



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**CON FIRE, CONTRA COSTA SHERIFF'S OFFICE, AND CITY OF WALNUT CREEK CONDUCT
SUCCESSFUL FIRST-TIME EVACUATION DRILL OF ROSSMOOR NEIGHBORHOOD**

**Some 100 Rossmoor Residents Participated in Early Sunday Morning Exercise to Evacuate
Residents and Test New CWS Alerting System Tool**

WALNUT CREEK, CALIF., May 18, 2022 – Contra Costa County Fire Protection District (Con Fire), the Contra Costa County Sheriff's Office of Emergency Services, and the City of Walnut Creek today announced the successful conduct of a historic, first-time evacuation exercise in the Walnut Creek community of Rossmoor on Sunday, May 15.

The exercise was designed to evaluate and improve evacuation procedures for residents of the Rossmoor community and test the County's new Zonehaven digital evacuation tool for first responders.

At 7 a.m. Sunday, the Contra Costa County Community Warning System (CWS) sent a message to residents participating, directing them to begin exercising their evacuation plans due to a fictitious Las Trampas wildfire burning to the south of Rossmoor. Upon receiving the CWS alert, participants began to evacuate using traffic patterns directed by Walnut Creek Police. Predetermined evacuation routes led evacuees to a temporary evacuation point at the Heather Farms Park Community Center. At the closure of the exercise, 127 Rossmoor residents evacuated their homes, effectively practicing their evacuation plans.

"We train for and implement actual evacuations for various disaster scenarios in conjunction with our law enforcement partners," said Fire Chief Lewis Broschard, Contra Costa County Fire Protection District. "However, this evacuation drill, using our new digital evacuation tool, Zonehaven, and in an area presenting numerous challenges, was especially valuable for evacuations here and across the County."

Walnut Creek Deputy City Manager Carla Hansen noted the safety of Rossmoor residents is one of the highest priorities the City of Walnut Creek has. "The City of Walnut Creek began

1 - 1 - 1

Con Fire, Contra Costa Sheriff's Office, City of Walnut Creek Conduct Rossmoor Evac Exercise – 2/2/2

planning for this drill last year, and was thrilled to have such strong participation. We learn from each of these events, and will build upon the lessons learned to enhance our emergency response approach,” said Hansen.

Additional objectives were to educate, familiarize, and prepare the Rossmoor community to better respond to a wildfire threat while evaluating the abilities of local government and emergency response agencies to notify residents, order an evacuation, and control traffic flow in an orderly manner while directing residents either away from a wildfire threat or to a designated temporary evacuation point.

The Rossmoor evacuation drill was the first large-scale use of new digital evacuation tool Zonehaven, which uses predefined zones across the entire county to identify and communicate areas to be evacuated quickly in conjunction with the CWS. All residents are encouraged to sign up for CWS and get to know their zone identifier, which they can quickly determine by visiting www.cwsalerts.com/know-your-zone.

While emergency evacuations may be prompted by any number of natural or manmade disasters, the wildland fire scenario was chosen because of the increasingly dangerous hazard such fires pose in wildland-urban interface areas such as the Rossmoor community.

In addition to strengthening collaboration between all participating agencies, data was collected that will be used to improve evacuation plans across the City of Walnut Creek and the County.

Participating agencies planned the evacuation exercise over the course of several months.

These agencies included the City of Walnut Creek, Con Fire, Cal Fire's Santa Clara Unit, the Golden Rain Foundation – Rossmoor, Contra Costa Sheriff's Office of Emergency Services, the Red Cross, CERT and Contra Costa County Animal Services.

- # -

About Contra Costa County Fire Protection District (Con Fire) -- A recognized fire service leader – Con Fire provides fire and emergency medical services to some 625,000 residents in nine cities and five unincorporated areas across our 304 square-mile jurisdiction. And, through our unique ambulance Alliance, we provide EMS and ambulance transport services to much of the remainder of Contra Costa County, California. With few exceptions, county emergency ambulance transport services are provided by Con Fire through its unique sub-contractor Alliance model across the District and beyond to include some 520 square miles of the County. In 2021, the District responded to more than 141,000 incidents of all types, including some 55,000 fire and EMS emergencies, and dispatched nearly 100,000 ambulances, providing expert medical care on more than 75,000 ambulance transports. The District, with 26 fire stations and more than 400 employees, is dedicated to preserving life, property, and the environment.



PHOTO RELEASE

CON FIRE, CONTRA COSTA SHERIFF'S OFFICE, AND CITY OF WALNUT CREEK CONDUCT SUCCESSFUL FIRST-TIME EVACUATION DRILL OF ROSSMOOR NEIGHBORHOOD

Some 100 Rossmoor Residents Participated in Early Sunday Morning Exercise to Evacuate Residents and Test New CWS Alerting System Tool

WALNUT CREEK, CALIF., May 18, 2022 – Contra Costa County Fire Protection District (Con Fire), the Contra Costa County Sheriff's Office of Emergency Services, and the City of Walnut Creek today announced the successful conduct of a historic, first-time evacuation exercise in the Walnut Creek community of Rossmoor on Sunday, May 15.



Multiple agencies conducted a first-time evacuation exercise of a City of Walnut Creek community May 15 using the new Community Warning System tool, Zonehaven

Click above images for photo/video files.

- # -

About Contra Costa County Fire Protection District (Con Fire) -- A recognized fire service leader – Con Fire provides fire and emergency medical services to some 625,000 residents in nine cities and five unincorporated areas across our 304 square-mile jurisdiction. And, through our unique ambulance Alliance, we provide EMS and ambulance transport services to much of the remainder of Contra Costa County, California. With few exceptions, county emergency ambulance transport services are provided by Con Fire through its unique sub-contractor Alliance model across the District and beyond to include some 520 square miles of the County. In 2021, the District responded to more than 141,000 incidents of all types, including some 55,000 fire and EMS emergencies, and dispatched nearly 100,000 ambulances, providing expert medical care on more than 75,000 ambulance transports. The District, with 26 fire stations and more than 400 employees, is dedicated to preserving life, property, and the environment.