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November 21, 2022

Patrick Chew, Fire Marshal  
Amador Fire Protection District  
810 Court Street  
Jackson, CA 95642

**Subject: AFD Fee Schedule Update**

Dear Patrick,

It has been a genuine pleasure working with you in your efforts to update the current fire prevention fee schedule for the Amador Fire Protection District (AFPD). I appreciate the cooperation you and your staff provided during our review and evaluation of your current costs for service delivery. At the end of the process, we were able to produce an updated hourly rate for fire prevention services and an updated fee schedule for you to carry forward to your Board of Directors for approval.

The AFPD conducted a fee study in 2019 working with the Matrix Consulting Group. The groundwork for your current fee schedule was laid at that time. The task at hand during this latest collaboration between the AFPD and Bureau Veritas was simply an update of fees based on current costs for providing fire prevention related services. A review of your current direct and indirect costs was conducted, and a new hourly rate was produced.

In addition to updating the AFPD fee schedule, I would like to offer my perspective on cost recovery as a former fire marshal at the local community level, as well as the State Fire Marshal for California. Fire prevention services, also known as community risk reduction, are of paramount importance for a variety of reasons. I encourage you to consider the following cost recovery principles as you continue to implement the AFPD fee schedule.

**Why is cost recovery is important?**

In every community risk reduction (prevention) program plays a critical role in the protection of life, property, environment, economic vitality and firefighter safety. The public has entrusted the AFPD with the stewardship of providing the best available risk reduction services. To enhance and bolster an organization's risk reduction program, I draw inspiration from a few key pillars that support the existence of the fire service's risk reduction efforts and exemplify best practices in enabling service delivery.

The California Health and Safety, and Government Codes provide fire agencies the tools necessary to implement fees to defray the costs of providing certain services. It is prudent to utilize the legal tools available to support the AFPD's risk reduction efforts long term, thereby,



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potentially reducing the Prevention Division's overall financial impact to the department's general fund budget.

As you continue the organization's journey in growing an effective, comprehensive and fiscally responsible risk reduction program I would encourage the AFPD to embrace the following pillars to support your efforts:

1. Mission and Strategic Plan
2. The Five E's of Prevention
3. National Standards
4. Everyone Goes Home Program: Founded by the National Firefighters Foundation

Each of these elements is relevant to the overall fiscal health of your risk reduction program as described below.

#### 1. Amador Fire Protection District Mission and Strategic Plan

The AFPD's adopted mission states that the District is "*committed to serving the needs of Amador County with Professionalism, Integrity and Vision.*"

Furthermore, the District's Strategic Plan emphasizes that "*the District strives to provide for the protection of life and property from the threat of fires, medical emergencies, and hazardous materials release. This mission is accomplished through planning, prevention, education, the suppression of unfriendly fires, and providing emergency care for the sick and injured.*"

When I read the AFPD's Mission Statement and Strategic Plan it is clear to me that the organization is committed providing excellent services to the communities served. This certainly includes the proactive and preventative purpose of your fire prevention program and carrying out your duties in a financially sustainable manner.

#### 2. The Five E's of Prevention

The most effective risk-reduction strategies are those that employ a broad-based integrated approach utilizing a combination of prevention interventions. President Harry S. Truman's 1947 conference on fire prevention coined the original Three E's — education, enforcement and engineering. In 2000, the National Fire Academy added economic incentive and emergency response because of their importance to community risk reduction. The goal of using multiple interventions in parallel is twofold: prevent incidents from occurring, and when prevention fails, reduce or mitigate the impact of the incident. Each of the E's can contribute to the development of realistic, comprehensive and effective solutions. Together the E's produce a synergistic effect and are more effective than when used individually.

In order to develop and manage a robust prevention program that addresses the preventative and proactive elements of the "Five E's", adequate funding is needed. An up to date and comprehensive fee schedule will place the AFPD in a more fiscally sustainable position to continue delivering high quality risk reduction services.



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### 3. National Standards

Two key national standards that provide guidance and direction in the management of an effective prevention program that embraces the concept of overall community risk reduction include:

- NFPA 1730: Standard on Organization and Deployment of Fire Prevention Inspection and Code Enforcement, Plan Review, Investigation, and Public Education Operations
- NFPA 1300: Standard on Community Risk Assessment and Community Risk Reduction Plan Development

These standards provide a guidance roadmap for communities to use when developing and implementing strong risk reduction programs. One very important element of delivering exceptional services is the need for adequate resources, including employees. I strongly encourage the AFPD to look into the future and embrace a fee structure that will support additional resources so the District may adequately meet all risk reduction mandates and community expectations. I strongly suspect one fire marshal may not be enough to support an area that is almost 500 square miles in size.

Updating your fee schedule is essential to help financially sustain the department's ability to deliver most prevention related services.

### 4. Everyone Goes Home® Program: Founded by the National Firefighters Foundation

It goes without saying the firefighter safety is of the utmost importance. The Everyone Goes Home® Program, founded by the [National Fallen Firefighters Foundation](#), provides free training, resources, and programs to champion and implement the 16 Firefighter Life Safety Initiatives. The goal of the Everyone Goes Home® Program is to reduce the number of preventable firefighter line-of-duty deaths and injuries. Two of the 16 Firefighter Life Safety Initiatives are directly related to fire prevention services. [Initiative 14](#) relates to public education practices and [Initiative 15](#) relates to fire sprinklers and code enforcement. Click on these hyperlinks to get more detailed information about these important initiatives.

Again, implementing a comprehensive fee schedule directly supports this critical national fire service program and ultimately plays a role in assuring your firefighters can safely go home at the end of their shift.

### Final thoughts and deliverables

Again, thank you for the opportunity to work with you and your staff on this important project. A properly maintained and implemented cost recovery program will greatly support your efforts to deliver high quality fire prevention services. Accompanying this letter are the deliverables Bureau Veritas committed to providing to you.



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1. Hourly rate calculation worksheet: Included with this fee schedule update was an evaluation of the current hourly rate of \$88. A review of current direct and indirect costs resulted in an updated proposed hourly rate of \$133. An Excel spreadsheet (Attachment A) was provided to AFD staff, which allows for the capability of future updates as operational costs change.
2. Fee schedule: The current AFD fee schedule was updated to reflect the proposed hourly rate. A copy (Attachment B) was provided to AFD staff.

Please feel free to contact me should you have further questions or concerns.

Kind Regards,

Dennis Mathisen  
Fire & Life Safety Manager