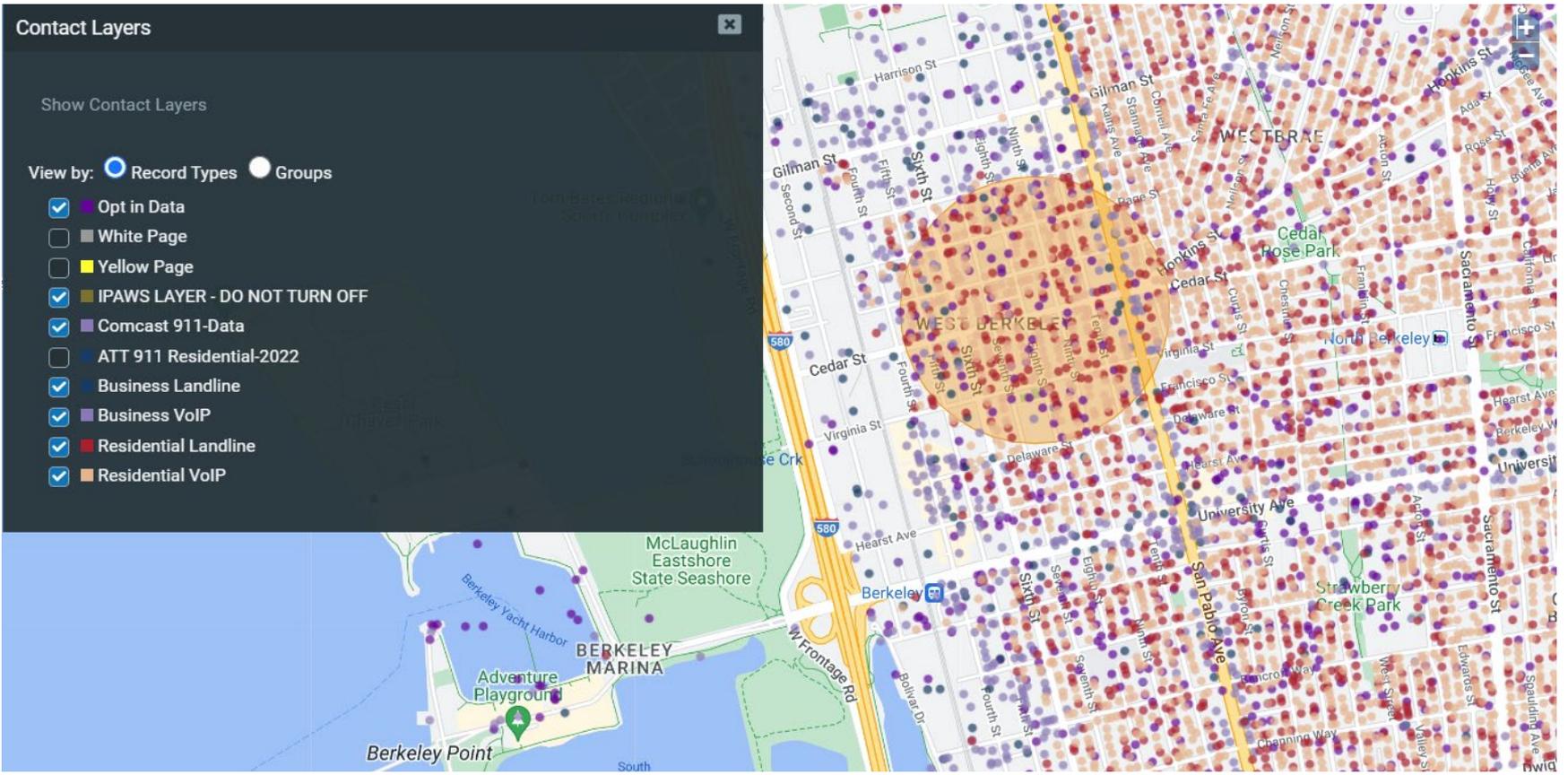
(aka Everbridge)

ACALERT

Alameda County's Emergency Alert & Notification System

Alameda - Albany - Berkeley - Dublin - Emeryville - Fremont - Hayward -
Livermore - Newark - Oakland - Piedmont

Pleasanton - San Leandro - Union City - Unincorporated Areas





AC Alert

(aka Everbridge)

Capabilities

- Countywide mass notification system
 - Voice alerts to phones
 - SMS text messages
 - Email
 - TTY/TDD messages
- System already includes hard line AT&T numbers

