



A Message from the State Fire Marshal Chief Daniel Berlant February 2025



Welcome to the February 2025 edition of the CAL FIRE – Office of the State Fire Marshal (OSFM) Newsletter. During the unprecedented fires in Los Angeles in January, CAL FIRE – Office of the State Fire Marshal staff were an important part of the state’s response and recovery efforts through our [Damage Inspection Teams](#) as well as large numbers of staff being assigned to Incident Management Teams. This month's edition of the newsletter highlights efforts that were made by our Office during this difficult time.

Also a part of this month’s edition, we highlight the new [Fuels Treatment Effectiveness Reporting Dashboard](#). The new dashboard highlights fuel reduction projects that were effective in helping to contain wildfires and/or assist with emergency response and evacuations of those impacted by wildfires. I encourage you to take some time to explore the dashboard and read or view some of the reports from across the state. They are a testament to the invaluable fuel reduction work that CAL FIRE and our partners are doing to enhance California's wildfire resiliency.

CAL FIRE's mission reaches far beyond firefighting. Each year CAL FIRE engages in hundreds of fuels reduction projects across the state. These range from using heavy equipment to clear overgrown vegetation, to applying beneficial fire to the landscape. We work alongside state, federal, local, and tribal partners to accomplish [these prevention efforts](#). Additionally, we are working to improve building codes and standards to improve community resilience and help reduce the spread and impact of fires.

Embers, not necessarily the main fire front, are the biggest threat to your home during a wildfire. Research-based wildfire mitigations, including the new Zone 0 or Ember Resistant Zone, increase the chance of a home’s survival during a wildfire. Based on research and the latest science, the Zone 0 regulations will likely require a zone of nothing combustible within 5 feet of structures located in a very high fire hazard severity zone in local responsibility areas, as well as the State Responsibility Area. Following action by our Governor, the Office of the State Fire Marshal began releasing [local fire hazard severity zone maps](#) to help define where critical wildfire mitigations will be required. We will also be working to support the Board of Forestry to recommend “Zone 0” regulations at the March board meeting. Remember the ember! Start now keep the first five feet around your home free of combustible materials. Learn more about Zone 0 at [ReadyForWildfire.org](#).

This edition also highlights the recent appointment of Chief Vickie Sakamoto to the position of Assistant State Fire Marshal. Chief Sakamoto’s illustrious career reflects a firm dedication to fire protection and public safety. Join me in welcoming Chief Sakamoto to her new position.

Thanks for taking the time to catch up on the important work of our team and being an important part in our efforts to reduce the impacts of fires.

Daniel Berlant
California State Fire Marshal

Check out the next page for some photos of the most recent hires and promotions within our Office.

On November 1, 2024, we held a promotional and badge pinning ceremony to honor our CAL FIRE – Office of the State Fire Marshal team members.

We loved hosting all the family members and friends as the new and promoted CAL FIRE staff were pinned with their new badges or celebrated for their career achievement.

State Fire Marshal Daniel Berlant swore in the new members, while CAL FIRE and OSFM leadership, and co-workers were in attendance to celebrate. CAL FIRE Chief Deputy Director Anale Burlew spoke at the event about the critical role the OSFM staff play in fire prevention.

Please join us in congratulating the following who were honored at the ceremony:

Senior Staff:

- * Vickie Sakamoto | Assistant State Fire Marshal

Community Wildfire Preparedness and Mitigation:

- * Santiago Loftis | Environmental Scientist
- * Kyle O'Neil | Battalion Chief
- * Emily Smith | Staff Chief
- * Shane Vargas | Assistant Chief



Fire and Life Safety:

- * Luke Gamboa | Staff Services Analyst
- * Edward Londono | Deputy State Fire Marshal
- * Sarah Morozov | Deputy State Fire Marshal
- * Gary Shimotsu | Senior Architect
- * Julie Stenger-Smith | Associate Architect



Fire Engineering and Investigations:

- * Michael Hill | Staff Services Manager I
- * Terence Liszewski | Deputy State Fire Marshal, Specialist
- * Patricia Rock | Deputy State Fire Marshal, Specialist

Code Development & Analysis:

- * Jena Garcia | Supervising Deputy State Fire Marshal

Support Services:

- * Jillian Fisher | Staff Services Manager I



To view all images from the event, please visit

<https://www.flickr.com/.../calfire/albums/72177720321709070/>.

To learn more about OSFM, please visit osfm.fire.ca.gov.

Ignite your passion with a career at CAL FIRE. Apply today at www.JoinCALFIRE.com.