



For Immediate Release

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Harlingen Names New Fire Chief

Harlingen, Texas– Harlingen City Manager Dan Serna has named Rafael Balderas as the Fire Department’s new leader. Balderas has 27 years of experience in fire service with the City of McAllen where he served as chief for the past eight years.

During his tenure as the McAllen Fire Chief, he helped improve the City’s Fire Rating or ISO (Insurance Services Office) from a 4 to a 2. The ratings calculate how well-equipped fire departments are to put out fires in that community.

He was also instrumental in the construction of a new training field and two new fire stations, as well as, implementing in-house fire academies and an in-house dispatch center.



Balderas holds an associate’s degree in Chemistry from Harlingen’s Texas State Technical College and has numerous certifications that include Fire Fighter Master, Fire Investigator

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Master, Fire Inspector Master, Fire Service Instructor II, Hazardous Material Technician, and Department Head Suppression.

City Manager Serna says Balderas' experience speaks for itself. "Rafael has a lot of experience in fire service and is well rounded in all aspects of what it takes to lead and operate a fire department of our size."

His first day on the job was December 2 and says he's happy to be part of the Harlingen team. "I'm honored and privileged to be here among so much professionalism. Mr. Serna and his staff have been great. The Harlingen Fire Department is in good shape and I'm excited for the opportunity to work with the men and women of the department."

The City of Harlingen welcomes Fire Chief Rafael Balderas.

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