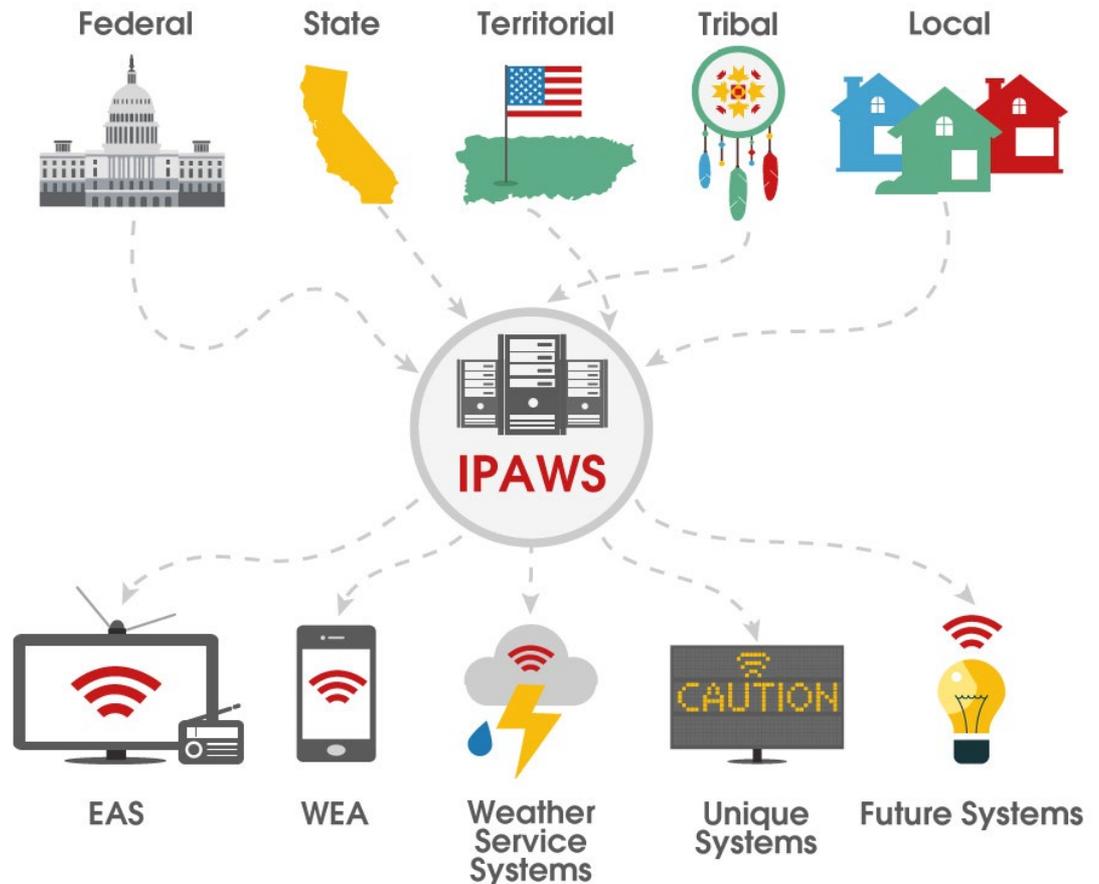
Community Preparedness

- Sign up for an account at ACAlert.org
 - Alerts to your mobile phone and email
 - Locations you care about



Integrated Public Alert & Warning System (IPAWS)

- Powerful, evolving technology
- Alerts likely to go beyond Berkeley borders
- Berkeley access is via Alameda County license

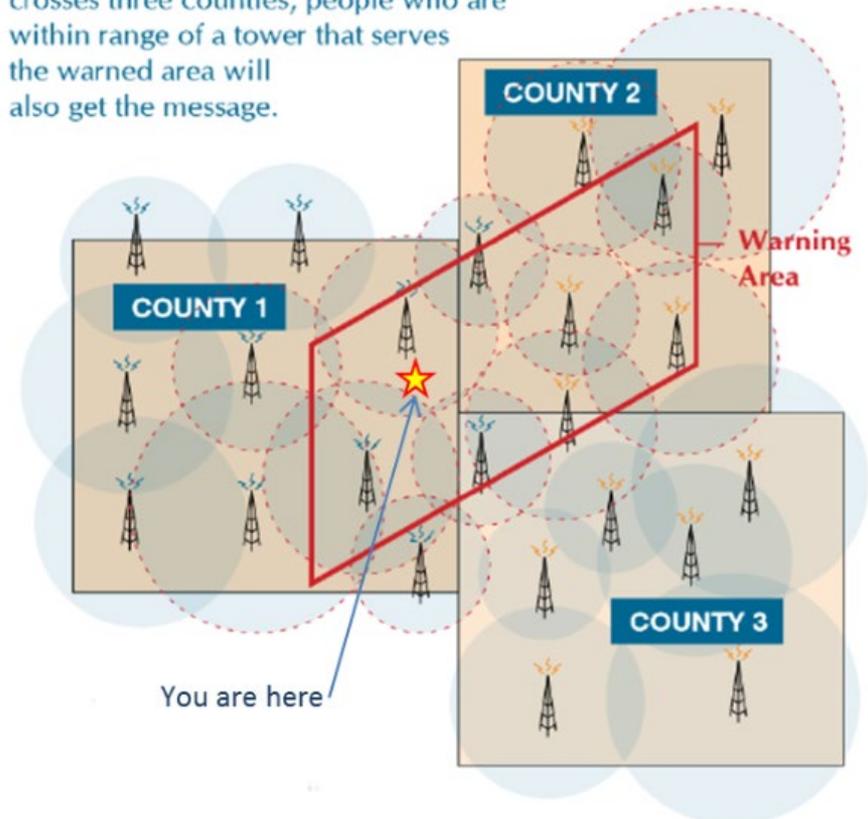




IPAWS: Wireless Emergency Alerts (WEA)

