



SHAUN HALL/Daily Courier

Grants Pass Fire Marshal Brian Pike drives a 1927 fire engine on Wednesday into its home at a new police and fire station on the Grants Pass Parkway. A grand opening for the station is planned for early summer, although police and firefighters already are using the center.

New station up and running

Police, firefighters settling in at Parkway Public Safety Center

By Shaun Hall
of the Daily Courier

Moving can be such fun. Boxes of stuff. Workmen putting the finishing touches to new construction. Firefighters pushing in an old fire engine.

Gawkers. The city's newest and most conspicuous fire and police station quietly (except for the sirens) became operational last week for firefighters. This week, police moved in, as did some of the city's antique fire engines, which will be on permanent display there. Fire prevention personnel will soon move in.

On Wednesday, workmen tended to landscaping and caulking. Boxes of all that comes with a big move were

piled in corners and hallways. A telephone contractor was due later in the day.

Upstairs, firefighter Marty Adamo wrestled with an audiovisual system for the station's public education and training room, which is due to be used next week for the start of a citizens public safety academy.

There have been computer systems and radio systems to get up and running.

"It's been wild," said Lang Johnson, deputy chief in charge of the city's fire division. "There's a lot to do."

The station — which goes by the name Parkway Public Safety Center — replaces a relatively small two-bay building across the Grants Pass Parkway.

"Essentially, all we did was

move a truck from that bay over there," Johnson said, nodding toward the Parkway.

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The new center is the second station to open in the last six months. A Redwood-area police and fire station opened in October, courtesy of a voter-approved bond measure.

About half of the city's police patrol force will work out of the new Parkway Center.

"We're excited to be here, and very grateful," Johnson said. "It means a lot. It's a great representation of what this community is about."

Ironically, if voters defeat a

tax levy proposal in May, as they did in November, there likely would be fewer people to man the new station.

One person who favors the new station is Judi Castellano, sales and marketing director for The Suites, an assisted living facility across East Park Street from the center. Firefighters already have dropped by, and the late-night sirens haven't prompted complaints from residents, she said.

Instead, it's a comfort having help that much closer. And residents have enjoyed watching the construction.

"They are so happy to have them there," she said.

A grand opening event for the center is planned for early summer.