

Sugarmill Woods Bulletin

November 2, 2011

Dear Residents,

Citrus County Fire Rescue Services officially became a division within the Citrus County Sheriff's Office on October 1, 2011. As part of this change all Fire Rescue Operations for Citrus County are now combined with the Sheriff's Office under one Public Safety organization and team with one mission. The Citrus County Fire Rescue personnel have officially integrated with the Sheriff's Office to take a whole new approach to Public Safety.

As a result of this reorganization, two previously vacant fire stations already have been reopened and staffed with career fire fighters; one in the Sugarmill Woods community and the other in the Floral City community. Due to the county's prior financial shortfall in its Fire Rescue division, these two communities had been underserved for several years. Sugarmill Woods residents are already feeling more confident about response times for any future fire rescue related situations.

The DeRosa Fire Rescue Station, located just north of Citronelle, is due to reopen sometime in January, 2012. The facility is currently being retrofitted in order to activate it effectively. As a result of this reorganization, Citrus County now has seven (previously five) Career Staffed 24 x 7 Fire Rescue Stations now in operation with the eighth one opening in January. These stations are spread across the County providing much better support for all of Citrus County's residents.

In recognition of this important and much needed support within our community, Citrus County Fire Rescue Operations Division will be holding an **Open House and Recruitment Event** this month at the Sugarmill Woods Fire Rescue Station.

Citrus County Fire Rescue Services

Open House & Recruitment Event

Friday, November 18, 2011

9:00 AM to 12:00 Noon

Sugarmill Woods Fire Rescue Station

We encourage residents to consider stopping at the station anytime during this Open House period and meet some of our new Fire Fighters stationed in our community. By the way, five members of the Citrus County Fire Rescue Division reside in our Sugarmill Woods community (two career fire fighters, two volunteers, and one Rehab unit member). In addition the Sheriff's Office Law Enforcement Division has 21 of their personnel living in the SMW community. Let's show our appreciation and support for these individuals who put their lives on the line to protect and serve us and our community.



In addition to bringing aboard approximately 200 former county career and volunteer firefighters, drivers, inspectors and support staff, the Sheriff's Office has hired a training coordinator, plus a volunteer coordinator. Realizing a critical need for attracting new volunteers to the fire services and perhaps more importantly, retaining them, Sheriff Dawsy reached out to his own deputy sheriffs to serve in this role during their off-duty hours. Many of them will be undergoing the necessary training to assume these additional duties.

The volunteer coordinator will actively seek out local individuals with an interest in volunteering to help augment the Fire Rescue rank and file. This key position will be responsible for recruiting new volunteer firefighters, maintaining their paperwork and working closely with them to retain their service.

In another strategic move by Dawsy, certain Fire Rescue administrators were reassigned to the field in an effort to put "more boots on the ground" without hiring new personnel.

When it comes to training, future savings are anticipated by utilizing the combined resources offered by the Withlacoochee Technical Institute. The new training coordinator will associate closely with the CCSO's long-term plan of transforming WTI's existing Criminal Justice Academy into the Citrus County Public Safety Training Center. Public safety personnel will then have a multi-purpose venue available to them for honing their firefighting skills as well as fulfilling their scheduled state-mandated training requirements.

The academy's current director, Sheriff's Office Lt. Phil Royal, believes that combining resources – such as instructors, trainers, equipment, facilities, budgets and networking capabilities – ultimately will produce a higher caliber of public safety professional.

With Fire Rescue officially on board, the Sheriff's Office anticipates quicker response times, a more innovative use of technologies, plus enhanced training opportunities, based on safety and providing the level of fire service that citizens deserve.

Please remember to mark **Friday, November 18** on your calendar and bring your friends and neighbors with you to this **Fire Rescue Operations Open House** at our **Sugarmill Woods Fire Rescue Station**. The Open House hours are from **9:00 AM to 12:00 Noon**. Please stop by for a few minutes to meet some of the team and thank them for their service.

Sincerely,

Duane Dueker,
President, Sugarmill Woods Civic Association

cc: Cypress Village POA, Oak Village Association, Southern Woods POA