- Sent to smartphones based on real-time location
- Uses distinct alert tone
- Information is very limited (short text messages)
- No signup required

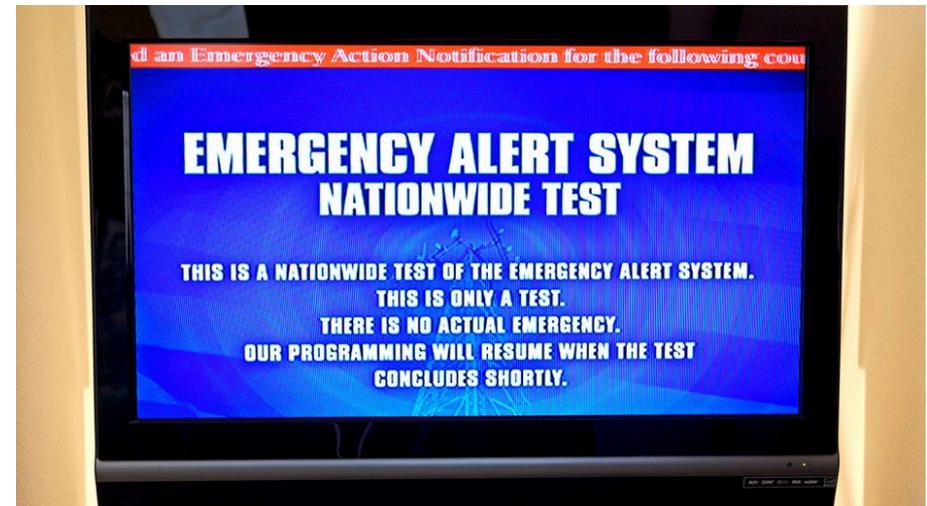
As this simplified illustration shows, when a warning is issued for a polygon that crosses three counties, people who are within range of a tower that serves the warned area will also get the message.





IPAWS: Emergency Alert System (EAS)

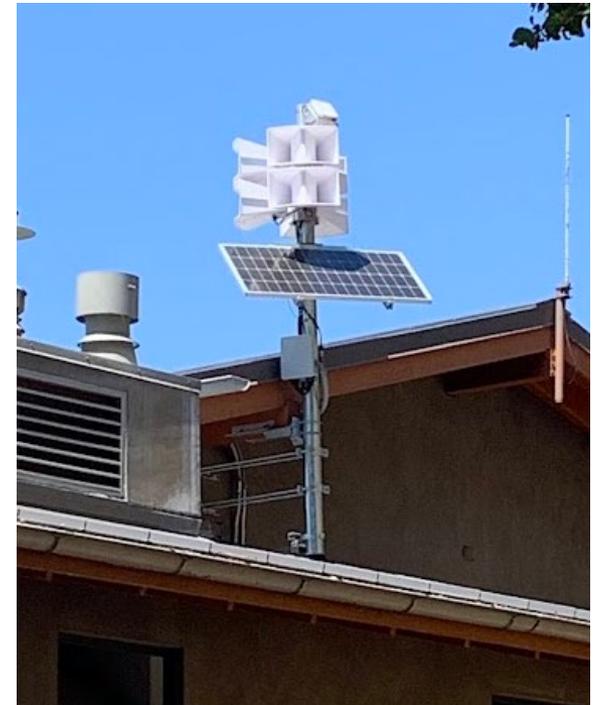
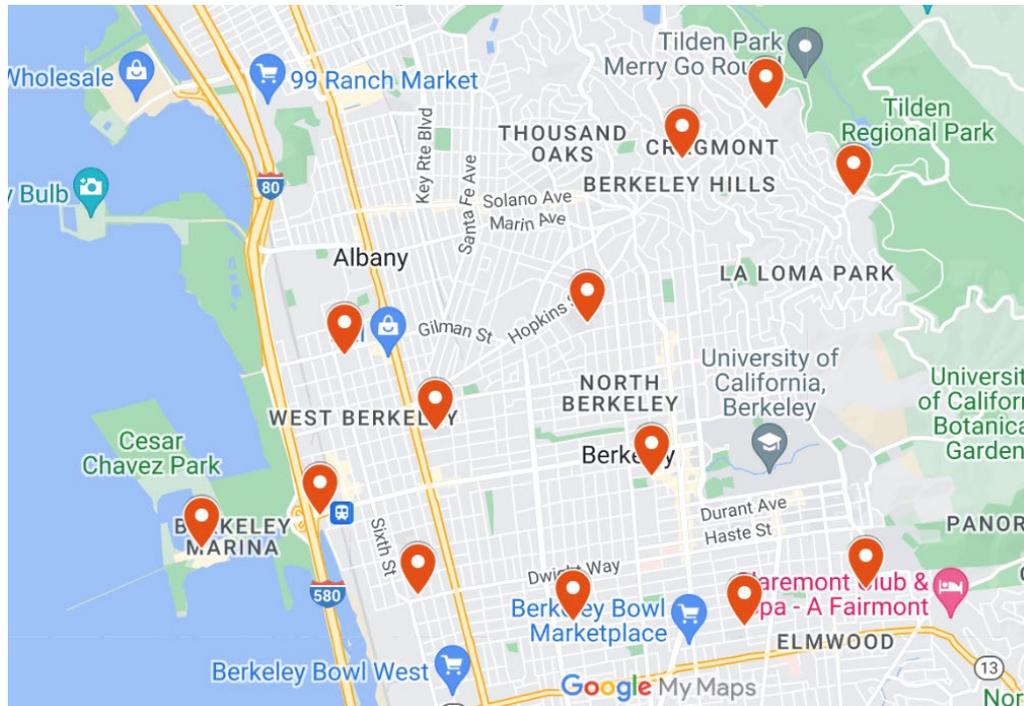
- TV scrolls, radio interrupts
- EAS stations:
 - KCBS 740 AM
 - KQED 88.5 FM
 - KSOL 98.9 FM (Spanish)





