

## Photo Report: May 19<sup>th</sup> Evacuation Drill

Summary: The evacuation drill was a great **SUCCESS** because it **HAPPENED!**

Note: This was the **FIRST** evacuation drill in the City of Richmond.

The emphasis of the drill was on the coordination and performance of emergency responders. Residents' participation was important to evaluate the response time and performance of RFD, RPD, County Sheriff, the County Office of Emergency Services who issues CWS, and [Zonehaven](#). Volunteer firefighters joined 94803 Emergency Preparedness Alliance volunteers to distribute flyers to residents and participated in the drill evaluation process.

Initially, we were not sure whether a) the Richmond Fire Department would be able to coordinate different agencies to participate in the drill, b) it could happen on May 19<sup>th</sup> which is the National Golden Eagle Day to exercise emergency evacuation or later, c) it could happen at all with the current vacant position of manager of emergency services, d) CWS and Nixle would be coordinated, e)... and many more concerns. We are glad that the working relationship between different agencies have been established, our emergency responders are more informed about Zonehaven and are more coordinated than before. We hope to conduct future drills with the aim of further improving community preparedness in addition to coordination of our emergency responders.

The RFD valuation report will be provided soon & there will be a Zoom community gathering to discuss it.

Volunteers (Dave, Didit, Vincent, Cliff, Sharon, Rebecca, and myself) joined Richmond Fire, Police, County Sheriff & Zonehaven staff for the drill @ 7:15 am



Thanks to Rico Rincon (RFD), Rebecca and Susan for the pictures.

Battalion Chief Victor Bontempo provided an overview of the drill and its goals



Timeline and evacuation order were discussed, too.

**Timeline**

- 0800 hrs. Volunteers & RPD depart for check-in set-up at Hilltop Mall
- 0815 hrs. Crew of Station 68 arrive at Hilltop Mall and stage Truck 68
- 0845 hrs. RPD, RFD and volunteers stage at assigned intersections
- 0900 hrs. IC changes RCH-E054 to "Evacuation Order" on Zonehaven and CWS issues Immediate Evacuation Order for RCH-E054
- 0910 hrs. IC changes RCH-E055 to "Evacuation Warning" on Zonehaven and CWS issues an Evacuation Warning for RCH-E055
- 0945 hrs. IC will place all zones in normal status using Zonehaven
- 1000 hrs. Once all cars have stopped checking in at mall, CWS will issue message, closing the simulation, providing a link to the survey

**Evacuation Order.** An immediate threat to life. This is a lawful order to leave now. The area is lawfully closed to public access.

**Evacuation Warning.** A potential threat to life and/or property. Those who require additional time to evacuate, and those with pets and livestock should leave now.

**Clear To Repopulate.** It is safe to return to your home. Be aware of your surroundings and go through the returning home checklist.

**Shelter In Place.** An order to go indoors. Shut and lock doors and windows. Prepare to self-sustain until further notice and/or contacted by emergency personnel for additional direction.

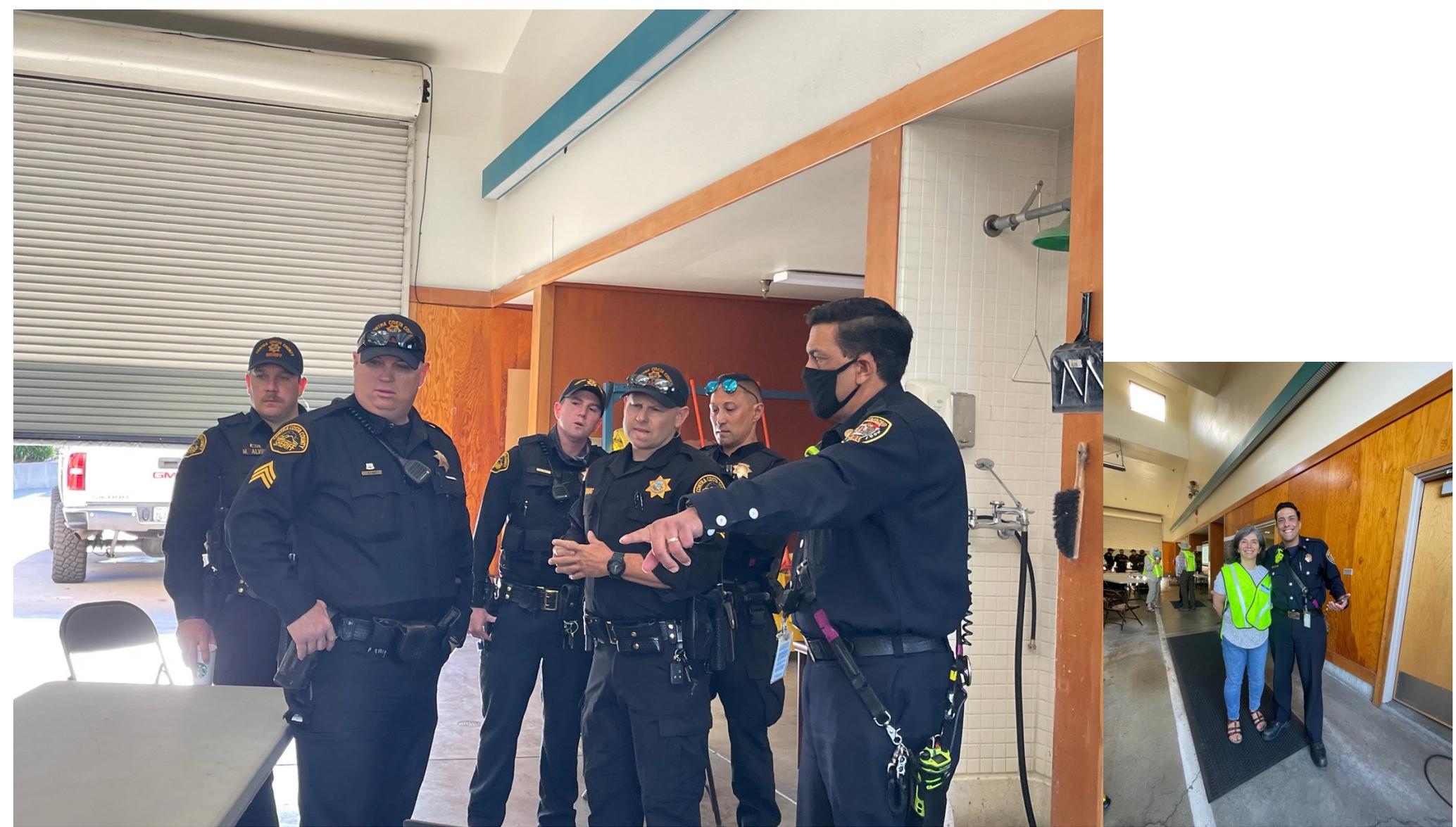
**Normal.** There is no current knowledge of threats affecting your area and that you can carry on with normal activity.

