

NEWS RELEASE

CAL FIRE SAN LUIS OBISPO UNIT

Unit Chief
John Owens



March 6th, 2026

CAL FIRE SAN LUIS OBISPO UNIT ANNOUNCES NEW DEPUTY CHIEF OF OPERATIONS

San Luis Obispo, CA – CAL FIRE San Luis Obispo Unit Chief John Owens has announced the appointment of Keith Tsudama as the new Deputy Chief of Operations for the San Luis Obispo Unit, effective **March 16, 2026**.

Chief Tsudama brings more than 20 years of fire service experience to the position. He began his career in 2002 with the United States Forest Service before joining **CAL FIRE** in 2003. Over the course of his career, he has served in several leadership roles, including Firefighter, Engineer, Fire Captain, Battalion Chief, and Assistant Chief.

Throughout his career, Chief Tsudama has worked in operations, training, and specialized rescue programs. He has also played an active role in statewide incident management, helping coordinate large emergency responses across California. Most recently, he served as Assistant Chief in the San Benito-Monterey Unit, where he oversaw Community Risk Reduction and the unit's training program.

Chief Tsudama has also contributed to firefighter training across the state as a registered State Fire Training instructor and as a faculty member at the Monterey Peninsula College Fire Academy. He is currently assigned as Deputy Incident Commander for **CAL FIRE** Incident Management Team 6 and recently served as an Operations Chief with the Monterey County Urban Search and Rescue Team.

Chief Tsudama resides in Paso Robles with his wife, Ashley, and his stepdaughters, Hope and Autumn.

"Chief Tsudama's experience, leadership, and commitment to training and operational excellence make him a tremendous addition to the San Luis Obispo Unit leadership team," said Unit Chief John Owens.

Please join us in welcoming Chief Tsudama to San Luis Obispo County.

###

CAL FIRE SLU / SLO County Fire Department

100 Cross Street, Suite 101

San Luis Obispo, CA 93401

(805) 543 4244

Email: slu.reception@fire.ca.gov

Website: calfireslo.org

Instagram: [calfiresanluisobispo](https://www.instagram.com/calfiresanluisobispo)

X or Twitter: [calfire_slo](https://twitter.com/calfire_slo)