Outdoor Warning System Sirens

(aka Genasys Alert)





Outdoor Warning System Sirens

(aka Genasys Alert)

Capabilities

- Network of sirens on rooftops/poles throughout Berkeley
- Alerts people outdoors
- Broadcasts tones and pre-recorded or live messages
- Emergency messages accompanied by “slow wail” tone

Community Preparedness

- Be familiar with siren tones
- If you hear a siren sound:
 - Look for more information on the Berkeley Emergency Map
 - Monitor your phone for AC Alert and/or WEA messages
 - Seek more information on TV and radio



Test Results: OWS Performs as expected

Heard siren tone				
	Yes	No	Not Sure	Total Respondents %
¼ mile from siren	121(88%)	14(10%)	3(2%)	138 (100%)
¼-1/2 mile from siren	134(71%)	48(26%)	6(3%)	188(100%)

Voice announcement				
	Yes	No	Barely/Could Not Clearly Hear the Words	Total Respondents %
¼ mile from siren	81(58%)	23(17%)	34(25%)	138(100%)
¼-1/2 mile from siren	57(30%)	67(36%)	64(34%)	188(100%)



Alerting Toolkit: System Strengths

- **Berkeley Emergency Map**
 - Quick updates directly from Command Post
 - Zone-based instructions
- **IPAWS**
 - Reaching people based on real-time location
 - Radio and TV integration
- **AC Alert**
 - Detailed information targeted to affected populations
 - Multiple modalities (voice, text, TTY/TDD)
- **Outdoor Warning System**
 - Blunt force instrument to tell people outdoors to look for more information



More Information

Systems: BerkeleyCA.gov/EmergencyAlerting

Key Actions

- Berkeley Emergency Map:
 - Bookmark Protect.Genasys.com
 - Download Genasys Protect App
- AC Alert:
 - Sign up mobile phones and emails at ACAlert.org
- Outdoor Warning System
 - Get familiar with alerts: Soundcloud.com/CityofBerkeley



Susan Wengraf
Vice Mayor & Councilmember District 6

JOIN US FOR CEREMONIAL INSTALLATION OF HISTORIC PHOTO AT CITY HALL

The City of Berkeley invites you to join us on the 101st anniversary of the 1923 Berkeley Fire for the ceremonial installation of the historic panoramic photograph of the ruins of the '23 fire in North Berkeley.

What: Installation of historic photograph of ruins of 1923 Fire by Gabriel Moulin

Where: 2180 Milvia Street, Main Lobby

When: September 17th at 10:00 a.m.

This commemoration will include brief comments by Vice Mayor Susan Wengraf, Mayor Jesse Arreguín, and Fire Chief David Sprague about the history of the fire and our major accomplishments in making Berkeley more resistant to wildfire.

RSVP: LMcWhorter@berkeleyca.gov

Panoramic Photo: RUINS OF THE BERKELEY FIRE SEPTEMBER 17, 1923 by Gabriel Moulin (1872-1945)

Gabriel Moulin's panoramic photograph taken on September 19, shows North Berkeley in total ruin two days after the 1923 Fire. Known for its architectural photographs, the well-respected commercial Moulin Studios in this case recorded the destruction of the fire with a Cirkut camera, capable of capturing panoramic landscapes.

The 1923 fire started in Wildcat Canyon high in the hills of Berkeley. The conflagration rapidly moved over the ridge of Grizzly Peak Blvd. into North Berkeley where high winds pushed the fire down the hill destroying everything in its path.