Joe Grupalo from Zonehaven (previously a Battalion Chief with El Cerrito Fire Dept.) works closely with the RFD. He followed Chief Bontempo and explained how Zonehaven works. The image Joe is pointing to shows Red Flag Warning and the worst possible case, PDS, which stands for Particularly Dangerous Situation. It was the case in Paradise fire where the fire spread at the rate of 80 football fields per minute!



I am going to invite both Chief Bontempo and Joe Grupalo to a Zoom Community Gathering to tell us more about evacuation situations and the usefulness of Zonehaven.

Chief Bontempo provided information to emergency responders about the use of Zonehaven.



I used the opportunity to specially thank Chief Bontempo on behalf of the community for organizing the drill despite all difficulties in such a short time.



Richmond Fire Marshal Eric Govan was also present.

You see our Fire Marshal discussing evacuation routes when I asked everyone for a photo.

Fire Chief Montoya and Fire Marshal Govan have been helping us access ConFire Crew 12 (funded by Measure X) to assist neighbors with vegetation management. If you need help with reducing fuel in your neighborhood then please feel free to request for help.



Richmond Fire Chief Angel Montoya was also present. We used the brief meeting opportunity to discuss several issues of concern as well as progress with regards to wildfire safety as we work together at the West Contra Costa Fire Safe Council (WCCFSC).



Some volunteers joined the emergency responders to observe the evacuation routes and traffic flow while some of us went to the collection point at Hilltop Mall.

Our firefighters helped us set up our little table next to their big table under their tent.





Evacuation participants were asked to fill out an assessment survey by the fire dept on provided iPads.

94803 Emergency Preparedness Alliance volunteers have worked on their own survey and hope you participate in responding to the questions for improving community safety:

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1CV5mS1tkb8I268iRZGLwDSq16NyKE1BUaDdJsbEm7UA/edit>



Some participants who had heard about the drill through their HOA announcement signed up for 94803 Emergency Preparedness Alliance community mailing list.



Chief Bontempo remained at the command center while Chief Montoya joined the participants at the end of the drill.

Rebecca talked about the 56-gallon water barrels for emergency preparedness.



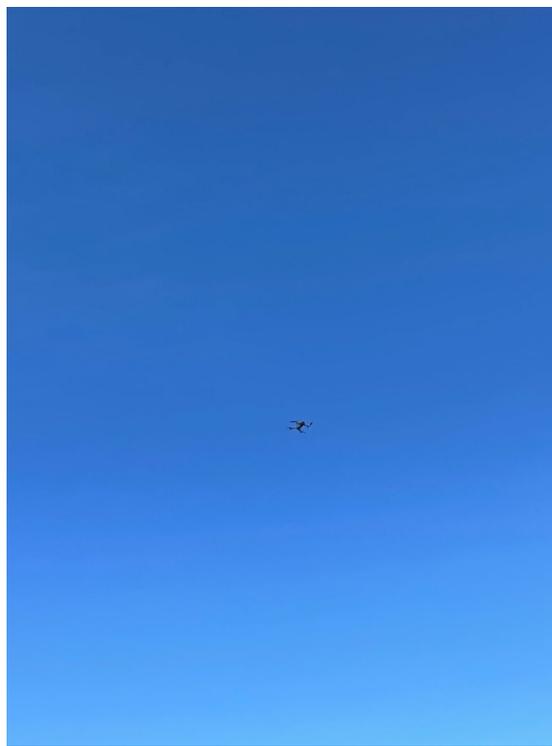
Participation rate was low comparing with, for example, Kensington that had a participation rate of 30%. But again, the drill was a success regardless of the level of participation just because our fire department managed to coordinate different agencies in a short time and make it happen.



First prize, a walkie-talkie set of two, went to Jianan.

The 56 gallon water barrel was claimed by Melanie.

You may request for a free food-grade 56 gallon water barrel.



We learned that the city has 2 drones that one of them is used by the Fire Department.

The **94803 Emergency Preparedness Alliance** has prepared flyers to inform residents about emergency alerts, CWS and Nixle. If you are willing to distribute them to your neighbors during your afternoon walks, please let us know.

Thank you for caring for safety!

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94803 Emergency Preparedness Alliance

[94803.org](http://94803.org)