



NEWS



News Headlines 3/22/2018

- Cajon Pass Thursday Morning Traffic Update
- Victorville taps Benson to lead city Fire Department
- Victorville Fire Chief chosen to lead new city-run fire department
- Victorville hires fire chief for new department
- Fontana Rotary Club will help with donation of fire engines to needy communities in Mexico

Cajon Pass Thursday Morning Traffic Update

Staff Writer, VVNG

Posted: March 22, 2018

CAJON PASS, Calif. (VVNG.com) — Multiple crashes, spinouts, and rain are causing traffic delays for motorists traveling through the Cajon Pass Thursday morning.

At 4:51 am, a black SUV lost control, rolled, and landed on its roof on the southbound 15, north of Kenwood Avenue. The crash prompted lane closures and as of 6:53 am, the no. 1 lane remains blocked as officials continue to wait for a tow truck. The cause of the crash remains under investigation.

Just before 6:00 am, California Highway Patrol incident logs, reported a rollover traffic collision on the northbound 15 freeway, north of Cleghorn Road. According to the logs, a Jeep and a sedan were involved in a crash and blocking the no. 1-3 lanes. The sedan overturned and landed on its roof in the no. 1 lane

Firefighters with San Bernardino County Fire responded and treated one patient with non-life threatening injuries. The no. 3 and 4 lanes have re-opened as of 6:48 am. Motorist are reporting traffic is backed-up to the 15/215 split.

As of 7:00 am, there are no major incidents to report on the northbound side, however, motorists are reporting a major slow down as they approach the accident near Kenwood on the northbound side.

<http://www.vvng.com/cajon-pass-thursday-morning-traffic-update/>

Victorville taps Benson to lead city Fire Department

Shea Johnson, Daily Press

Posted: March 21, 2018, 11:53 a.m.



Greg Benson

City officials said his experience leading the establishment of a new department and his focus on community engagement were major factors in their decision.

VICTORVILLE — The city has tapped Greg Benson, a former fire chief with more than 35 years of public safety experience, to serve as the head of the Victorville Fire Department, officials said Wednesday.

Benson will oversee the city's underway transition from **San Bernardino County Fire** to its own agency. He is expected to begin April 23.

The choice comes after conclusion of a nationwide search for a top official. A native of Illinois, Benson most recently oversaw the formation of the Fox River and Countryside Fire Protection District in Illinois, serving as the fire chief there for five years.

City officials said his experience leading the establishment of a new department and his focus on community engagement were major factors in their decision.

“In addition to leading the formation of a new fire department, Greg has helped fire departments nationwide achieve highly coveted accreditation status,” Interim City Manager Keith Metzler said in a statement. “These experiences along with his sincere commitment to community involvement make Greg the ideal person to lead our city’s Fire Department, oversee its formation, and ensure it achieves service excellence.”

Since retiring in 2015, Benson has acted as a professional services consultant assisting fire departments nationwide to achieve accreditation status. Benson will immediately be charged with staffing the new department.

But in the long-run, officials hope he can garner accreditation status for the new department — a status reportedly achieved by less than 1 percent of the nation’s municipal fire agencies.

“Being chosen to serve as Victorville’s Fire Chief after a nationwide search is both humbling and an honor,” Benson said in a statement. “This is a very unique opportunity, and I will draw on my diverse professional experiences and education to contribute to the future safety of Victorville.”

City officials have said a reactivation of its decade-long dormant city Fire Department will reduce spending by 5 percent annually and equate to a \$3.8 million savings in the first five years — a shift supported by the majority Council. After the first five years, officials expect cost savings of roughly 14 percent annually and also 70 percent less in pension costs than if the city were to continue with County Fire.

Councilman Eric Negrete and Councilwoman Blanca Gomez have expressed concerns about rising pension costs through CalPERS and whether the move had been fully vetted.

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<http://www.vvdailypress.com/news/20180321/victorville-taps-benson-to-lead-city-fire-department>

Victorville Fire Chief chosen to lead new city-run fire department

Staff Writer, VVNG

Posted: March 21, 2018

VICTORVILLE, Calif. – After a nationwide search, the City of Victorville has chosen Greg Benson, a former fire chief with more than 35 years of experience in public safety, to serve as Fire Chief for its new city-run fire department. Benson will oversee the formation of the City’s Fire Department while Victorville transitions from contract fire services with **San Bernardino County Fire**. Benson’s start date is April 23, and division chief and battalion chief interviews for the new fire department will soon follow. The City’s transition from City Fire is expected to be complete by December 2018 with the Victorville Fire Department operational on Jan. 1, 2019.

Benson, a native of Illinois, possesses a depth of knowledge and variety of experience at operations, administration and command levels in fire suppression, emergency medical services, hazardous materials and emergency management. During his career, he has served at all fire department ranks from firefighter to fire chief.

