★ PROUDLY SERVING OUR COMMUNITY SINCE 2025 ★

AVENAL FIRE DEPARTMENT

COURAGE ★ COMMITMENT ★ COMMUNITY



BUILDING A
SAFER AVENAL
Together

AFD
CITY OF AVENAL
FIRE
EST. 2025

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

YOUR QUESTIONS. OUR COMMITMENT.

- PROFESSIONAL SERVICE
- COMMUNITY FOCUSED
- SAFETY DRIVEN
- ALWAYS READY

YOUR SAFETY OUR MISSION
Dedicated to protecting lives, property, and our community.

24/7 SERVICE
Career and Reserve personnel staffed around the clock.

RESPONDING TOGETHER
Proudly serving the City of Avenal and beyond through mutual aid.

COMMITTED TO OUR COMMUNITY
Education, prevention, and partnerships make us stronger together.

READY FOR TOMORROW
Building a modern, innovative, and resilient fire department.

EMERGENCY
CALL 911
NON-EMERGENCY
(559) 386-5766

VISIT US ONLINE
avenalfire.org

FOLLOW US
@avenalfire

SCAN TO VISIT OUR WEBSITE!

AVENAL FIRE DEPARTMENT

Frequently Asked Questions

When I call 911, who responds?

Emergency calls within the City of Avenal are dispatched to the Avenal Fire Department. AFD provides the City's primary fire and emergency response and requests additional mutual-aid resources when an incident requires them.

Are Avenal firefighters volunteers or paid?

Avenal Fire is a combination fire department made up of paid professional firefighters and reserve firefighters. The department currently has 14 paid professional firefighters and approximately 20 reserve firefighters. Each day, AFD has a minimum of four paid personnel on duty, with reserve firefighters available to supplement staffing. This combination model provides additional operational flexibility, allowing the department to increase daily staffing, place additional response units in service, and strengthen emergency coverage for the community.

Is the Fire Department staffed 24 hours a day?

Yes. Avenal Fire maintains 24-hour emergency coverage. Career suppression personnel work a 48/96 schedule, with reserve firefighters and additional personnel supplementing daily staffing and Chief Officer coverage.

How many firefighters are on duty each day?

At a minimum, Avenal Fire staffs five firefighters each day. This provides one Type I engine staffed with a Captain, Engineer, and Firefighter, along with a second unit staffed with a Captain or Engineer and a Firefighter. All operational personnel are also EMTs. Reserve firefighters can supplement daily staffing, allowing AFD to staff up to eight personnel and three response units, along with additional Chief Officer coverage.

How quickly does Avenal Fire respond?

Based on the Department's June 1-August 7, 2026 operational data, AFD averaged approximately 2.5 minutes of travel time and an aggregate response time of approximately 3.8 minutes from dispatch to arrival on scene.

How many personnel does the department have?

Avenal Fire continues to grow as a combination department. The August 11 Chief's Update documented 26 total members at that point in the department's development, including paid professionals, intern firefighters, reserves/volunteers, and Chief Officers. Since then, AFD has continued expanding its paid and reserve staffing model.

What area does the Fire Department serve?

The Avenal Fire Department is the municipal fire department for the City of Avenal. During the June 1-August 7 reporting period, 201 of 206 incidents occurred in the Avenal Urban Zone and five occurred in the Avenal Rural Zone. AFD can also respond outside the City when requested through mutual aid, automatic aid, or other authorized cooperative agreements.

How many emergency vehicles does the department operate?

AFD's operational fleet includes Type 1 structural fire engines, a 100-foot aerial platform, a Type 6 patrol, a water tender, and a squad. The fleet continues to be developed to support structural, wildland, rescue, medical, and mutual-aid operations.

Does AFD respond outside the City?

Yes. Avenal participates in California's State Master Mutual Aid system and can assist neighboring jurisdictions when requested and when resources are available. During the June 1-August 7 reporting period, AFD used Master Mutual Aid assistance on four incidents, including residential and commercial structure fires, a vegetation fire, and an overlapping call.

What is mutual aid?

Mutual aid is a system that allows fire agencies to assist one another when an emergency exceeds the resources of a single department. It provides access to additional engines, trucks, Chief Officers, specialized resources, and personnel. Avenal Fire currently has a formal mutual-aid agreement with Coalinga Fire Department and is working to establish mutual-aid and/or automatic-aid partnerships with NAS Lemoore Fire, Avenal State Prison, Fresno County Fire Protection District, and Lemoore Volunteer Fire Department. The City has also requested mutual-aid agreements with Kings County Fire Department on multiple occasions; Kings County Fire has indicated that it is not interested in pursuing such an agreement at this time. AFD will continue developing regional partnerships that strengthen emergency response capability.

Does the Fire Department inspect businesses?

