

Office of State Fire Marshal 2007 emergency mobilization briefing



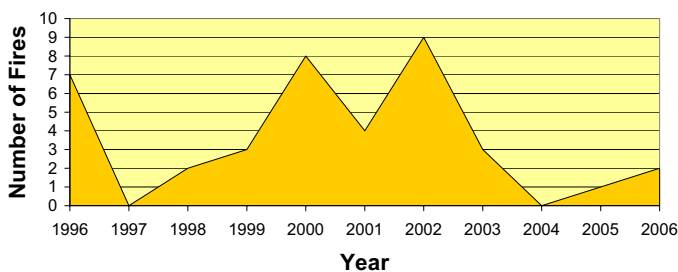
June 2007 · State Fire Marshal Nancy Orr · 4760 Portland Road NE · Salem, Oregon 97305-1760

Oregon fire service mobilization and the Oregon Emergency Conflagration Act

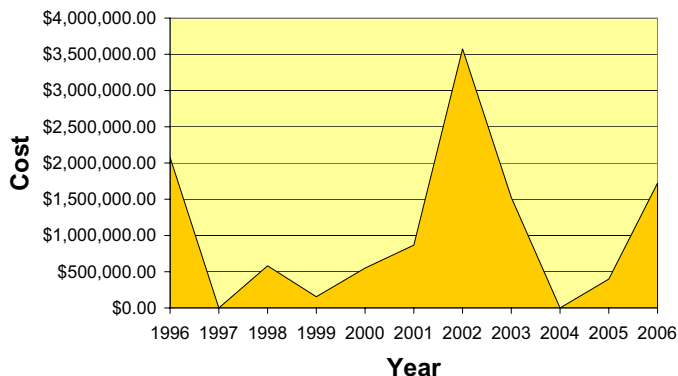
The *Oregon Fire Service Mobilization Plan* is used in mobilizing structural firefighters, the Oregon Urban Search and Rescue task force and 15 regional hazardous materials response teams during a declared conflagration or when an incident threatens life or structures and exceeds the capacity of local and mutual aid emergency resources.

The *Emergency Conflagration Act* was developed in 1940 as a civil defense measure and can be invoked only by the Governor. The Act mandates the State Fire Marshal have a plan for the most practical utilization of the state's firefighting resources. The Act also provides for reimbursing communities' costs to send their emergency resources, through state emergency funds.

Conflagrations in Oregon 1996-2006



OSFM Conflagration Costs 1996-2006



Conflagration request and mobilization process

The request to invoke the *Emergency Conflagration Act* begins at the local level:

1. The local fire chief and county fire defense board chief determine mutual aid resources are depleted or determine the event to be beyond the capacity of local and mutual aid resources.
2. The State Fire Marshal receives notification from the fire defense board chief and verifies the critical need for mobilizing additional support.
3. If appropriate, the State Fire Marshal requests the Governor invoke the Conflagration Act so additional resources can be mobilized.

Incidents resulting in critical need may include, but are not limited to:

- Structural fires by sheer number, size or speed of fire spread
- Natural disasters such as earthquakes, floods, tsunamis or volcanic eruptions
- Human-caused disasters such as terrorist attacks

Each incident involves assessment of six decision criteria prior to activation of the Mobilization Plan:

1. Incident status
2. Area/terrain involved
3. Resources available
4. Factors at risk
5. Control concerns
6. Other contributing factors

Unprotected communities

Oregon fire departments protect structures within the boundaries of their jurisdiction. Many areas of Oregon remain unprotected by structural fire departments or districts.

Originating with the Governor's Fire Service Policy Council, current policy motivates communities to create Community Wildfire Protection Plans (CWPPs). Prior to a request for invoking the Conflagration Act, counties must:

- Have a CWPP
- Adopt construction standards requiring reduction of fire risk and structural ignitability, including fire siting standards for structures and roads
- Clarify language on county tax statements indicating the assessment for forest patrol does not include structural protection

Reimbursement

Per ORS 476.560 and 476.570, reimbursement for responding resources is assured only when the Governor invokes the Conflagration Act. The Mobilization Plan may be used separately from the Conflagration Act to mobilize local structural fire agencies for any emergency exceeding mutual aid resources.

Urban Search and Rescue

State Fire Marshal leadership recognized the existing emergency response needs and expectations beyond conflagration fires and developed the State of Oregon Urban Search and Rescue task force (OR-US&R). The OR-US&R is activated using the Mobilization Plan.

Environmental experts, emergency managers and fire service leaders have warned of Oregon's potential for natural disasters such as earthquakes, floods, tsunamis, volcanic eruptions and landslides. Possible terrorist attacks pose a similar disaster threat.

These disasters may quickly exhaust the capabilities of local emergency resources; and it may take federal resources as long as four days to arrive and provide assistance.

The goal of the OR-US&R is to fill the need between local fire service immediate response capability and large-scale federal resources by

providing trained personnel and specialized equipment for response to large-scale events involving structural collapse.

The OR-US&R was created by an ORS 190 Intergovernmental Agreement between fire departments (with technical rescue expertise), the Oregon Department of Transportation, Oregon Emergency Management and others.

The OR-US&R has Type 1 capability including:

- Triage of damaged structures and reconnaissance duties
- Assistance in stabilization of damaged structures
- Physical and electronic search and rescue in damaged structures
- Maintaining self-sufficiency for 72 hours and possible extended operations
- Specialized equipment cached in trailers ready for transport to the scene of an event

The OSFM continues to increase its focus on all-risk incidents and response and has created an Emergency Response Unit, centralizing the management of Incident Management Teams, the Oregon Urban Search and Rescue task force and the hazardous materials response teams.

This reorganization increases efficiency in communication, logistics, deployment standards and training, ultimately delivering a more effective, coordinated response to the citizens of Oregon, local governments and the Oregon fire service.