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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **County of Santa Clara Appoints New Fire Chief** *Chief Kenneth Kehmna Brings 23 years of Fire Service Experience*

**SANTA CLARA COUNTY, CALIF.**— Today, the County of Santa Clara Board of Supervisors announced the appointment of Kenneth R. Kehmna to serve as the new Fire Chief for the Santa Clara County Fire Department. Kehmna, who has 23 years of fire service experience, began his career as a firefighter with the City of Campbell in 1987. In 1993, County Fire assumed responsibility for providing fire services to Campbell, bringing Kehmna and his colleagues from the city into the Santa Clara County Fire Department.

Since 2007, Kehmna held the post of Deputy Chief, first in charge of operations and in 2009 in charge of training. As Deputy Chief of operations, he managed the four department battalions and the fire investigation division. As Deputy Chief in charge of training, he manages all training activities to ensure firefighter readiness. From 2005 to 2007, Kehmna was Battalion Chief. From August 2004 to May 2005, he served as Training Captain and Fire Captain from February 2000 to August 2004.

"Chief Kehmna brings a wealth of experience and knowledge to the position of Fire Chief," said County of Santa Clara Board President Dave Cortese. "He is intimately familiar with fire service in Santa Clara County and dedicated to providing high-level quality services to our community."

The Santa Clara County Fire Department is a California Fire Protection District serving Santa Clara County and the communities of Campbell, Cupertino, Los Altos, Los Altos Hills, Los Gatos, Monte Sereno, Morgan Hill and Saratoga. County Fire functions as a regional emergency services delivery system, partnering with other local jurisdictions to provide a high level of service and to supplement the services of smaller communities.

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Kehmna values building and maintaining strong cooperative relationships with regional public safety partners and working closely with local governments in the county. Kehmna continues to serve on the State Training and Education Advisory Committee providing policy review for the State Fire Marshal and final review of all State Fire Training course curricula. Kehmna also serves on the FIRESCOPE CICCIS Task Force assisting with continuous development of the California Incident Command Certification System (CICCIS).

Throughout his management career, he has provided leadership by coaching and mentoring others. He also worked closely with the recently retired Fire Chief and represented County Fire at the regional and statewide level working closely with the California Emergency Management Association and Cal Fire.

Kehmna completed his Master of Science degree in Executive Fire Service Leadership from Grand Canyon University in 2009. He graduated with honors and received a Bachelor of Arts degree in Management from Saint Mary's College in 1999. He also has an Associate of Science degree in Fire Science from Mission College.

"I will do my very best to preserve the proud lineage of leadership that has been the hallmark of this Department," he continued. "I am excited about our future and confident that the outstanding relationship we have with labor will continue as we face new challenges and opportunities together in the coming years."

His appointment as Fire Chief is effective May 16, 2011, and he will be paid \$214,687. Kehmna and his wife Ginger reside in San Jose and have two children - 15 year old son John and 14 year old daughter Hannah.

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