Yes. AFD conducts fire and life-safety inspections and works with businesses to identify hazards, improve compliance, and reduce risk. Inspection frequency and requirements depend on occupancy type and applicable law.

Why are fire inspections important?

Inspections help identify blocked exits, electrical hazards, fire-protection deficiencies, unsafe storage, access problems, and other conditions before they contribute to an emergency. Prevention and early correction of hazards are key components of AFD's Community Risk Reduction strategy.

How is AFD addressing weed abatement?

AFD used a **systematic, parcel-by-parcel inspection strategy** to establish community-wide coverage rather than relying only on complaints. The City was divided into **assigned inspection zones**, and AFD personnel conducted visual inspections of properties within those zones. When personnel identified dry vegetation, weeds, combustible accumulations, or other potential fire hazards, they **documented the condition with photographs and the property address**. The information was then provided to **City Code Enforcement for follow-up through the City's weed-abatement and nuisance process**. This approach allowed AFD to rapidly identify hazards across the community, create a documented record of conditions, and connect fire-prevention inspections with the City's enforcement process. During the June 1-August 7 reporting period, AFD documented approximately **2,100 weed-abatement inspections by parcel**.

Do I need a fire permit?

Some activities, operations, events, and hazardous processes require permits under applicable fire and life-safety codes. Contact AFD before beginning a regulated activity if you are unsure whether a permit or inspection is required.

What is CERT?

CERT - Community Emergency Response Team - teaches residents basic disaster-preparedness skills so they can better protect themselves, their families, and their neighborhoods during emergencies.

What is the Community Risk Reduction Committee?

The **Community Risk Reduction (CRR) Committee** is designed to help AFD put its mission and vision into action by bringing community members and the Fire Department together to identify local risks and develop practical prevention, education, preparedness, and injury-reduction strategies. AFD's mission calls for **data-informed response, proactive risk reduction, collaborative solutions, and stronger community resilience**, while its vision is to build a **modern, high-performing fire department recognized for innovation, operational excellence, and community partnership**. The CRR Committee directly supports both by creating a structured way for the community to participate in identifying problems, establishing priorities, developing solutions, and evaluating where prevention efforts can have the greatest impact. Just as importantly, the Committee is intended to **build trust through transparency, communication, collaboration, and shared ownership of community safety**. Rather than the Fire Department deciding alone what the community needs, CRR creates an ongoing partnership in which residents and community stakeholders have a voice in how AFD addresses risk. The goal is to strengthen relationships while reducing preventable fires, injuries, emergencies, and other hazards - helping AFD fulfill its commitment to **Building a Safer Avenal Together.**

What is the Safer Homes, Safer Avenal program?

AFD is actively working to implement **Safer Homes, Safer Avenal**, a Community Risk Reduction initiative designed to partner with **multifamily residential properties** to improve fire and life safety where residents live. The program will combine **resident-focused public education, voluntary fire-safety inspections of individual residential units, identification of common household fire hazards, and recommendations to property owners and managers for improving fire-safety features and conditions**. The goal is to bring residents, property management, and AFD together to identify risks before an emergency occurs, strengthen prevention and preparedness, and create safer multifamily communities throughout Avenal.

Does AFD offer CPR and first-aid classes?

Yes. In the June 1-August 7 reporting period alone, AFD conducted five CPR/AED classes reaching approximately 100 people. CPR, first aid, and related education are part of the Department's broader Community Risk Reduction program.

What public-education programs does AFD provide?

AFD's Community Risk Reduction work includes town halls, CPR/AED classes, fire drills, the Citizen Fire Academy, smoke-alarm installations, youth and daycare visits, community events, fire-safety education, and other outreach. AFD is also developing Safer Homes, Safer Avenal to expand prevention and education efforts within multifamily residential properties.

Can firefighters visit schools or community groups?

Yes. AFD works with schools, youth programs, businesses, civic groups, and community organizations. Early outreach included Kidz Spot visits, Happy Feet Day Care, community events, youth sports activities, fire drills, and public-safety education.

What has AFD accomplished since its establishment?

During **June-August 2026**, Avenal Fire responded to **308 incidents**. The call-type breakdown was **193 medical calls (62.7%), 55 no-emergency calls (17.9%), 24 other calls (7.8%), 19 fires (6.2%), 7 public-service calls (2.3%), 5 hazardous situations (1.6%), and 5 rescues (1.6%)**. During its early operational period, AFD also maintained staffing above the then-established two-person minimum on 94.1% of days and continued expanding Department staffing and operational capacity. AFD recorded approximately 715 community contacts, conducted five CPR/AED classes reaching about 100 people, provided smoke-alarm installation assistance to approximately 70 homes, and completed extensive parcel and weed-abatement inspection work. The Department also expanded its apparatus and operational capacity, participated in California's State Master Mutual Aid system, developed regional partnerships, applied for approximately $1.3 million through the SAFER program for six firefighter positions and $26,000 through the FEMA AFG program for training, and received a DripDrop hydration grant.

