



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

December 2, 2021

### County Fire Chief Announces Retirement

Ventura, CA – Ventura County Fire Department Chief Mark Lorenzen has announced his retirement to take place in early 2022. “Mark’s leadership has helped build our Fire Protection District into one of the most innovative and advanced Fire organizations in the nation,” said County Executive Officer Mike Powers. “Mark will truly be missed. I appreciate his focus on community engagement and emergency preparedness. He has assembled an outstanding leadership team that has demonstrated their excellence time and again through the largest wildfires the County has ever faced.”

Mark has worked for the Ventura County Fire Department for 31 years. He was appointed to serve as the department’s 11<sup>th</sup> Fire Chief in 2012. During his tenure as chief, Mark led the agency in responding to two mega fires and a mass shooting – the 2017 Thomas Fire and in 2018 the tragic Borderline shooting, followed less than 16 hours later by the Hill and Woolsey Fires.

“When I joined the Ventura County Fire Department as a firefighter trainee 31 years ago, I couldn’t imagine becoming chief. I just wanted to make it through the academy and become a firefighter,” Mark said. “Since then, I have been blessed to work with so many good people who care deeply about public service and our community, and I was given the privilege of leading this great organization. I am proud of what we have accomplished together and know that the department will continue its excellent service for many years to come.”

Following the remarkable success in protecting lives threatened from the Thomas Fire, Mark was invited to testify in Sacramento on multiple occasions regarding the best practices implemented under his command. His testimony before the state led to support from the Legislature for a one-time expenditure of \$25 million to upgrade technology infrastructure and revamp the statewide fire resource ordering system. Additionally, the Legislature and Governor have now included \$25 million in the annual state budget so that all local government agencies can preposition resources as Ventura County did.

Mark also worked with the Board of Supervisors and County Executive Office to purchase three surplus military Blackhawk helicopters for fighting wildfires. The addition of this equipment to the Ventura County Aviation Unit, a joint operation of the Ventura County Sheriff’s Office and the Ventura County Fire Department, has substantially increased the agency’s abilities to fight wildfires.



# COUNTY *of* VENTURA

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His genuine and proactive outreach efforts with the County agencies, local, state, federal and community leaders have helped to build strong partnerships. These efforts have fostered a robust network of support helping to make the County of Ventura safer and more resilient for the future.

A recruitment for the position of Fire Chief will open in early 2022.

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