With the aid of fire fighters from neighboring cities, the Berkeley Fire Department, together with hundreds of students from UC Berkeley and other citizens, finally contained the fire at the corner of Hearst and Shattuck Avenues. Luckily, no lives were lost, but 600 homes were destroyed, and thousands of Berkeley residents and students were left homeless.

From: [kelly hammargren](#)
To: [May, Keith](#)
Subject: Disaster and Fire Safety Commission & Fire Chief Sprague letter are mentioned in the Activist's Diary
Date: Thursday, September 12, 2024 1:50:16 PM

WARNING: This is not a City of Berkeley email. Do not click links or attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

Hello

Here is the link to the Activist's Diary on middle housing published in the Berkeley Daily Planet or you can read the same copied into this email.

kelly hammargren

<https://www.berkeleydailyplanet.com/issue/2024-09-01/article/50818?headline=A-BERKELEY-ACTIVIST-S-DIARY-Missing-Middle-Housing-in-Fire-Zones--Kelly-Hammargren>

I was in Tim Walz country (Minnesota) when I saw the book *Gunflint Burning: Fire in the Boundary Waters* by Cary J. Griffith sitting on top of the stack of books at my sister's house. Gunflint burning is the story of the Ham Lake Fire, the largest fire in Minnesota history in almost a century.

If you have ever canoed and portaged through the Boundary Waters then you know how uniquely beautiful, serene the experience is. I did the trip decades ago with my then boyfriend. Out on the lake completely by ourselves we stopped to take in the spectacular beauty. It felt and looked as though the earth curved off from this miraculously special place.

Stephen Posniak who loved the Boundary Waters on May 5, 2007 two days into his twenty-seventh solo annual trip into the boundary waters in a moment of carelessness accidentally ignited the fire that burned an estimated 75,551 acres of forest with a cost over \$11,000,000 in resources, and destroyed so much that some told the author Griffith it was just too painful to relive through even talking about it.

More than one thousand firefighters, volunteers and others responded to the call to fight the Ham Lake Fire.

Griffith is masterful in describing wildfire as the beast that it is eating up whatever is in its path.

Any casual trip into the Berkeley Hills reveals yards, gullies, hillsides filled with highly flammable vegetation leading to the densely packed housing all of which make a tasty meal to feed the fire beast.

I doubt that any of the younger crowd that spoke in favor of adding housing, increasing density, in the high fire zones in the Berkeley Hills at the July 23 special meeting on the Middle Housing Ordinance have any appreciation of the beast that wildfire is and how a moment of carelessness, a wayward spark can ignite a fire that eats everything in its path until it runs out

of fuel.

A young woman who has never previously attended the Disaster and Fire Safety Commission that I recall in the years I've attended the commission meetings stood up for non-agenda comments on August 7, 2024 to speak to how she attended the city council meeting on middle housing and that older people from the hills were talking about fire and opposing adding middle housing in the hills when her friends needed housing.

She insinuated through her comments that opposition to adding housing in the fire zones was a ruse by existing property owners to bolster their own selfish interests. She didn't believe the hills were actually that hazardous and housing should be built in the hills so her friends would have places to live.

The comments from the young woman pushing for approval of increasing density in the hills, the fire zones, didn't move any commission action at the meeting.

Through the evening we learned from the young woman's comments she had lived in Berkeley three years and that is exactly the problem.

She wasn't here in 1991 nearly thirty-three years ago when the Berkeley Oakland Firestorm exploded on Sunday morning October 20th destroying 2,843 single-family homes, 437 apartments and condominium units, took the lives of 25 and 150 people suffered non-fatal injuries.

Anyone who experienced that day is unlikely to forget it especially the people who were trapped in traffic trying to evacuate, abandoned their cars and ran for their lives with the fire billowing around them. Others of us watched the fire move down the hills not knowing if it could be stopped and heard the frightening fire survivor stories from co-workers, friends and neighbors over the days that followed.

I wonder if she read Fire Chief Sprague's letter to City Council on the Middle Housing Zoning and fire risk, watched the films and followed the references from Sprague's letter or for that matter if any of the people commenting at the July 23 City Council meeting for treating all of the City the same and increasing density in the Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones (VHFHSZ) read his letter. <https://tinyurl.com/ye27ra3e>

I doubt any of those commenters at City Council dismissing fire risk actually grasped that fire in the Berkeley Hills is cyclical in nature and at thirty-three years since the Oakland Berkeley Hills Fire in 1991 we are pushing our luck.

Of course, I've learned as a RN, people even when confronted with irrefutable science and

facts, have an immense capacity for denial.

After the meeting, in the brief exchange I had with a member of the Berkeley Fire Department, asking what he thought, he gave this answer, “she isn’t interested in the science.”

When Kathy Kramer (organizer of the annual native plant garden tour) and I took a drive through the VHFHSZ to look at vegetation especially along the expected evacuation routes, nearly the entire area along our drive was filled with what looked more like kindling than what would fall into recommended steps for home hardening to reduce fire risk.