What partnerships has the department developed?

AFD has developed or pursued partnerships with Coalinga Fire Department, NAS Lemoore Fire, Avenal State Prison, Lemoore Fire Department, Fresno County Fire Protection District, CALTERRA, State of California Workforce Development, Fresno City College, and West Hills College. These partnerships support mutual/automatic aid, training, workforce development, internships, emergency-management education, and career pathways.

How can I volunteer?

Reserve and volunteer opportunities depend on current department needs and eligibility requirements. AFD's workforce-development partnerships also support training and experience opportunities for volunteers and developing firefighters. **Current Reserve Firefighter, volunteer, and other City employment opportunities are posted through the City of Avenal's Job Opportunities webpage:** www.cityofavenal.com/jobs
Interested applicants should review current postings for qualifications, application instructions, and recruitment status.

Can I tour the fire station?

Station tours may be available by arrangement and are subject to emergency response, staffing, training, and operational needs.

How can I request the Fire Department for an event?

Community organizations may contact AFD to request apparatus displays, public-education presentations, school visits, CPR programs, or participation in community events. AFD has actively participated in town halls, youth programs, public education, community celebrations, and other local events.

What are AFD's goals for the future?

AFD's priorities include sustaining strong daily staffing, maintaining multiple staffed response resources, continuing apparatus and operational development, expanding firefighter training and professional development, strengthening regional mutual/automatic-aid partnerships, pursuing grant funding, and growing Community Risk Reduction and workforce-development programs.

What qualifications do Avenal firefighters have?

Operational personnel are trained and certified for their assigned duties based on the needs of the organization. AFD personnel may hold **California State Fire Marshal (CSFM)/State Fire Training professional certifications** or recognized equivalent **Pro Board or IFSAC** certifications appropriate to the position. Qualifications may include Fire Fighter I/II, wildland firefighting, hazardous materials, EMT, driver/operator, rescue, instructor, officer, prevention/inspection, and other specialized certifications.

What qualifications do Engineers have?

Engineers are responsible for safely driving and operating fire apparatus, pumps, water systems, and assigned equipment while also performing firefighter duties. Depending on assignment and organizational needs, qualifications may include **CSFM/SFT Fire Fighter I and II** and **Fire Apparatus Driver/Operator - Pumping Apparatus (D/O 1A and 1B)**. Engineers assigned to specialized apparatus may also hold **Aerial Apparatus (D/O 1C), Wildland Fire Apparatus, and/or Water Tender Apparatus** certifications. Additional qualifications may include EMT, wildland, hazardous-materials, rescue, and other operational certifications. AFD may recognize appropriate **Pro Board or IFSAC-accredited equivalents** based on reciprocity/equivalency requirements and organizational need.

What qualifications do Fire Captains have?

Fire Captains supervise personnel and company-level emergency operations and are responsible for incident command, crew safety, training, readiness, and operational decision-making. Depending on assignment and organizational needs, qualifications may include **CSFM/SFT Fire Fighter I and II** and **Company Officer** certification or a recognized equivalent. The Company Officer curriculum includes **2A Human Resource Management, 2B General Administrative Functions, 2C Fire Inspections and Investigation, 2D All-Risk Command Operations, and 2E Wildland Incident Operations**. Captains may also hold **Fire and Emergency Services Instructor**, applicable Driver/Operator, EMT, wildland, hazardous-materials, rescue, inspection/prevention, and other certifications. AFD may recognize appropriate **Pro Board or IFSAC-accredited equivalents** consistent with reciprocity/equivalency requirements and organizational need.

How often do firefighters train?

Training is continuous. Avenal firefighters are required to complete a minimum of 240 hours of continuing education and training each year in firefighting and related disciplines. As members advance into positions such as Engineer or Captain, additional continuing education is required. Because AFD members are also EMTs, they must complete 24 hours of EMS continuing education every two years, along with the required skills competency assessment, to maintain EMT certification. A Fire Captain may complete more than 300 hours of continuing education annually across structural and wildland firefighting, EMS, leadership and command, hazardous materials, apparatus operations, rescue, and other professional-development requirements.

How do I report a fire hazard or safety concern?

For an immediate threat to life, property, or the environment, call 911. For a non-emergency fire or life-safety concern, contact the Avenal Fire Department at **559-317-9886**.

When should I call 911 versus a non-emergency number?

Call 911 for an emergency requiring an immediate response, including a fire, medical emergency, vehicle collision with injuries or hazards, rescue, hazardous condition, or an immediate threat to life or property. Use **559-317-9886** for routine AFD questions or non-emergency concerns.

