

Message from the Chief

Recognizing Veterans Day, 2012

Although originally called Armistice Day and established to commemorate the end of hostilities during the First World War, Veterans Day is now observed on November 11 each year to recognize the selfless sacrifice of all American Veterans who have protected our freedom and continue to serve our country. This Veterans Day, reach out and thank our veterans by acknowledging their service and when possible extend a helping hand to these veterans' families, especially as the holiday season approaches and many will not have the opportunity to spend it together.



Reminiscent of the years following the Second World War and the Vietnam Conflict, large numbers of American service men and women are now returning to civilian life. Over one million service members are projected to leave the military by 2016. Recognizing the hardships accompanying reintegration into the civilian workforce as well as the valuable skills and experience these veterans possess, CAL FIRE has launched R.V.E.T.S. (Returning Veterans Enlisting Their Skills for CAL FIRE service). The working group charged with developing this program, in partnership with the California Department of Veterans Affairs, will be exploring a variety of employment options and educational opportunities for California veterans who have successfully served in the United States Armed Services. Although in the early stages of development, R.V.E.T.S. was represented at the 2012 Honor-a-Hero, Hire-a-Vet job fair last month in the Sacramento area and is currently working on creating a veterans resource page for the CAL FIRE Internet.

The fire service and the military share many common values. Both have strong roots in tradition, teamwork, professionalism, organizational leadership and public service. CAL FIRE's reputation as a world class emergency response and resource agency is due in large part to the veterans who have instilled their skills and values in the organization over the decades. I am excited that CAL FIRE is part of this valuable effort for our current and future veterans and look forward to new and innovative opportunities that will continue to enhance our service to the public.

Chief Ken Pimlott
CAL FIRE Director