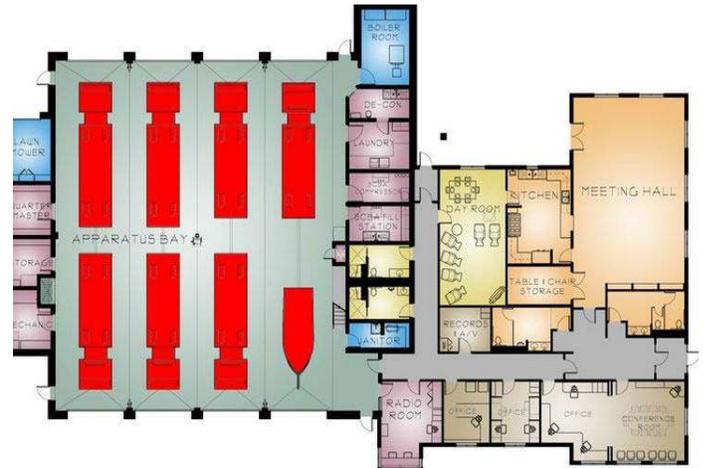


BEEP Kids Sketch November 13, 2021 | Fire Station #50 | San Diego, California

For more than 152 years, City of San Diego firefighters have kept a vigilant watch over their community. The Department's history is as rich and diverse as the area it serves.

Firefighting in San Diego, Pre-1900

On May 17, 1869, the Pioneer Hook & Ladder Company was established in San Diego with a budget of \$250 and a volunteer staff of 50 people. By 1872, the Department had acquired its first Engine Company, Company 1, for a cost of \$900. Engine Company 1 consisted of a thin, high wheeled, horse drawn wagon with twelve buckets hung over the side for hand-filled bucket brigades. By 1887, volunteers used steam engines to battle fires. San Diego had two horse drawn steam fire engines, a hose wagon with 3,500 feet of hose, and eleven horses.



Firehouse or Fire Station – It is the same?

We don't think many people would say there's a formal distinction between a firehouse and a fire station, but you're probably more likely to see "firehouse" used to refer to a station in a small town.

It's All About the Passion – Life as a Firefighter

One thing that's true about all firefighters: you have to have the passion to do this job for any length of time. Sure, some grit and strength can get you through life as a firefighter for a while. But if you want to be a lifelong firefighter, you have to have the passion. You're going to see things that you've never seen before. Your job will be to aid people in their time of need. It's personally rewarding, but it takes a lot of effort to get there.

A Fire Department Is Born

Because of a shortage of horses, ladder trucks had to be pulled by the firefighters. San Diego's population grew from 3,000 in 1880 to 30,000 by 1887. On August 5, 1889, a City Charter Amendment established the San Diego City Fire Department. The department started with forty-one men, eleven horses, two Steam Fire Engines; one Hose Wagon, two Hose Carts, one Hook & Ladder; and four thousand feet of hose.

