MESCAL-J6 FIRE DISRICT

Ed Nied - Fire Chief

98 N. Oak Dr. Benson, AZ. 85602
Phone (520)586-4690 - Fax (520)586-8598

Fire Chief Report
February 2026
Presented at March 25, 2026, Board Meeting

Incidents: 2/1- 2/28/26: 45 total; fire-6 ; ems-23 ; other- 16
Total for 2026 – 98; 2025—88 **calls = 9.4% increase.**
Mutual aid: given-2 , received-1; billable calls 1.
Significant calls: House fire in Mescal-J6 Fire District. Property saved approximately $90,000
Hazard Mitigation Collections:

February received $200. Still working on 12 totaling $12,551.25

Received payment from UPRR $978

Received WC rebate $1600

Projects:
Strategic Plan: I have been going through the plan and updating progress in the areas we've made strides in. I will be meeting soon with Jayme to truly learn how best to use the spreadsheet he created.

Policy Review:
I will continue to evaluate and bring forward. The ones changed in the work session Feb 11 still need some attention before being brought forward for final review.

IT: Working on possibility of gaining Spillman interface between the CAD and our tablet. This will allow information to be downloaded and save time on writing reports. Also working to get info auto downloaded to our billing company, reducing duplication. Attempting to be more efficient. New ESO system is difficult at times….still learning how to navigate.

Repeater:
I was able to connect with two individuals who have been very helpful. Because there was already an agreement signed, and due to the safety nature concerns, it is being "fast-tracked" as much as possible. Should be hearing something around May 1.

Have secured a free Connex box. Delayed delivery as they are doing it for free. We will be moving the turnouts from bay into it so they don't absorb the diesel fumes, and they don't off-gas carcinogens on our personnel. Due to space, the bays are used for training and education. This is a critical step in protecting our personnel.

Activities:
Beginning to train other FDs on use of extrication equipment.

Air quality testing done, not getting return call from extinguisher person, so will be calling a different one. All required by law or standard.

Camaro Valley: A single 10' section of hard suction hose will plumb to trash pump and then soft 2 ¾" will connect to truck. This will allow us to be able to use the water and the property owners won't have to bury pipes to the roadway. We will need a form of entry such as gate to be able to get to tanks. Been in further discussion regarding homes that are not in district but are up in NW corner. Will be meeting with homeowners soon.

Grant Activities:

GOHS- Put in 2027 grant for items not received in last years such as RAMs, airbags, etc. The 2026 grant is up to date and all required quarterly reports are done.

Ak-Chin Grant- The extractor is installed and functional. We will initially wash everyone's turnouts and then place them into Connex box. This will eliminate the absorption into the turnouts of diesel and other dangerous chemicals that are then directly transferred to our personnel. We will be finalizing paperwork to be submitted for close out.

HRFSA- I have answered initial questions to the H&HS staff. After you are earmarked, You have to "apply" for the funding. Awaiting direction for next steps. I have been reassured by Sen. Kelly's office that we will be getting the $650K for the vehicles and ALS/Rescue equipment.

2027 FPS opened. I had meeting with Rep. Ciscomani and his Legislative Director as well as Chief of Staff. I have written to ask for funding to be used to build the new station and community center. We were told to dream big, and so we did—10.2M. It is highly unlikely that we will receive all of it and so the station comes first. We may have to build in phases such as bays; station proper; admin; gym, etc.

Applied with guidance from Sen. Kelly's office, for the 2027 CDS. Asking for 5M for station. Our need is so great. It's way past due, our firefighters have got to get out of that environment. I am very hopeful on this.

Fire House Subs- wrote for six full sets of turnouts. $37000

AFG- will be opening soon. Suppression helmets, boots, gloves, open and we are in for turnouts. We were not allowed to change it in any way. This is an extension of our 2024 AFG.

100 Club- PPE, not open until March. If AFG and FHS don't come through we will try for turnouts.

FPS- Wrote for community risk reduction evaluation, $11,650. We will not do it unless we get grant. No word yet on this as it was part of government shutdown timeline. However, we have been continually posting things on FB and NextDoor to educate the public on reducing their risk.

BLM Brush Truck- still awaiting decision--- made it to Federal level- delayed decision until DHS is funded again.

Arizona 1st and USDA- will be utilizing them hopefully for portions of the station and community center plan. I have also asked Fire Chief Grants for information on assisting with determining if SAFER would be worth it.

Rep. Lupe Diaz has put in 10.2 million in on state appropriations for our new station and community center. Chances are we will end up getting far less, but we will see, so we know what to go after in way of donations, other grants. Again, trying hard to do everything to relieve tax burden as we move forward.

I have been invited to the SEADG luncheons going forward. I have attended 2. It's a good chance to make connections and hear what else is going on.

I have been asked to sit on the Legislative Committee for the Arizona Special District Alliance. I've accepted and my hope is we can share and learn how to assist our and other areas within the county. It's an effort to be heard and educate legislators on special district (especially rural) issues and needs. More to come….