



City of Placentia Press Release

For Immediate Release

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PLACENTIA FIRE BEGINS ITS FIRST SHIFT

PLACENTIA, CA – The first shift for the Placentia Fire and Life Safety Department began on Wednesday, July 1, 2020 at 8:00 a.m. The shift began with a “Push In” ceremony of the new fire engines at the fire stations. The “Push-In” ceremony is a tradition that dates back to the late 1800s when fire departments used hand-drawn pumpers and horse-drawn equipment. Upon returning to the station after a fire call, the horses could not easily back the equipment into the station, so the firefighters had to push the fire pumpers into the fire station.

“Over the past year, the City has worked diligently to hire the most experienced and qualified fire personnel for our new Fire Department,” said Damien R. Arrula, City Administrator. “We have also obtained the most advanced and technologically capable fire equipment to ensure our Fire Department has the best life-saving tools that our residents deserve.”

The City hired a veteran Fire Chief who has 35 years of fire experience, previously leading a fire department of over 350 personnel at 37 fire stations and protecting a population of 1.2 million residents. In addition, the City has hired 3 full-time Battalion Chiefs with over 95 years of combined fire experience, 6 full-time Fire Captains with over 101 years of experience, 7 full-time Fire Engineers with over 61 years of experience, one of which received a ‘North County Regional Hero’ award. Lastly, the City has hired 6 full-time Firefighters whom have over 65 years of combined fire and emergency medical experience. All of the City’s fire personnel meet or exceed National and State standards and three of them have even received the ‘Firefighter of the Year’ distinction from their previous jurisdictions.

“Our dedicated team of fire and EMS professionals are ready and proud to begin providing quality services to the citizens of Placentia,” said Fire Chief J. Pono Van Gieson. “Through teamwork, training, and enhanced communications, we will provide fire protection services, fire prevention and inspection services, basic and advanced life support services and public education services.”

“We are excited to finally provide our own locally-controlled Fire Department to our community,” said Mayor Ward Smith. “With our new emergency response technology and advanced medical equipment, the Department will operate efficiently while providing the fastest available response times to our residents.”

Residents should still call 911 for emergencies or (714) 993-8164 for non-emergencies. We look forward to continuing to serve and keep the community informed as we provide these essential life-saving services for our residents.

For more information and continual updates, please visit www.placentia.org/fireems.

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