How can my family prepare for an emergency or disaster?

AFD recommends following FEMA's Ready.gov preparedness framework: **make a plan, build a kit, and stay informed.** Your household plan should identify evacuation routes and meeting places, transportation needs, and how family members will reconnect if separated. Designate an **out-of-area contact**, keep written contact information with each family member, and remember that text messages may work when voice calls do not. Practice and update the plan regularly.

Build an emergency supply kit capable of supporting your household for several days. FEMA recommends water and nonperishable food, medications, first-aid supplies, flashlights, batteries and chargers, a battery-powered or hand-crank radio, sanitation supplies, local maps, and copies of important documents. Include supplies for children, older adults, disabilities or access and functional needs, medical equipment, and pets. Keep a portable go-kit available if evacuation becomes necessary.

Prepare before the emergency. Know evacuation routes and how you would shelter in place, maintain working smoke and carbon-monoxide alarms, learn CPR and first aid, and know how to safely shut off utilities when appropriate. Keep vehicles reasonably fueled or charged and follow official instructions during an incident. AFD also encourages residents to participate in preparedness programs such as CERT when available.

How can I receive emergency notifications and alerts?

Stay connected with Avenal Fire through **Facebook and Instagram @avenalfire**. Residents can also download **PulsePoint Respond** and follow Avenal Fire for real-time information about emergency incidents and public-interest notifications. AFD communication channels also provide emergency and non-emergency news, preparedness information, public-safety updates, and community information.

What should I do if I accidentally dial 911?

Do not hang up. Stay on the line and tell the dispatcher that the call was accidental and that there is no emergency. If you hang up, the dispatcher may need to call back or take additional steps to verify that you are safe. Accidental calls should never prevent someone from calling 911 when a real emergency exists.

Are smoke alarms required, and how often should they be tested?

Smoke alarms are an essential part of home fire safety and should be installed and maintained in accordance with applicable requirements and the manufacturer's instructions. Test your smoke alarms **at least once each month** and replace batteries or alarms when required. **Working smoke alarms save lives:** National Fire Protection Association research found that the death rate in reported home fires is approximately **60% lower in homes with working smoke alarms** than in homes with no smoke alarms or alarms that failed to operate. NFPA also found that **59% of home fire deaths** occurred in properties with no smoke alarms or alarms that did not operate. AFD's Community Risk Reduction efforts include smoke-alarm assistance; during the June 1-August 7 reporting period, the Department provided smoke-alarm installation assistance to approximately **70 homes**.

What are my responsibilities regarding weed abatement and maintaining defensible space?

City of Avenal requirements: Property owners and occupants are responsible for preventing fire hazards and public nuisances on their property. Under the Avenal Municipal Code, dry or dead shrubs, dead trees, combustible refuse or waste, and other material determined by the Fire Department to constitute a fire hazard may be declared a public nuisance. Lawns or grasses exceeding **six inches** and visible on the property are also identified as a nuisance condition. Occupants of property adjoining a public alley are responsible for keeping the area between the property line and the middle of the alley free of weeds, garbage, rubbish, combustible material, and similar accumulations.

How the abatement process works: The City's current practice generally begins with a courtesy door hanger or verbal warning and approximately **10 days to correct the condition**. If the hazard remains, Code Enforcement documents the condition and may issue additional written notices with progressively shorter compliance periods. A formal Notice of Abatement Citation may require correction within a period not exceeding 10 days. Continued noncompliance can result in citations and ultimately City or contractor abatement. The property owner can be responsible for the City's actual abatement and administrative costs, and unpaid costs may ultimately become a lien or assessment against the property. Conditions that are imminently dangerous to life or adjacent property may be subject to expedited action.

Wildfire and Firewise best practices: In addition to minimum City requirements, residents are encouraged to reduce fuels around structures. Keep the first **0-5 feet (Zone 0)** as ember-resistant and noncombustible as practical; remove dead vegetation and debris and avoid storing combustible materials next to the home. Keep the **5-30 foot area (Zone 1)** lean, clean, and green, and reduce continuous vegetation and other fuels in the **30-100 foot area (Zone 2)** where applicable. Keep roofs and gutters clear, remove combustible material beneath decks, maintain vegetation spacing, and preserve clear access for emergency apparatus. These Firewise practices supplement - rather than replace - the City's enforceable nuisance and weed-abatement requirements.

MISSION

Advance public safety through data-informed response, proactive risk reduction, and collaborative solutions that protect people, safeguard property, and strengthen community resilience.

VISION

Build a modern, high-performing fire department recognized for innovation, operational excellence, and community partnership.

OUR VALUES

Alignment	**Collaboration**
Trust	**Integrity**
Compassion	**Growth**

BUILDING A SAFER AVENAL TOGETHER