



**NEWS RELEASE**

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**New Deployment Tool Assists in Serving the Community**

TVF&R responds to over 30,000 incidents each year. Over 80 percent of those incidents are medical calls. On May 7<sup>th</sup>, TVF&R added a new tool to its toolbox – a Car with one paramedic. The four Cars (Toyota FJ Cruisers) are expected to assist the District with responding in a cost-effective manner to non life-threatening situations that don't require an engine with multiple Firefighter EMTs/Paramedics and a full cache of tools. The Cars are strategically based at fire stations in Aloha, Beaverton, Tigard, and Wilsonville and deployed Tuesday through Friday, from 7 am – 5 pm. The stations and schedule were chosen after analyzing years of incident data.

Last week in their first four days in service, the Cars were deployed to 41 incidents that included 15 false fire alarms, nine non injury motor vehicle crashes, and several smoke investigations, lock-outs, falls, sick persons, and smoke detector problems. During that same time frame, TVF&R's engines, trucks, and medic units responded to 256 calls including 56 cardiac and breathing problems, 22 strokes and seizures, 10 fires, 35 unconscious/unresponsive persons; and 10 motor vehicle crashes with injury. As a full-service organization, TVF&R responds to all 9-1-1 calls. Assistant Chief Dustin Morrow states, "Depending on the severity of the situation, we now have the option of strategically responding with an engine, truck, medic unit, and even a car." Morrow added, "We believe this strategic deployment makes good financial sense, both for the taxpayer as we utilize limited resources, and our ability to sustain our operation in the future."

Each Car is outfitted with necessary equipment and supplies, a cardiac monitor, and a computer with response maps and current information on every 9-1-1 call. Although most situations responded to will be non-emergency, the Car can be upgraded to respond more quickly (Code 3)—or the paramedic can call for more units—if a situation worsens. Almost 100,000 incidents were analyzed to identify situations appropriate for a Car and single responder. In addition to acting as a 'relief valve' for the growing number of non life-threatening incidents to which Firefighters are called to, the 4WD Cars also provide the District with another tool to navigate congested streets and icy roadways, and access off-road emergencies.

The four FJ Cruisers are 2007 and 2008 models and were purchased from local dealerships via a public bid process. The purchase was made possible due to a capital improvement bond that was approved by almost 70% of voters in 2006.

Adds Morrow, "While the Car is expected to play an important role, we know that fires, serious medical incidents, crashes, rescues, and hazardous material situations are still going to occur and when they do, our public expects us to respond with enough tools and personnel to get the job done – and therein lies the strength of our engines and truck companies."

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