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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: December 21, 2016

NEWS RELEASE

State Fire Marshal Recognized for Contributions During His Career



The New Mexico Public Regulation Commission bid a fond farewell to outgoing State Fire Marshal John Standefer, who is set to retire December 31, 2016, after serving New Mexico for 47 years in the fire service, 15 of those years as State Fire Marshal. From left are Commissioners Pat Lyons and Lynda Lovejoy, Fire Marshal Standefer, Commission Chair Valerie Espinoza, and Commissioners Sandy Jones and Karen Montoya.

SANTA FE – Days before his retirement is set to mark the culmination of a long and storied career in the fire service, New Mexico State Fire Marshal John Standefer was recognized for his many years of selfless dedication and service during the open meeting held Wednesday, December 21 by the New Mexico Public Regulation Commission (NMPRC).

NMPRC Chief of Staff Ernie Archuleta read a proclamation in Recognition of Superior Achievement, stating that Fire Marshal Standefer has provided steady and unwavering leadership at the New Mexico State Fire Marshal's Office in Santa Fe and the Firefighter's Training Academy in Socorro, and that leadership extended far beyond the confines of the two locations to include fire departments throughout New Mexico.

Standefer oversaw arson investigations throughout the state as well as fire safety inspections held at schools, commercial buildings and countless other public buildings in New Mexico conducted by personnel at the State Fire Marshal's Office (SFMO). Standefer was at the helm of the SFMO since 2001. Over the course of the past 15 years, Standefer administered the training offered to volunteer and paid fire departments all over New Mexico.

Early on in Standefer's tenure as State Fire Marshal, he worked with the Commission and Legislators to elevate the Office to a Division within the NMPRC. Through those same legislative efforts, the Fire Protection Grant Fund was established, resulting in improvements of fire departments' response capabilities and ISO [Insurance Service Office] ratings. Improved ISO ratings directly translate to lower insurance premiums to businesses and homeowners throughout the state.

Standefer began his career in the fire service in New Mexico with the Eunice Fire Department in August 1969. Standefer then went on to serve 14 years with the Bernalillo County Fire Department, where he served as Deputy Chief.

During the New Mexico Fire & EMS Expo held earlier this year, Fire Marshal Standefer was officially awarded the New Mexico Fire Service's Carl Joe Standefer Meritorious Award – named after John's father, a previous New Mexico State Fire Marshal – for a career dedicated to public safety and an unwavering drive to better New Mexico's fire departments.

A committee of fire professionals representing fire departments throughout New Mexico met without the State Fire Marshal's knowledge, and voted to award the inaugural Carl Joe Standefer Meritorious Award to John. Standefer was surprised with the award during the state's Fire & EMS Expo held at the Firefighters Training Academy in Socorro in September.

When asked to identify the chief accomplishment for which he is most proud, Standefer stated, "I take a lot of pride in the [New Mexico Firefighters Training] Academy, which opened in 1989, and having centralized training of firefighters in the state. We have added to it over the years, including a structural burn complex, which we utilize for structure firefighter training. We will add two new buildings with streets and utilities included. This will allow instructors to teach firefighters even more complex aspects of firefighting in real world settings, like residential, a two story hotel and a strip mall."

In September, Fire Marshal Standefer stated that he hoped the groundbreaking would take place within six months, with construction completed by the end of 2017.

On receiving the award named after his father, Standefer said, "It is a tremendous honor. It has been my privilege to serve the firefighters of New Mexico for 47 years."

About the NMPRC

The NMPRC regulates public utilities, telecommunications companies and motor carriers operating in the State of New Mexico. It also administers the State Fire Marshal's Office, the New Mexico Firefighters Training Academy in Socorro, N.M., and the Pipeline Safety Bureau.

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