



For Immediate Release
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HFD Announces Changes in Leadership for Public Education Program

Harrisonburg, Va. – The Harrisonburg Fire Department (HFD) announces the retirement of a long time employee who has impacted the lives of many over the years.

Lieutenant Wanda Willis, public education officer, will officially retire on January 1, 2017. She has worked with HFD since 1988 and started her career with the city as a dispatcher. In 2001, she was assigned as the full-time fire prevention officer in the fire prevention division, which encompasses education, inspections, and investigations. She was promoted in 2006 to her current position.

Willis has grown the public education programs and outreach efforts in public schools, colleges, and throughout the community to provide information to keep residents safe and prevent injuries.

“Wanda has truly dedicated her life to keeping everyone in this community safe,” explained Fire Chief Ian Bennett. “Our department is fortunate to have had her leadership and knowledge. She has provided a great foundation for the future of HFD’s public education programs.”

The transition to fill Willis’ position is expected to be seamless as Erin Stehle has been named as the next public education officer and will begin her new role on January 3.

Stehle currently serves as the fire prevention education specialist for HFD. In 2011, she started as an intern with HFD after graduating from James Madison University with a degree in health sciences and a concentration in public health education. Stehle was hired as the car seat technician in 2011 before moving into her current position.

Stehle was selected from an applicant pool of five candidates.

For additional information on the fire prevention division, visit www.HarrisonburgVA.gov/fire-prevention-division.

*The city of Harrisonburg is home to four **Harrisonburg Fire Department** stations. For more information about each fire station, visit www.HarrisonburgVA.gov/hfd-stations.*



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