



Fire District Board:

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Big Bear Lake Fire Protection District

February 12, 2010

Letters to the Editor
Grizzly Newspaper

To the Bear Valley Community:

With the recent significant snowfall, the majority of our fire hydrants lie buried under many feet of snow. In the event of a fire, firefighters may need to be able to quickly find and operate the nearest fire hydrant. Is the hydrant nearest to your home or place of business accessible or is it buried under several feet of snow?

Here are some facts: a structure fire doubles in size every minute. Precious minutes may be wasted while firefighters try to find a hydrant and then dig the snow out from around it. Fire engines carry 500 gallons of tank water, however, firefighting hose streams use about 90-150 gallons per minute, quickly depleting water supplies. Having a reliable and constant water supply during firefighting activities is critical.

Are snow poles or hydrant caps missing? Have you noticed a fire hydrant that is damaged or leaking? A leak can cause the entire hydrant to freeze up like an ice cube, making it useless in the event of an emergency.

Fire hydrant deficiencies are to be reported to the City of Big Bear Lake Department of Water and Power at 866.5050. For assistance with reducing significant berms burying fire hydrants, call the City of Big Bear Lake Department of Water and Power or the Department of Public Works at 866.7521.

With all the recent accumulation of snow, how does one locate the nearest fire hydrant? Fire hydrants are usually placed at intersections, spaced between 300-600 feet apart, and positioned at the entry to commercial, multi-family residential properties and at the end of cul-de-sacs. Snow poles help to identify their location.

The Department of Water and Power, Public Works Division and the Big Bear Lake Fire Protection District are working together to access fire hydrants buried by snow and/or ice. Realizing that snowfall and roadway clearing each contribute to the covering of fire hydrants, priorities have been established to clear hydrants in the City of Big Bear Lake.



Preserving Our Past...Protecting
Our Future

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Members of the community can assist by clearing a 3-foot circumference around their nearest fire hydrant. This provides the space needed for emergency personnel to access and operate the fire hydrant.

I encourage you to take the time today to inspect and clear your neighborhood fire hydrants. Caring for the fire hydrant nearest to your home or business supports the Fire District's continuing efforts to promote life safety and property protection in the community. Thank you for your support.

Sincerely,

RODNEY S. BALLARD
Fire Chief