



City of Yakima

News Release

Subject: Fire Chief Appointment

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Acting Tag Removed from Bob Stewart's Title

Since January, Bob Stewart has served as acting chief of the Yakima Fire Department. Stewart stepped into the role following the retirement of Dave Willson. After evaluating his performance over the last five months and being impressed with what he has seen, City Manager Tony O'Rourke has decided that Stewart will be the department's next chief.

At the June 17th Yakima City Council business meeting, Stewart will be officially sworn in as Yakima's fire chief.

Bob has been successful in taking on the additional responsibilities and challenges that come with leading Central Washington's largest fire department, said O'Rourke. He has proven to be an outstanding leader, administrator, and motivator since becoming acting fire chief. I'm convinced that Bob is the right person to guide the department through the next stage of its evolution and to build on the success that he has already achieved, said O'Rourke.

Stewart has spent his entire professional career with the Yakima Fire Department (YFD). He was hired by the YFD as a firefighter in 1988 while he was serving as a cadet captain for Marion County (Oregon) Fire District #1 and studying Fire Science at Chemeketa Community College in Salem, Oregon. Prior to college, Stewart served three years in the U.S. Navy as an airman and flight deck firefighter. He grew up in Salem and graduated from North Salem High School in 1979.

Six years after he was hired by the YFD, Stewart was promoted to lieutenant. He became a shift captain in February 2001 and was named training captain in December that year. Over the next four years, Stewart worked in an acting capacity as both a deputy chief and battalion chief while primarily serving as a line captain. In July 2007, he was promoted to deputy chief.

I'm honored to have been given the opportunity to take the Yakima Fire Department to the next level, said Stewart. I'm looking forward to working together with our outstanding professional staff to continue to improve the department and to deliver the top quality services that our department is known for, said Stewart.

The YFD has about 90 full time staff and an annual budget of just over \$10 million.