

Mayor Coleman Appoints Tim Butler as Saint Paul Fire Chief

(Saint Paul) – Saint Paul Mayor Chris Coleman announced today that after a national search he will appoint Saint Paul Director of Emergency Management, Tim Butler, as the City's new Fire Chief. Butler will take the place of Doug Holton, who left the department earlier this year.

“The Saint Paul Fire Department has a long tradition of providing great service to our residents and Tim Butler has the dedication and talent to keep us moving into the 21st century. With over 20 years of emergency response and management experience, he is the clear candidate to implement the findings of the audit and new strategic plan for the department,” Coleman said.

Butler has been at the forefront of emergency management in Saint Paul since 1990, when he was hired as the Saint Paul Fire Communications Chief, where he supervised Fire and EMS dispatch operations for nine years. When the City's Police and Fire communications centers merged in 1999, Butler was selected as the Emergency Communication Center Manager, a position he held for 5 years. In 2004, Butler took over responsibility of the city's emergency management and homeland security functions.

“It feels great to be back in the Fire Department again,” Butler said. “The men and women of the Saint Paul Fire Department have built a rich history and tradition of service, innovation, and expertise. I am extremely proud to be part of this department, and very honored to be chosen as the next Fire Chief.”

A retired member of the U.S. Coast Guard and Reserves, Butler served in U.S. military contingency operations in Grenada, Europe, Iraqi Air Operations, and mobilization for the September 11, 2001 attacks and Operation Enduring Freedom. He also served as a liaison officer for the US military Crisis Action Team responding to the grounding of the Exxon Valdez and as Chief of Staff for the US Transportation Command's Crisis Action Team.

In April, Mayor Coleman appointed Butler as the City's first Director of Emergency Management, where he made strides in building an enhanced infrastructure for emergency response and lead the City's response to the collapse of the I-35W Bridge in Minneapolis and other emergencies in recent months. In recognition of his leadership in the emergency response community, Butler was named the Metro area's emergency management Director of the Year at the annual conference of the Association of Minnesota Emergency Managers (AMEM).

“Tim's breadth of experience in the SPFD and in major operations in the Coast Guard, coupled with his advanced training in emergency response makes him uniquely qualified to lead this department in transition. In a post 9/11 world, he has the skills necessary to take operations in the Fire Department to the next level,” Coleman said.

Mayor Coleman praised interim-Fire Chief Bob Morrison for his leadership. “Chief Morrison has served the residents of Saint Paul ably for decades, and his willingness to provide a smooth transition for the department is a testament to his leadership and dedication to Saint Paul,” said Coleman.

Butler graduated with honors with a B.S. from the United States Coast Guard Academy and is currently studying toward an M.A. in Public Safety Administration from Saint Mary’s University of Minnesota. Chief Butler lives in Maplewood with his wife, Susan, and their three children.