



NEWS RELEASE

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Orange County Fire Authority
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Subject: OCFA Assistant Chief Jerry Hunter Retires

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Following a long, successful and memorable 49-year career, Chief Hunter will retire on Thursday, September 13, 2007. The OCFA will honor him with a barbecue lunch on that day at its headquarters facility in Irvine, 1 Fire Authority Road, starting at 11:00 a.m.

“This is both a happy and sad occasion for everyone here at the OCFA,” said Fire Chief Chip Prather. “Chief Hunter not only served in the fire service for 49 years, but he was and still is one of the most popular individuals I have ever worked with. It didn’t matter how high Jerry rose in the ranks, he always treated everyone with the utmost respect and always had a kind word for his co-workers.”

When OCFA Assistant Chief Jerry Hunter started his fire service career in 1958, Dwight Eisenhower was President, the Dodgers were spending their first season in Los Angeles and Disneyland had been open for only three years.

In his current assignment, Chief Hunter serves as Assistant Chief of Support Services. In that capacity, he is responsible for supervising the daily activities of Strategic Services, Property Management, Automotive Fleet Services and Legislative Services. He has served in that capacity since April of 2007.



Chief Hunter started his fire service career in 1958 with the Spokane County (Washington) Fire Department. In 1963, he moved to Southern California and joined the Stanton Fire Department.

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The Orange County Fire Authority is a joint powers authority that serves more than 1.3 million residents in 22 cities and the unincorporated areas of the county.

He transitioned through the ranks and was selected as the City of Stanton Fire Chief in 1980, serving in that role until 1987. In that capacity, he managed all aspects of the Department, including the development of organizational plans, identification of Department goals, preparation and administration of department budget, development of fire prevention programs, establishing employee hiring and performance standards and supervision of management level department employees.

He developed the City of Stanton's Emergency Disaster Plan, which was ultimately approved as a model for other small cities in California, and developed and implemented programs to generate new revenue sources to augment budgeted funds. During his tenure as Fire Chief, he also served as Chairperson for the California League of Cities FLSA Committee, which developed and prepared findings relative to FLSA impacts for cities.

When Stanton transitioned to the Orange County Fire Department in 1987, Chief Hunter served as an OCFD Battalion Chief in Battalion Four until 1989. At the time, Battalion Four provided service to the City of Mission Viejo and the unincorporated areas of El Toro, Lake Forest, Laguna Hills and Trabuco Canyon. Lake Forest and Laguna Hills have since become cities.

In 1989, Chief Hunter was promoted to Division One Chief, where he was responsible for planning, directing and supervising the overall work activities of the Division. Nine field Battalion Chiefs worked under his supervision and he acted as the primary liaison between the OCFA and the seven contract cities in the Division. Those cities included Buena Park, Cypress, La Palma, Los Alamitos, Seal Beach, Stanton and Westminster.

Other responsibilities as Division One Chief included: responding to major emergencies as the Incident Commander, negotiating automatic aid and/or cooperative service agreements with other agencies, monitoring state and federal legislation, and coordination of future department facilities with private developers and builders. Under his direction, Division One continued to expand with the addition of the cities of Buena Park in 1994 and Westminster in 1995. While he was serving as Division Chief, the Orange County Fire Department became the Orange County Fire Authority in 1995.

“Probably the biggest change in the fire service during my career was the emphasis that is now placed on firefighter safety,” said Chief Hunter. “The equipment has also changed through the years, again with safety as the main goal.”

Chief Hunter holds an A.A. Degree from Santa Ana College. He has been a member of the Orange County Fire Chiefs Association, California League of Cities Fire Department Executive Committee, California Fire Chiefs Association and the Western Fire Chiefs Association. His service in civic organizations includes the Stanton Chamber of Commerce, West Anaheim Kiwanis Club, Boy Scouts of America and the Stanton American Legion.

Chief Hunter is looking forward to traveling and getting in some fishing now that he no longer has to answer the bell every day.

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