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The Woodland Fire Department has brought in a team of instructors to teach wildland safety training for the next two weeks at Fire Station 3. Titled **S290 Intermediate Widland Fire Behavior**, this course is the 2nd in a national curriculum series of fire behavior courses designed to give firefighters the recognition clues they need to monitor and predict changes in weather and fire activity while working in a wildland fire environment. Areas of instruction include atmospheric stability, conditions for critical wind behavior, weather processes, micro climates, topographic effect on weather and fire behavior, weather and fire predictive modeling.

The course is being team taught by Patrick Shreffler and Mike Smith. Shreffler, retired from the US Forest Service and the Kern County Fire Department, helped develop this curriculum and teaches this course all over the state and the country. With 38 years of experience fighting and managing wildland fires, Shreffler presently serves on a federal incident management team. Smith has worked for the National Weather Service for 20 years and is the most experienced fire-incident meteorologist in the system, serving at over campaign 50 fires.

Jim Burau, Training Battalion Chief, coordinated this class in order to maximize the safety to firefighters and to get them closer to State and national certification for wildland firefighting. "This class is important to our firefighters because it has been determined that 90% of wildland fire deaths have occurred following a change in weather conditions caused by wind, humidity, or atmospheric stability" says Burau.

This course is a 32-hour course and will be repeated three times for each of the fire department's three shifts making up the two week period. This course was advertised throughout the fire service community and over 70 firefighters from throughout northern California, as well as our own Woodland Firefighters, will receive the training.

First picture:

Mike Smith with the National Weather Service lecturing on daily temperature lag

Second picture:

Woodland Fire Engineers (L to R) Walter Scruggs and Jim Zuniga measure wind speed and wind direction- data used with other measurements to determine current and predictive weather conditions.

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