



# NEWS RELEASE

**For immediate release**

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## **Veteran firefighter, teacher named Beaufort Fire Department's new Training & Education Officer**

Lt. John Robinson, a 10-year veteran of the Beaufort Fire Department and a U.S. Navy Master Training Specialist, is the Beaufort Fire Department's new training education officer.

Robinson's duties include organizing training sessions to keep City firefighters up to date with their certifications and new firefighting and lifesaving techniques. He'll also create and expand the City's efforts to reduce fire losses by teaching residents, business owners and children about fire prevention and fire safety.

Robinson holds a Bachelor of Science degree in education and is working toward a Master's degree in business administration with an emphasis in public administration. He served in the U.S. Navy as a curriculum development/training specialist in sonar, and served aboard submarines during his 10 years of active duty – including Operation Desert Storm.

"Captain Robinson is an excellent firefighter, an engaging teacher and someone who knows how to lead by example," Beaufort Fire Chief Sammy Negrón said. "We are fortunate to have him with the Beaufort Fire Department and we are pleased to announce this promotion."

Negrón will continue to serve as the City Fire Marshal, and other firefighters will assist Robinson with his education efforts. Under Negrón's model, every firefighter should be involved in helping prevent fires and fire damage. He and Robinson will train every Beaufort firefighter in fire prevention and education.

“We are changing the fire marshal bureaucracy into a broader capacity by engaging the energy and enthusiasm of all firefighters to educate the public and provide prevention services,” Beaufort City Manager Scott Dadson said. “We are expanding fire education and fire prevention efforts because they work.”

For instance, during recent neighborhood cleanups throughout downtown Beaufort that cleared out more than 312 tons of debris, much of it flammable, firefighters helped remove the debris. They also visited in homes and talked to residents about fire safety. They also checked smoke detectors and fire extinguishers in homes as part of their efforts to help prevent future fires.

“We are ensuring a continuation of all our fire prevention programs,” Negron said. “The USCB Hospitality Management program, Beaufort Elementary and Beaufort Middle schools have requested dates to schedule fire safety classes and events. We are placing more resources to fire prevention by means of equipment, personnel and programs.”

After leaving the Navy in 1996, Robinson worked for three years with Intel Semiconductor as a technical and safety expert. He graduated Beaufort High, is married, and has three children in school. They live in the Mossy Oaks neighborhood.

Retired Beaufort Fire Marshal Capt. Sammy Breland supported Robinson’s application for the training leadership position.

“We have a very strong Beaufort City Fire Department, and Chief Negron has made a strong choice in selecting Captain Robinson to lead the department’s training program,” Dadson said.

The resignation in mid-August of the City’s former fire marshal led to a realignment of duties and responsibilities within the fire department. The changes include redefining duties in the fire and life safety education portion of the Fire Marshal’s office and those of the training education officer, who is responsible for presenting high quality fire and life safety education programs to both the public and firefighters alike, Negron said.

“Everyone in this department is a firefighter, and every firefighter provides some measure of fire safety education,” he said.

Pro-active, prevention-based efforts by the Beaufort Fire Department and Beaufort Police Department earned “best practice” kudos from a recent comprehensive study conducted in 2009-2010 by the International City/County Management Association for Beaufort.

Those effort help save lives and reduce loss of property, ICMA experts said. The reports addressed strengths of both departments as well as areas where improvement is needed.

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