



LAKELAND FIRE DEPARTMENT

Media Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Douglas E. Riley Selected as New Fire Chief of the Lakeland Fire Department

Lakeland, FL – City of Lakeland City Manager, Tony Delgado, has appointed Douglas E. Riley as the Lakeland Fire Department's (LFD) new Fire Chief. Fire Chief Riley will begin his new role as the leader of the department on December 16, 2017. The appointment follows the retirement of Gary W. Ballard, who served as Fire Chief since 2010.

Doug Riley was formerly the department's Assistant Chief of Operations, prior to his promotion to Fire Chief. Fire Chief Riley has 30 years of public safety experience and has been with the department since 1987. He will lead the Lakeland Fire Department, an organization of 171 employees, seven stations, and a budget of approximately \$18,600,000. His annual salary will be \$136,103.00.

In regards to Riley's selection, City Manager Tony Delgado says "The City of Lakeland is fortunate to have a stellar team of professional Firefighters who have been led by outstanding Fire Chiefs through the years. I am proud and honored to have the opportunity to again appoint an outstanding individual, Assistant Chief Doug Riley, to lead the department following the retirement of Chief Ballard. Chief Riley has been part of our Fire Department for 30 years and has honed his skills, both administratively and operationally, through our ranks making him the right choice for the position. I believe his understanding of working with the community and managing inclusively with his team will assist us in continuing to build upon the great tradition of our department now and into the future."

The appointment came after an internal selection process between the department's Assistant Chiefs. Delgado also notes "I would be remiss if I did not recognize Assistant Chief Rick Hartzog for his outstanding contributions to the organization and his willingness to also be part of the interview process. I am confident that his expertise will not only assist Chief Riley but help build the foundation for an outstanding management team at the department."

In regards to his appointment as Fire Chief, Riley shares "I am both humbled and honored to be afforded the opportunity to lead our great fire department into the future. My entire career has been in dedicated-service to the Lakeland community and I look forward to serving the men and women of the department, with compassion and pride, as we continue to provide exceptional service to the citizens of our great city."

Douglas Riley was hired as a firefighter with the City of Lakeland on March 9, 1987. Throughout his career he has held the following positions; Driver/Engineer (March 1992), Fire Lieutenant (January 1995), Battalion Chief (June 2004) and most recently Assistant Chief of Operations, which he has served as since January 2010.

Douglas graduated from Lakeland Senior High School in 1984. He earned associate's degrees from Polk Community College in both Fire Science and Nursing. He graduated from the University of South Florida with a Bachelor's degree in Business in 2012. In addition to his degrees, Douglas holds certifications as a: Registered Nurse, Paramedic, Fire Officer I, Fire Instructor, and Fire Inspector.

He is a graduate of the Florida State University's prestigious Certified Public Manager program and the Florida Fire Chiefs' Association's Emergency Services Leadership Institute. He is also certified as a Florida Public Employer Labor Relations professional and was most recently recognized for his selection to participate in the International Association of Fire Chiefs Leadership cohort of 20 leaders across the fire service, selected out of hundreds of applicants nationwide. Douglas is a member of the Florida Fire Chiefs' Association as well as the International Association of Fire Chiefs. He currently serves as the Statewide Emergency Response Plan (SERP) Coordinator for Polk County, Florida.

More About the Lakeland Fire Department

The Lakeland Fire Department was established as a career-department in 1916. The Lakeland Fire Department has an Insurance Service Office (ISO) Public Protection Classification 1, the highest achievable rating. The department has seven stations serving approximately 100,000+ people in the City of Lakeland. The department has 171 employees, of which 150 are emergency response personnel. In 2016, the department responded to over 24,500 service calls in its 84 square-mile response area, which includes the city limits as well as portions of unincorporated Lakeland.

The department offers a wide range of services which includes heavy rescue, technical rescue, fire prevention, fire code enforcement, fire investigation, aircraft rescue and firefighting, and in-house fleet maintenance; all in addition to outstanding fire suppression and emergency medical response.

The Lakeland Fire Department is also passionate about being an active participant in its community and consistently giving back through philanthropic efforts and through non-emergency services like community outreach and preventative public education.

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Gary Ballard, Fire Chief

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