

March 31, 2020

Justin McDonald, Fire Chief  
Arcata Fire District  
Office | (707) 825-2000  
[jmcdonald@arcatafire.org](mailto:jmcdonald@arcatafire.org)  
[www.arcatafire.org](http://www.arcatafire.org)

## **ARCATA FIRE DISTRICT ANNOUNCES TEMPORARY STATION CLOSURES**

McKinleyville, CA - The Board of Directors for the Arcata Fire District announces that it will begin the temporary closure of one of its three stations beginning on April 1, 2020 at 8 am.

The station brownouts will last for eight days and will rotate through each station, beginning with the Mad River Station. District finances will no longer allow for the daily expenditure of overtime that is required to keep all three stations simultaneously open.

Measure R, which narrowly failed to receive the required two-thirds voter approval from the community at the March presidential primary election, was an attempt to help maintain the funding for both staffing and the third station. “Unfortunately, drastic measures, such as lay-off and demotions, are now needed to balance the District budget,” Board President, Nicole Johnson reported.

Staff reductions began with allowing employee vacancies, from retirement and firefighter departures, to remain unstaffed. A temporary firefighter position, that was filling a vacancy due to long-term medical leave, was also cut and three more layoff notices were issued earlier today. Along with the layoff notices, other full-time employees were given 90-day notice of demotions to a lower classification.

“Maintaining services, with the declining staff, station closures, and large increases in expenses, is tricky”, states Fire Chief Justin McDonald. “Operationally, things are changing. Our responses may be delayed, fewer employees and engines will go to what used to be multi-engine responses and we are scrambling to seek new dispatch options as our annual dispatch fees were increased nearly 200% with our 20/21 fiscal year budget.”

The Arcata Fire District Finance Committee and staff, continue to work together on the District budget to seek strategies for funding that will meet the District’s mission and responsibility to the community it serves. “We are forced to move forward with reduced services as a result of current financial situation and provide the best service possible with limited staffing.”

Finally, the District would like the public to be aware of the dates for the station brownouts. The stations will be dark, unstaffed and clearly marked when they are closed. The following are the dates and locations for the brownouts for the remainder of this fiscal year:

April 1-8	Mad River Station, 3235 Janes Road, Arcata
April 9-16	Arcata Downtown Station, 631 9 <sup>th</sup> Street, Arcata
April 17-24	McKinleyville Station, 2149 Central Ave, McKinleyville
April 25-May 2	Mad River Station, 3235 Janes Road, Arcata
May 3-10	Arcata Downtown Station, 631 9 <sup>th</sup> Street, Arcata
May 11-18	McKinleyville Station, 2149 Central Ave, McKinleyville
May 19-26	Mad River Station, 3235 Janes Road, Arcata
May 27-June 3	Arcata Downtown Station, 631 9 <sup>th</sup> Street, Arcata
June 4-11	McKinleyville Station, 2149 Central Ave, McKinleyville
June 12-19	Mad River Station, 3235 Janes Road, Arcata
June 20-27	Arcata Downtown Station, 631 9 <sup>th</sup> Street, Arcata
June 28-July 5	McKinleyville Station, 2149 Central Ave, McKinleyville
July 6-14	Mad River Station, 3235 Janes Road, Arcata

###



[www.arcatafire.org](http://www.arcatafire.org)