

Corvallis Rural Fire Protection District History

On March 18, 1941, a group of citizens from the surrounding areas of the City of Corvallis met to form the Corvallis Rural Fire Protection District (CRFPD). Those instrumental in its formation were: I.J. Starker, Dale Hollingsworth, John F. Schenk, Don Beery, R. L. Smith, Homer Beach, Chas Swain, J.M Clifford, Bob Starrrm and Fred Merryfield.

The CRFPD encircles the City of Corvallis with an area of approximately 33 square miles (not including the city's own 12 square miles) which includes land in Benton County and Linn County. Its area is much the same today as it was in 1941 when it was formed. Oregon State protected lands and other fire protection districts bound it on nearly its full perimeter. Adair RFPD to the North, Tangent RFPD to the East, Halsey-Shedd RFPD to the southeast and Philomath Fire & Rescue to the west.

The City of Corvallis has annexed sizable portions of the District during the history of the CRFPD, including industrial property (Evans Products/Crystal Lake Drive and the HP site on Circle Blvd) as well as residential property (Skyline West, Conifer Blvd and Philomath Blvd areas).

The most recent annexation of land into the CRFPD, April of 2007, was Crestmont Farms, which is located in the Oak Creek area. The only other areas currently open to annexation are Stahlbush Island (off of Peoria Road to the east) and a large unprotected area south of the Corvallis Airport, which extends several miles south of the current boundary or to the Monroe-Alpine RFPD.

The CRFPD has contracted with the City of Corvallis for fire protection since March 16, 1942 when it paid the sum of \$850.00 (eight hundred and fifty dollars) for the services. Then, mayor, H.W. Hand signed the contract for the City of Corvallis, which was based on an assessed value of \$907,914.20 within the District. In comparison, the CRFPD paid \$1,087,385.00 for services during the 2006-07 fiscal year, based on an assessed value of \$661,536,867.00. Today the taxing authority of the CRFPD is set at \$2.1140 per \$1,000 assessed value.

The population of the CRFPD is about 9,000 residents, occupying approximately 3,267 homes. Recent population estimates for the CRFPD have been as high as 11,000 people. Due to the aging of the population within Benton County, it is more likely that the population of the CRFPD lies somewhere between 8,390 and 9,801. These estimates are based on a 2005 look at the Portland State University population study and voter roles in Benton County and Linn County.

In December of 1998, formal plans to build a station for the most densely populated area of the CRFPD began. The resulting location and building of the Locke Fire Station at 544 NW Lewisburg Ave. was realized with the June 2000 completion. Many thanks go to Leatha Amort for selling the five-acre parcel, where Locke Fire Station now stands, to the CRFPD. (Locke Fire Station is named in honor of the Locke family, one of the original homesteads in Benton County and Mrs. Amort's maiden name.) The Corvallis Fire Chief at the time was the honorable Doug VanPelt and the first lieutenant to oversee

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the station and its 9 intern firefighters was Roy Emery, the former fire chief for the Corvallis Fire Department.

Footnote: Information included in the above summary was taken from actual record books of the CRFPD, a 1994 report compiled by the Corvallis Fire Department and a 1997 report by 4M Consulting.