

Affiliate Sponsor VIP Responds to Valley Fire in Support of Lake County Winegrowers

Lake County Winegrape Commission - November 30, 2015



VIP employee Bugui arrives with straw wattles. *Photo by Carolyn Marchetti*

Vineyard Industry Products (VIP), an affiliate sponsor of the Lake County Winegrape Commission, stepped up to assist grape growers who were impacted by the Valley Fire in southern Lake County in September.

VIP donated much-needed straw wattle to several winegrowers, providing them with material to help with erosion control following the damage caused by the fire. VIP generously donated 24 pallets of straw wattle, totaling 288 wattles with each roll measuring 25 feet long.

“The team at Vineyard Industry Products reached out to us right after the fire started to ask how they could help Lake County’s vineyard owners,” said Winegrape Commission President Debra Sommerfield. “We really appreciate the support and incredible generosity of VIP and so many others across our industry.”

VIP President Sunni Ashley said, “We believe in supporting those organizations that support our growers. We appreciate the opportunity to be a part of the Lake County winegrape community — producers of quality grapes for decades.”

VIP has served the vineyard industry since 1979 when then-owners Paul and Laraine Downer started the business out of their home in Santa Rosa. “The company had six phone lines coming into the house and stored its inventory at the Shone farm,” Ashley said.

Ashley and John Downer, Paul’s son, officially took over operations in 2000, and the company has since grown to three California locations in Windsor, Los Alamos, and Paso Robles.

“We are committed to providing the winegrape industry with quality products at the best possible prices,” said Joel Castaneda, VIP Division Manager and Purchasing Agent. “We have a long-standing reputation for excellent customer service, on-time deliveries, and staying true to our word.”

Ashley noted that VIP staff keeps attuned to laws and technologies affecting grape growing



VIP truck passes through burned trees to deliver wattles. *Photo by Carolyn Marchetti*

and watches for new products to help growers stay compliant and “make their lives easier.”

VIP carries a complete line of vineyard trellis systems and supplies such as highway stakes, T-posts, wire, clips, anchors, grow tubes, milk cartons, bird netting, pruning supplies, and night lighting supplies. Among the products available is VIP’s patented J-R Clip® (Pat #5501035 & #5916028), one of the innovative, cost-effective solutions VIP developed over the years.

VIP Sales Representative Jose Avila spends much of his time in Lake County and is available to assist growers. Avila may be reached at (707) 540-3575, javila@vinbiz.com. For quotes or information, contact Michael Owens at the Windsor location, (707) 837-5410, michaelo@vinbiz.com.

For more information, visit the [VIP web site](#).



Offloading wattles. *Photo by Carolyn Marchetti*



Bugui gets a thank you for delivering much needed wattles. *Photo by Carolyn Marchetti*