You can find the list of recommended native plants for VHFHSZ on the Bringing Back the Natives Fire-Hazardous plants and fire-resistant native plants webpage. <https://www.bringingbackthenatives.net/fire-hazardous-plants-fire-resistant-native-plants>

To make what Kathy and I saw that day even more alarming, my walk partner who lives in the WUI (Wildland Urban Interface) on the very edge where housing ends and wildland starts shared with me that in a recent evacuation exercise/drill she couldn’t get out and down the hill. That was in optimal conditions without raging fire and panicked drivers trying to evacuate.

Changing the VHFHSZ from a mix of highly flammable vegetation to fire-resistant native plants is a momentous task. The Berkeley Fire Department is trying to get on top of this through inspections and the Berkeley Fire Safe Council has done a miraculous job of clearing flammable eucalyptus debris, but there is still so much to be done.

A frequent phrase heard on adding and increasing housing density is that it is necessary because “my children can’t live here” or “my friends can’t live here” as if the 10.5 square miles of land in Berkeley is the only place in the world to live. What was interesting in my recent trip to Minnesota and all the other trips over the years, I never heard anyone whining about where their children or friends couldn’t live.

Fire was just part of the backdrop to what played out at the July 23, 2024 city council special meeting on the Middle Housing Ordinance that started at 3:30 pm, was supposed to end at 5:30 pm and ran over to 8:42 pm.

I read the late posted “Revised Agenda Material for Supplemental Packet 2” from Jordon Klein, that stated, “Staff recommend delaying action to adopt the Middle Housing Zoning Ordinance...” but I didn’t quite believe there would be no action so I attended in person to what I believed would be a historic city council meeting.

By the time the meeting started, there were over 100 in attendance and most everyone spoke. It broke out in young versus old meaning under 40 and people with gray hair, there was resentment over the long history of restrictive covenants, wealth in the hills and redlining in the flats. There was the continuing divide of race and class between hills and the flats with There was the demand that if density is going to increase then it should be across the entire city. There were calls of racism as the real issue for exempting the hills from increased density not fire.

The very real unaffordability of housing hovered over all of it.

It was former councilmember Lori Droste who brought the Missing Middle Housing to the table as an answer to housing affordability. Middle Housing defined as duplexes, triplexes and fourplexes were supposed to be more affordable by their very nature of adding more units to a single parcel and neatly fitting into single family home neighborhoods.

Missing Middle Housing was presented as addressing racism and the remnants of redlining and bringing equity by eliminating single family housing zoning even though it has been that same single family housing zoning that protected the historic San Pablo Park Black neighborhood and to this day single family housing provides the more modestly priced homes in West Berkeley which has the highest percentage of persons of color in the 2020 census.

At the August 10, 2024 Berkeley Neighborhoods Council meeting, Chip Moore Chair of the Planning Commission was invited to speak on the Middle Housing Zoning Ordinance. Moore (who is Black), expressed his reservations on the Middle Housing Zoning going on to state, “They [proponents of middle housing] are using racism as a way to defend bad public policy... this is not real...they want you to shy away from this argument and I think it is despicable that they are using redlining to justify this...”.

Councilmembers Bartlett, Robinson and Kesarwani attached their names as sponsors to Droste when Missing Middle Housing appeared on the city council agenda on February 26, 2019 (vote to continue), on March 26, 2019 (vote to hold over to April 23) and on April 23, 2019 when it was finally passed as a referral to the City Manager after which it landed at the Planning Commission.

Missing Middle Housing fell to the back shelf with the pandemic and other priorities. In the intervening years on February 23, 2021 City Council voted to end single family zoning and to allow multi-family housing throughout all residential neighborhoods with small scale developments in formerly single-family zoning neighborhood and low-density neighborhoods.

In 2023 Berkeley submitted its Housing Element for the years 2023 – 2031 which is the state required document and exercise to define Berkeley’s plan for adding the assigned Regional

Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) of 8,934 dwelling units which Berkeley expanded to plan for 15,000 units.

Each regional governmental group receives a bulk number of new housing units which are divided up and assigned to cities within a region. Berkeley is part of the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) of which Berkeley Mayor Jesse Arreguin is President.

Interestingly, Richmond which is just up the road and has nearly three times the amount of land (33.7 square miles) was assigned by ABAG just 3,614 dwelling units. ABAG has their formulas. https://www.ci.richmond.ca.us/DocumentCenter/View/66913/6th-Cycle-Housing-Element_Certified?bidId=

In 2023, Middle Housing was revived and brought to the Planning Commission for discussion by city staff on November 1, 2023 to refine the recommendations to send to City Council.

The name Missing Middle Housing is to give the impression that besides middle size housing being missing that when middle housing is built it will be affordable to middle income and low-income households.

The entire theory ignores the price of land. The more units that can be put on a piece of land, the more valuable that piece of land becomes which in turn hikes the rent and sale price of units. It is why when a modest single-family home is demolished and replaced with two or more houses they each sell at market rate which is over \$1,000,000.

At the start of the Planning Commission public hearing on Middle Housing on April 3, 2024 Laurie Capitelli (alternate for the evening for Blaine Merker) was still on the middle housing as “affordable” page until he was informed by other commissioners that middle housing was about increasing the number of units not affordability.

