



NEWS



News Headlines 06/28/2021

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Apple Valley has a new fire chief

Rene De La Cruz, Victorville Daily Press

Posted: June 27, 2021



Ken Harrison, Apple Valley Fire Protection District's new fire chief, said he's excited to get to know people in the community.

After decades of working for the Orange County Fire Authority, Fire Chief Ken Harrison is now overseeing the Apple Valley Fire Protection District.

The 55-year-old Harrison told the Daily Press he took the position after being a part of Orange County's "big machine," which includes 1,400 firefighters, 11 battalions and 77 fire stations.

"The Orange County Fire Authority is so big that you don't get the opportunity to know the people you work with and the community you serve," Harrison said in an interview. "I want to spend the next five to 10 years building relationships in-house and throughout Apple Valley."

Harrison became familiar with the AVFPD over the years, and said he found its firefighters, risk reduction program, wildland fuels management, inspection, and support personnel to be some of the finest he had seen.

Apple Valley Fire welcomed Harrison and his wife, Suzanne, who works as an ER nurse, to the district in a social media post last week.

"During the application process, we knew that Ken was the perfect fit," said Sid Hultquist, an AVFPD board member and former fire chief in the district. "He has plenty of experience, is highly intelligent and he's a guy that's driven by relationships and getting out into the community."

Hultquist, who also serves as acting fire chief for the Barstow Fire Department, said Harrison replaces Fire Chief Lorenzo Gigliotti, who recently retired and relocated to Missouri after being hired in 2017.

During Tuesday's Town Council meeting, Mayor Curt Emick introduced Harrison, who said he was "honored and humbled" to be in Apple Valley.

Emick asked Harrison to explain how the district would handle fireworks season in Apple Valley.

Harrison said the issue of illegal fireworks is a large concern for any public safety agency, adding that the district is preparing for an increase in usage in the time leading up to the Fourth of July holiday.

"We're approaching this from a task force arrangement where we're going to have extra units on patrol," said Harrison, who hopes the presence of fire personnel will deter firework usage in the community.

Harrison's career

Harrison spent the last 25 years with the Orange County Fire Authority. His last assignment was a nearly eight-year stint as battalion chief, and aircraft rescue and firefighting program manager for the city of Irvine and John Wayne Airport in Santa Ana.

In Irvine, Harrison said he led the execution of emergency services and delivery of risk-reduction plans.

He managed response activities to high-profile incidents and performed safety officer responsibilities, as well. He also scheduled city-wide activities and actively contributed to new employee development.

Harrison conducted fire authority research and engaged with city and county officials to ensure service. He also successfully managed a \$5 million contract for fire safety services with attention to recruitment and training to expand training activities to include mutual aid agencies.

Since December 1994, Harrison has served as fire captain, paramedic administrative fire captain, and coordinator for the Wellness and Fitness program and Firefighter Academy Cadre.

During his career, Harrison served with several other California fire agencies, including the Carlsbad Fire Department, Tahoe-Douglas Fire Protection District and Riverside City Fire Department.

Family and education

The Harrisons have three children, including Charlie "Chuck" Harrison, 23, a professional downhill mountain bike racer who works for Trek Factory Racing.

Cody Harrison, their 21-year-old son, earned his bachelor's degree at San Diego State and works for Cal Fire. Their daughter, Caylee Harrison, 19, attends nursing school at Point Loma Nazarene University.

Harrison earned a bachelor's degree from California State University, Long Beach and is a graduate of the National Fire Academy Executive Fire Officer Program.

Harrison is also a certified Master Instructor with California State Fire Training. Earlier this year, he completed his master's degree in organizational leadership from Columbia Southern University.

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La Paz Drive apartment fire: multiple agencies respond

Digital Staff, HD Daily News

Posted: June 24, 2021



On the morning of June 24, Victorville Fire was dispatched to an apartment fire in the 14000 block of La Paz Dr. Victorville Fire Personnel battled the fire on two floors. Fortunately, no injuries were reported.

It happened on Thursday morning just before at 9:15 a.m., the Victorville Fire Department was dispatched to a structure fire at an apartment complex in the 14000 block of La Paz Drive. The report advised that occupants could be trapped in the affected apartment. Medic Engine 314 was the first to arrive on the scene and immediately initiated a search for possible victims. No occupants were located.

The fire was extinguished in under 20 minutes and contained to the apartment where the fire originated. Crews remained on the scene for several hours to conduct extensive overhaul. The cause of the fire is under investigation. No injuries were reported.

Victorville Fire's suppression effort was assisted by Apple Valley Fire Department, **San Bernardino County Fire** and AMR. Additionally, the San Bernardino County Fire Marshal provided a fire investigator and their new arson dog to assist with the investigation. CalFire provided station coverage. The American Red Cross was contacted to assist displaced residents.

https://www.hddailynews.com/news/local/la-paz-drive-apartment-fire-multiple-agencies-respond/article_c9604522-d56a-11eb-b3e2-3305f88e13fa.html