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NNSS, BOULDER CITY FIREFIGHTERS JOIN FORCES FOR BURN DRILL

LAS VEGAS, Nev. – Firefighters from the Nevada National Security Site (NNSS) and the Boulder City Fire Department joined forces for the first time March 24-26 to conduct a Live Burn Drill at the Las Vegas Fire and Rescue Training Center on Bonanza Road.



The training, which has firefighters entering different floors of a burn tower and locating and extinguishing a pre-set blaze, is critical for maintaining skills in fighting fire while in heavy smoke and heat using their Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus, or SCBAs. It also afforded the departments the opportunity to practice mutual aid support.

“Our focus is on bringing in a mutual aid partner and learning how to interface, communicate and integrate as a team,” NNSS Deputy Fire Chief John Gamby said. “Our firefighters only get the chance to practice live burns once a year, but it’s important for maintaining readiness.”

“This is invaluable training because we don’t have enough people to come down here and do this while staffing all the positions you need to fight fire in a live burn,” added Boulder City Division Chief Chuck Gebhart. “We also have a few new guys; this is their first time going in.”

NNSS Fire and Rescue consists of about 60 employees, including firefighters, paramedics and administrative personnel. They maintain two fire stations at the NNSS that service the 1,365 square mile site for the National Nuclear Security Administration/Nevada Field Office. They also serve local communities in Pahrump, Beatty and Armagosa.

Gamby said working with other departments like Boulder City and Las Vegas are important to helping share experience and techniques that can help everyone benefit during an emergency. The NNSS conducts similar exercises both at the Site and in local communities all throughout the year. Cadets from the Las Vegas Fire Explorer Program also participated.

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