April 3 was the evening that John E. “Chip” Moore, the Planning Commission Chair, was absent and Barnali Ghosh, vice-chair, chaired the meeting. It was quite a scene. In the nearly ten years I’ve attended Berkeley City meetings, I’ve never seen anything like it. Ghosh was intent on not allowing Commissioner Elisa Mikitin to speak. Ghosh interrupted her, spoke over her and even called on city staff to stop Mikitin from speaking. Staff stayed out of it.

Despite Mikitin’s concern not being on the table, she remained calm making her point that if there wasn’t some kind of staging/priority setting to encourage density in single family home districts that normally escape the impacts of upzoning (increasing housing density with bigger taller buildings covering more of the land on a lot/parcel), i.e. North Berkeley, the modest more affordable homes in West Berkeley would be the target for demolition and replacement.

The Planning Commission voted 7 to 2 (Ayes: Andrew, Capitelli, Marthinsen, Twu, Hauser, Ghosh, Noes: Mikitin, Oates, Absent: Moore) for one to 50 dwelling units per acre in Lower Density Residential including the Hillside Overlay the VHFSHZ and 20 to 80 dwelling units per acre in the Middle Density Residential and to change the language to say “building intensity can range” instead of “building intensity will range” under land use classifications.

The upzoning vote by the Planning Commission would increase the number of units in current low density neighborhoods with a range of 1 to 10 units to up to 50 units per acre and multi-unit neighborhoods from 20 to 40 units to up to 80 units per acre.

Middle Housing Zoning does not include the downtown which is zoned separately and seeing a surge of high-rises like the 26-story 456 unit building on Oxford and Center before the Zoning Adjustment Board on September 12, 2024. The Southside next to UC Berkeley Campus has already been upzoned.

In anticipation of the city council vote on Middle Housing Zoning, Commission on Aging commissioner Phyllis Orrick, who self-proclaimed as a YIMBY in her Sierra Club Northern Alameda County Executive Committee bid (she won), invited Karen Parolek to present examples of middle housing to the Commission on Aging on March 20, 2024. While Parolek was introduced as a Planner and representing Berkeley and she is the chair of the Transportation and Infrastructure Commission and a member of Walk Bike Berkeley, Parolek is the co-founder and President of Opticos Design, Inc., a nationally engaged architecture and urban design firm which specializes in missing middle housing. Parolek is not a city employee.

Parolek’s presentation included photos of fourplexes with spacious lawns and other designs that blended into local architecture. Spacious green lawns can be seen driving north on Claremont Boulevard off Ashby and Claremont Avenue, but most of us are living in already very dense neighborhoods. I measured the narrowest distance between the wall of my house and the wall of my neighbor, the duplex next door. It is 5 feet 7 inches.

In fact, the map included in Fire Chief Sprague’s letter shows nearly the entire Fire Zones 2 and 3 as dangerously dense which places Berkeley’s Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones in the highest risk category in addition to the topography and highly flammable vegetation.

Mayor Arreguin partnered with councilmember Kesarwani before the July 23 council meeting on Middle Housing Zoning to draft a proposal. It was a smart move as without gaining Kesarwani as a partner the ordinance likely would have passed with Kesarwani and Humbert joining Taplin Bartlett and Lunapara who all voted to move forward instead of abstaining.

The Lunapara/Humbert motion exempted the Hillside Overlay R1-H (Fire Zone 2) until after the evacuation study is completed by the Fire Department and accepted the maximum

densities recommended by Arreguin and Kesarwani.

R-1 – 40 units/acre – Resulting in 5 units on a 5000 square foot lot

R-1A and R2 – 50 units/acre – Resulting in 6 units on a 5000 square foot lot

R-2A and MU-R – 60 units/acre – Resulting in 7 units on a 5000 square foot lot

If your eyes glaze over and your brain goes into shutdown with these numbers, just know Jordon Klein, Director of Planning and Development stated in his introduction to City Council on July 23, “Council is being asked to consider new objective standards to facilitate the production of multi-unit projects in low density districts where those projects are currently not allowed.”

The bottom line is this is about opening every neighborhood to multi-unit development that has not already been upzoned.

There has been considerable information provided by the Fire Department in documents and presentations on the impact increasing the population and building density in Berkeley has on the capacity of the Fire Department to provide services.

The evacuation study being completed for the Fire Department is not just evacuation. It is also emergency access and will include when completed late this fall according to the information provided at the Disaster and Fire Safety Commission the capacity to assess the impact of how changing the configuration of a street will impact evacuation and emergency access.

The Berkeley Hills are not the only areas of the city with narrow streets creating trouble in the event of an emergency whether it is access for emergency medical services, response to fire or evacuation.

If public safety has a place in planning and decisions, any further upzoning or changes to the configuration of city streets should be on hold until the evacuation study is completed.

Middle Housing Zoning is coming back for a City Council vote, we need to keep our eyes open and our email pens ready.

