Costa Mesa Fire Chief Dan Stefano is new president of California Fire Chiefs Association

Costa Mesa Fire Chief Dan Stefano has been officially sworn in as the new president for the California Fire Chiefs Association (CalChiefs), becoming the first chief from Costa Mesa to hold that post and the first from Orange County in over 20 years.

Stefano will now lead the state organization that represents more than 800 fire agencies operating throughout California, including a nine-person executive board, an additional 12 area directors to complete the full board, as well as eight professional sections, covering the spectrum of all areas related to Fire, Rescue, EMS, and Community Risk Reduction activities. He remains the president of the Orange County Fire Chiefs Association, a role he has held for the past two years.

“The California fire service has never been more in alignment and unified on the critical issues we are facing today, as evidenced by our advocacy and legislative successes over the past few years.” Stefano shared. “Our talented CalChiefs leadership team will continue to build on our strong partnerships and highly valued relationships from the local level to the Capitol, in thoughtfully setting the stage for the best possible outcomes for the communities we all serve and for all of those who we serve together with, shoulder to shoulder, to that end.”

City Manager Lori Ann Farrell Harrison congratulated Chief Stefano on this key appointment.

“Those of us who work daily with Chief Stefano are keenly

aware of his strong leadership, dedication and professionalism," Farrell Harrison said. "But it is even more impressive that the chief's peers in the fire service have elected him to lead this statewide agency. We congratulate him on this major achievement."

Mayor Katrina Foley also praised Chief Stefano's leadership.

"Chief Stefano is a true public servant," Mayor Foley said. "During this pandemic, his calm, steady, and stable leadership served our council, fire department and city well. As we transition out of the COVID-19 crisis, and manage the devastating wildfires across the state of California, his servant leadership will benefit the region and state. We are honored to support him in this new role."

Chief Stefano said he is humbled that his colleagues chose him to lead this organization at such a critical time as firefighters across the state battle historic wildfires. Further, he said while he welcomes this new role, his dedication to the Costa Mesa Fire team and community remains his top priority.

Chief Stefano was elected to CalChiefs last year and had been serving in the role of president elect until his formal installation took place on Sept. 10. The last fire chief from the Orange County region to lead CalChiefs was Newport Beach Fire Chief Tim Riley in 1998.

Stefano, who grew up in neighboring Newport Beach, has served as the fire chief for Costa Mesa since 2013. Prior to that he served the Laguna Beach Fire Department for nearly two decades.