



NEWS RELEASE

County Administrative Office

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Fire Chief Mark Hartwig taking the reins in Santa Barbara County



San Bernardino County Fire Chief Mark Hartwig today accepted an offer to serve as fire chief for Santa Barbara County.

After serving nearly eight years at the helm of the San Bernardino County Fire Protection District, his final day with the district will be Feb. 15.

“Building a team of leaders and succession has been a high priority for me. We have a talented group of leaders at County Fire that will move forward as the Board decides how to select my replacement,” Hartwig said.

“Chief Hartwig has been a steadfast and effective leader for San Bernardino County,” said Board of Supervisors Chairman Curt Hagman, who represents the Fourth District. “The County has benefited from his expertise in emergency medical services and his service on behalf of our community. We will miss working with him and look forward to seeing him succeed in his new role.”

Hartwig became San Bernardino County fire chief on May 2, 2011 after serving as a deputy chief in Rancho Cucamonga. Hartwig had previously served with the San Bernardino County Fire Department from 1992 until 2005.

The Fire District underwent tremendous growth during Hartwig’s tenure, including a partnership with the Crest Forest Fire Protection District and the cities of Needles, Hesperia, San Bernardino, Upland and Twentynine Palms to annex into the district

Hartwig was recognized as the 2017 California Fire Chief of the Year by the California State Fire Chiefs’ Association and was appointed by then-Governor Brown to the California Commission on Emergency Medical Services on which he continues to serve.

“Fire Chief Mark Hartwig has served San Bernardino County for nearly eight years, successfully leading the department through many challenging times,” said Board of Supervisors Vice Chair Josie Gonzales, who represents the Fifth District. “I wish him well as he moves into this next phase of his professional career.”

“Chief Hartwig raised the bar for public safety, emergency response and departmental professionalism. His pursuit of excellence for San Bernardino County Fire will be missed,” said Second District Supervisor Janice Rutherford.

“I appreciate Chief Hartwig’s service to the County of San Bernardino,” said First District Supervisor Robert Lovingood. “During his tenure, the chief has been a strong advocate for the county, always willing to assist when his agency is called upon to help ensure our constituents receive the best possible service. The First District experienced some significant fires in recent years, and I want to thank Chief Hartwig again for his leadership during those moments of crisis. I wish the chief all the best as he transitions into this new leadership opportunity.”

“Chief Hartwig has proven himself to be an invaluable asset, especially during some of the most trying times in our county’s history,” said Third District Supervisor Dawn Rowe. “I appreciate his service to Third District residents and our county as a whole.”

One of the many areas in which Hartwig has distinguished himself is his collaboration with law enforcement in the pursuit of public safety. Under his leadership, County Fire partnered with the Sheriff in creating an Airship Program for firefighting and emergency medical response and the Inmate Hand Crew Program. Hartwig also helped develop a protocol in which fire personnel enter active shooter situations with law enforcement to ensure immediate medical aid to victims.

“I’d like to congratulate Chief Hartwig and wish him well on his new endeavor,” said Sheriff John McMahon. “I’m sure Mark will do a phenomenal job for the citizens of Santa Barbara County as he did here in San Bernardino. Mark has been a great partner in our efforts to deliver public safety. He has been at the forefront of progress, innovating services and collaboration between our departments.”

The County will make an announcement about the future leadership of the San Bernardino County Fire Protection District at some point prior to Feb. 15.

“It has been my honor to lead such a talented and distinguished team of men and women. They have accomplished more than I ever imagined was possible,” Hartwig said. “County Fire is well-positioned to address future opportunities and challenges.”