During his most recent assignment, Benson oversaw the formation of the Fox River and Countryside Fire Protection District in Illinois where he served as the district’s fire chief for five years. City officials point to this experience in leading the establishment of a new fire department and a commitment to community engagement as leading factors in their decision to hire Benson.

“In addition to leading the formation of a new fire department, Greg has helped fire departments nationwide achieve highly-coveted accreditation status,” said Interim City Manager, Keith Metzler. “These experiences along with his sincere commitment to community involvement make Greg the ideal person to lead our City’s Fire Department, oversee its formation, and ensure it achieves service excellence.”

Since retiring from the Fox River and Country Fire Protection District in 2015, Benson has served as a professional services consultant helping fire departments nationwide achieve accreditation status. He will call on this experience to create a framework for the organization of the Victorville Fire Department with the goals of meeting organizational priorities including one day garnering accreditation status for the new Victorville Fire Department – a status achieved by less than one percent of the nation’s municipal fire departments.

Benson’s immediate responsibility; however, will be staffing the new fire department. “My job will be to assemble the right team of people who share the same passion and service orientation,” said Benson. “Our priorities will be service, safety and excellence for the people and businesses of Victorville.”

Benson holds numerous executive level emergency service certifications and is designated a Chief Fire Officer by the Center for Public Safety Excellence. He earned a Master in Public Administration from Northern Illinois University and is pursuing a graduate degree in organizational development from Benedictine University.

“Being chosen to serve as Victorville’s Fire Chief after a nationwide search is both humbling and an honor,” said Benson. “This is a very unique opportunity, and I will draw on my diverse professional experiences and education to contribute to the future safety of Victorville.”

The Victorville City Council authorized the establishment of a new city fire department on Jan. 16. City officials estimate annual cost savings of five percent or a total of \$3.8 million within the first five years of city

fire operations. After the first five years, cost savings are estimated to be 14 percent annually and 70 percent less in pension costs than that of County Fire.

Additional job openings including those for firefighter/paramedics, captains, engineers and more will be posted on the City of Victorville website at www.victorvilleca.gov. Questions can be directed to the City of Victorville Human Resources Department at (760) 955-5049.

Located in Southern California at the mid-point between Los Angeles and Las Vegas, Victorville is the leading city for both industry and retail in the High Desert region. Victorville is a growing, vibrant community that is home to approximately 120,000 residents and some of the area's largest employers. Clean air, abundant mountain vistas, family-friendly recreational activities, spectacular sunsets and breathtaking night skies entice locals and visitors alike to fall in love with this city that is within a few hours of SoCal beaches, National Parks, mountain retreats, Ontario International Airport, and other major attractions.

<http://www.vvng.com/victorville-fire-chief-chosen-to-lead-new-city-run-fire-department/>

Victorville hires fire chief for new department

Staff Writer, Inland News

Posted: March 21, 2018

VICTORVILLE – (INT) – A retired Illinois fire chief has been appointed to guide the formation of the city's new fire department by the end of the year.

Victorville has contracted with San Bernardino County for fire protection.

Incoming fire chief Greg Benson most recently guided the formation of the Fox River and Countryside Fire Protection District in Illinois where he served as the district's fire chief for five years.

When he takes over April 23rd, Benson's immediate responsibility will be staffing the new fire department.

The Victorville City Council authorized the establishment of a new city fire department on January 16th. City officials estimate annual cost savings of five percent or a total of \$3.8 million within the first five years of city fire operations. After the first five years, cost savings are estimated to be 14 percent annually and 70 percent less in pension costs than that of County Fire.

<http://www.inlandnewstoday.com/story.php?s=50069>

Fontana Rotary Club will help with donation of fire engines to needy communities in Mexico

Staff Writer, Fontana Herald News

Posted: March 21, 2018

The San Bernardino County Board of Supervisors on March 20 approved the transfer of two surplus fire engines to the Fontana Rotary Club so the club can transfer the equipment to needy communities in Mexico.

“I applaud the Fontana Rotary Club for always being there to help communities in need,” San Bernardino County 2nd District Supervisor Janice Rutherford said. “These two fire engines no longer meet stringent standards here in the U.S., but they still have years of useful life in them, and I am glad to know they will continue to protect lives and property thanks to our friends at the Fontana Rotary Club.”

The two 1991 Spartan Monarch Type I fire engines will be transferred to the club, which will then transfer them to fire departments in Mexicali and San Felipe with the help of local Rotary Clubs.

The equipment no longer meets NFPA 1971 “Standard on Protective Ensembles for Structural Fire Fighting and Proximity Fire Fighting” or Fed-OSHA CFR 1910, Subpart L. Therefore, the fire engines are not useable by any local or state entities.

https://www.fontanaheraldnews.com/news/fontana-rotary-club-will-help-with-donation-of-fire-engines/article_b4eb0bfa-2d3d-11e8-a741-cf6722edd0a7.html