



## PRESS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release

# Cave Creek Wildland Fires: Two Years Ago

**Cave Creek, AZ**— Two years have passed since the devastating May 2020 fires in Cave Creek, Arizona. Together the two large fire incidents burned approximately 2,700+ acres of property and impacted several structures. Read on to learn what the community and the Town of Cave Creek have done to help protect the region from future wildland fires and to learn what steps you can take to contribute to protecting our town from this ongoing threat.

In 2021, the Town of Cave Creek hosted a variety of community discussions with residents and local business owners to gauge their interest and knowledge regarding the Town's local fire protection capabilities. These meetings evolved into Council action under the guidance of then Scottsdale Fire Deputy Chief Jim Ford. Ford has since joined the Town staff full-time and is continuing to assist with addressing the emergency fire and medical needs for this community. On January 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2022, Cave Creek opened its first Town Fire Station #1, in partnership with Daisy Mountain Fire and Medical who operate an additional four fire stations in the region. On January 7<sup>th</sup>, 2022, Cave Creek was officially accepted into the Regional Automatic Aid Response System. This now provides for a coordinated central dispatch and allows for quicker response of additional emergency units in the event of a large incident. In the event of an emergency always dial 911 and dispatch will route your calls to the appropriate services.

In a recent letter to the Town, Daisy Mountain Fire Chief Brian Tobin remarked -  
*"The Town of Cave Creek has come a long way since the summer of 2020 and the East Desert and Ocotillo wildland/urban interface fires. In less than 2 years you, partnering with the Daisy Mountain Fire District, have purchased a fire station, a fire engine, a brush truck, and hired and trained the fire fighter/paramedics needed to staff the station and equipment. And now inclusion in the Regional Automatic Aid System. This is truly exceptional considering the condensed timeline of events."*

Since the launch of the new fire department over 83% of the requests for service have been emergency medical related. On April 15<sup>th</sup> the Arizona Department of Health Services approved an extension of the Daisy Mountain Medical Ambulance Service to allow for an increase to their area that includes the Town of Cave Creek. Daisy Mountain ambulance M147 now calls the Cave Creek Fire Station its new home.

*"Getting to where we are now has been a huge collaborative effort and I'm happy to have been a part of it. Having the protections in place from the Regional Automatic Aid Partners still doesn't relieve us of our own personal responsibility to make sure we have Defensible Space around our structures!"*

- Cave Creek Mayor Ernie Bunch

While the improved level of fire protection is a relief residents in a Wildland Urban Interface Area (WUI) like the Cave Creek and Desert Hills communities still need to take individual measures to establish defensible space to help protect their properties and our town from the ongoing threat of wildland fires. Have you prepared fire breaks on your property? Do you remove invasive species and flash fuels from your yard? Do you track Red Flag Warning days? All Town residents need to understand that when the local Fire Danger Level is High and the Town therefore enacts Stage 1 and/or Stage 2 fire restrictions all spark generating activity is restricted in the Town of Cave Creek. This is a high desert town and officially classified as a wildland/urban interface (WUI) zone, which means it's flammable. Please educate yourselves and do your part to keep Cave Creek the thriving Sonoran oasis it is today.

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To inquire about the new Cave Creek emergency fire and medical services or to schedule a free wildland residential site inspection call Jim Ford : 480-488-6600. For additional fire safety educational materials visit [www.CaveCreekAZ.gov/FireSafety](http://www.CaveCreekAZ.gov/FireSafety).

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