



Marion County Board of County Commissioners Marion County Fire Rescue

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FORMER VOLUNTEER STATION NOW STAFFED WITH FULL-TIME FIREFIGHTERS

Immediate Release

MARION COUNTY, Fla. (March 31, 2009) – Marion County Fire Rescue (MCFR) Orange Springs Station 13, formerly an all-volunteer station, is now staffed with full-time state certified firefighter/paramedics and firefighter/EMTs 24-hours a day. This weekend firefighters settled into their station located at 23520 NE Highway 315 and have already responded to more than a half dozen 9-1-1 calls.

Staffing Orange Springs Station 13 marks another milestone for Marion County Commissioners and their 10-year-plan to improve fire rescue services countywide. Commissioners adopted this plan in 2001 to build new fire stations, renovate former volunteer stations and hire 250 additional firefighters by 2011. While Marion County Commissioners and fire rescue officials refocused the 10-year-plan during the 2006-2007 fiscal year to address emergency response concerns in the urban areas of the county, they have continued their commitment to the rural areas as shown with the opening of Orange Springs Station 13.

“We started moving forward on a cold afternoon in January, 2007,” recalled Marion County Commission Vice-Chairwoman Barbara Fitos, District 4. “We met with citizens and community groups in Orange Springs on several occasions to update them on the status and progress of this project. The opening of this station is significant to them and a great example of neighbor helping neighbor. There is a real sense of community in Orange Springs, and we wanted to fulfill our commitment to them and our 10-year-plan.”

Orange Springs Station 13 is now staffed with 12 dual-state firefighters (four per 24-hour shift) who provide fire suppression and rescue services as well as advanced life support emergency medical care. An advanced life support fire engine, brush truck and tanker truck are also housed at the station. The opening of Orange Springs Station 13 will enhance emergency response to Orange Springs, including communities around Island Lake, Pegram Lake and Deer Back Lake among other areas. The station will also provide back up emergency response to Ft. McCoy, Citra, Sparr and Hog Valley.

Prior to staffing Orange Springs Station 13 with 24-hour coverage, the closest full-time fire rescue units would respond from Ft. McCoy Station 7, which is about 10 miles from Station 13’s primary zone. That means, response times would vary from 10 to 15 minutes. But now, the geographical location is cut in half and response times will improve significantly.

Orange Springs Station 13 was originally built in 1984 and staffed with volunteer firefighters. But the station was never designed to house full-time firefighters who spend one-third of their life on-duty. As a result, firefighters are currently housed in a mobile home located behind the station.

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