

4.12 CAL FIRE and Volunteer Fire Companies

Approximately 627 square miles of unincorporated land with approximately 6,000 people are outside the boundaries of a public fire agency. The unincorporated communities in these areas consist primarily of single-family homes on unimproved roads, often with inadequate water sources in the rural and wilderness areas. Projected population growth in these areas is low, given County land use policies. Fewer than 700 calls for service to these areas are received annually.

Fire and EMS are currently provided to some of these areas by CAL FIRE and one of five volunteer fire companies (VFCs) and from adjacent fire departments. AMR provides ambulance response.

CAL FIRE's Santa Clara County unit (which covers Alameda, Contra Costa, Santa Clara, southern San Joaquin, and western Stanislaus counties) has 8 of its 12 stations in Santa Clara County. Fire equipment assigned to Santa Clara County proper includes 9 engines, 1 bulldozer, and 1 helicopter. Santa Clara Unit staff consists of 120 full time employees and 116 6 monthly firefighters from mid May thru Mid November. CAL FIRE provides wildfire, BLS, and rescue response in the SRA between May and November.

The five volunteer fire departments are:

Casa Loma VFC	Spring Valley VFC
Ormsby Fire Brigade	Uvas VFC
Stevens Creek VFC	

Table 3 on page 24 describes the general areas of the unorganized population nodes. The CCFD and SCFD boundary and station maps include station locations of these VFCs. Four of the five volunteer companies responded to the request for information: Casa Loma, Stevens Creek, Spring Valley and Ormsby.

The volunteer companies are staffed by local residents. Budgets are extremely limited for these organizations. There is no designated or fixed source of funding for the volunteer companies and they are limited in their abilities to self-fund donations from their local residential and business communities. The County of Santa Clara provides workers' compensation coverage.