Safety & Health Advisory



Safety and Health Considerations for Junior Firefighters

As firefighting remains one of the most dangerous occupations, junior firefighters are exposed to hazards that increase the risk of injuries, illnesses, and fatalities.

The fire service helps to address recruitment and retention needs by bringing in younger members through a junior firefighter program. Also known as explorers or cadets, these junior firefighters serve volunteer, career, and combination (career/volunteer) fire departments. Based on the state of the fire department's location, junior firefighters range from 14 to 17 years of age. State child labor laws specify what types of firefighting, emergency medical response, training, and non-operational activities junior firefighters may perform. In most states, junior firefighters may only participate in training and perform support work at fireground, emergency medical services, or rescue operations. Support work may include establishing a water supply, rolling up hoselines, or assisting with patient care as directed by medical personnel.

Some states have laws allowing junior firefighters to engage in training activities more consistent with their adult counterparts. These activities include "live fire" training to prepare junior firefighters to work in environments immediately dangerous to life or health. Performing activities such as live fire training places junior firefighters in an environment with a higher potential for injury and requires appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE).

WHAT FIRE DEPARTMENTS CAN DO:

- ❑ Follow state child labor laws for permissible activities specific to junior firefighters
- ❑ Update standard operating procedures or guidelines to reflect the requirements and restrictions identified in state child labor laws
- ❑ Recognize that junior firefighters require safety and health considerations beyond those for an adult firefighter
- ❑ Provide junior firefighters with appropriate PPE that both fits and affords the necessary protections for their assigned tasks
- ❑ Ensure proper training for junior firefighters on the use and care of their assigned PPE, including its limitations
- ❑ Comply with NFPA 1403 and any state or local regulations for safe training practices in states that permit live fire training for junior firefighters
- ❑ Consider developing mentor- and peer-support mechanisms designed for younger responders
- ❑ Inform parents or guardians about the expectations and the physical and mental risks of their junior firefighter's participation



Junior firefighters training on ground ladders. Photo courtesy of the South Strabane Fire Department.

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS on page 2

Safety & Health Advisory



Safety and Health Considerations for Junior Firefighters

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

What activities are junior firefighters permitted to perform?

Each state has laws and regulations specifying which activities junior firefighters can perform. Many of these use a tier system where the higher the age, the more activities are allowed. For example, 16- and 17-year-olds can perform certain tasks that 14- and 15-year-olds cannot. NIOSH encourages fire departments and academies to check with their local authority having jurisdiction and state Department of Labor for any requirements and restrictions specified under their state [child labor laws](#).

Why are safety and health considerations different for junior firefighters?

As adolescents, junior firefighters experience rapid changes in the brain and body at varying rates. As their physical strength develops, junior firefighters may not understand their physical limitations while working in their assigned PPE. They also may not fully understand or interpret risks around them. They tend to have far less judgment and experience than adult firefighters. These factors may influence their behavior and overall safety. Therefore, fire departments should ensure junior firefighters perform permitted activities under the direct supervision of an adult firefighter. They should be within speaking and touching distance. They should also require junior firefighters to undergo a general wellness medical exam or check-up by a physician before joining the fire service.

Why should fire departments provide junior firefighters with the appropriate PPE?

PPE is firefighters' last line of defense against many exposures. Improperly fitting PPE can increase injuries. It provides greater potential for slips, trips, and falls. Poorly fitting gear may also increase the chance of heat and chemical exposure if gaps exist at crucial interface areas (coat/pant, sleeve/glove, etc.).

NFPA 1971 sets size ranges for turnout gear and requires specific design patterns for men and women. However, it does not account for the different body types or sizes needed for adolescents. Junior firefighters often receive used PPE due to financial, logistical, and supply chain issues, especially in the volunteer fire service. They may receive PPE that does not fit properly, is past its 10-year service life, or has damage. As such, it may not provide the appropriate protection in hazardous settings and should not be used. Funding sources, such as the [Assistance to Firefighters Grants](#), can help secure appropriate PPE. Fire departments should follow the manufacturer's safety and use guidance for all PPE provided to junior firefighters.

What other considerations and resources support the safety and health of junior firefighters?

Using PPE color and markings (e.g., helmet color, shield panel) can help fire departments identify junior firefighters and ensure appropriate assignments, tasks, and supervision. Fire departments should also consider developing mentor- and peer-support mechanisms designed for junior firefighters. Firefighters' high risk of occupational exposure to traumatic events and stress may affect junior firefighters differently than their adult counterparts. Additional resources for support include the National Volunteer Fire Council's [National Junior Firefighter Program](#), NIOSH's [Young Worker Safety and Health](#) webpage, the U.S. Department of Labor's [child labor provisions](#), and the U.S. Fire Administration's [Manual on Recruitment and Retention](#).

Get more topic resources:

<https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/research-programs/portfolio/public-safety.html>

DHHS (NIOSH) Publication No. 2024-114 | July 2024

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.26616/NIOSH PUB2024114>

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