

# CITY OF MUSCATINE



COMMUNICATIONS DIVISION  
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## MUSCATINE FIRE CHIEF ANNOUNCES RETIREMENT

Veteran firefighter to end 36 plus years of service to community on April 30

**MUSCATINE, Iowa** – After over 36-plus years of service to the citizens of Muscatine, Fire Chief Jerry Ewers has announced his intention to retire on April 30. His retirement follows that of Assistant Fire Chief Mike Hartman who left the Muscatine Fire Department on April 1.

Matt Mardesen, Muscatine City Administrator, will be announcing an interim Fire Chief while the search begins for Ewer's replacement. Hartman's position will not be filled due to budget limitations.

Ewers is just the eighth Fire Chief since the department became a paid department in 1916.

The list includes J.J. Brown 1916-1941, Harold Bierman 1941-1947, Paul Meerdink 1947-1954,



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Alex Bender 1954-1975, Paul Ziegenhorn 1975-1984, James Pumfrey 1985-1991, Steve Dalbey 1991-2009, and Jerry Ewers 2009 - 2025.

"My goal as fire chief was to make the department better and I believe I have achieved that," Ewers said. "For me that means that we make sure the staff is trained, equipped, and ready to respond to any emergency that gets called in. It also means that they go home safe at the end of their shift."

Muscatine has had one line-of-duty death since Muscatine established a paid fire department when Michael Kruse fell through a roof while fighting a fire on September 14, 2002.

"I worked with Mike for many years while I was a lieutenant so my commitment to the firefighters and their families is to not put another line of duty death name on that memorial," Ewers said.

The Muscatine Firefighters Memorial was built and dedicated in 2003 honoring the 100th anniversary of the Muscatine Fire Department and includes the names of fallen firefighters.

The current Fire Chief went on to state that Muscatine has great staff on the fire department.

"I am proud of what they do every day going out on emergency calls and solving problems, putting out fires, and treating and transporting sick and injured people while keeping the community safe through our prevention efforts," Ewers said.

Ewers looked at a poster on the wall of his office and pointed to the mission and values of the city and department.

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"If you look at our Mission and Values, it talks about providing effective municipal services and excellent customer service," Ewers said. "I am confident that our firefighters and paramedics do that every day."

Ewers said that it has been a pleasure and honor to serve the City, the fire department, and the citizens of Muscatine all these years.

"But now is the time for me to retire and pass the baton while I am still active and healthy, spend more time with family, and do a little travelling," Ewers said.

When looking back over his career, Ewers noted that one of the items that tops his list of accomplishments is the building of Station 2 to serve the residents of the southend. Ewers was directly involved in the fund raising and construction of the fire station. He is also proud of the training program and training grounds for the department.

Two items that he was unable to accomplish during his tenure was the construction of Station Three and the adding of a Deputy Fire Chief as a 40-hour per week staff member to handle the fire department operations.

"I would have liked to see these two things materialize before I leave, but hopefully they will still be a request for the next fire chief because they are needed for our community and our department," Ewers said.

Ewers joined the U.S. Army after graduating from Clinton High School and served as a combat medic from January 1985 to January 1988 while earning his parachute badge and Emergency Medical Technician certification.

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"That is where I got my EMS (Emergency Medical Services) experience and that help me to get hired here," Ewers said.

He joined the Muscatine Fire Department on July 18, 1988 and has served the community with dedication, professionalism, and perseverance over the next 36 plus years.

"I was the second paramedic in the Fire Department and worked part-time for Riley's Ambulance and I was the second paramedic on Riley's ambulance for the community," Ewers said.

Ewers has held every rank in the fire department including firefighter, EMS Coordinator, Lieutenant, Captain, Assistant Chief, and Fire Chief. He was promoted to Fire Lieutenant on August 6, 1996, to Fire Captain on December 4, 1999, named Assistant Fire Chief on July 17, 2001, and has served as Fire Chief since October 19, 2009.



Ewers holds an AA in fire science, BA in fire administration, is a credentialed fire officer, and a graduate of the National Fire Academy Executive Fire Officer Program. He has been awarded firefighter of the year by the Muscatine Journal, Career Individual of the Year by the Iowa EMS Association, and was a contributing committee member on the International Association of Fire Chiefs document "Enhancing Fire Based EMS."

The veteran firefighter also had a lot of other opportunities and experiences throughout his career including serving as the Interim City Administrator/Interim Deputy City Clerk for the City

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of Muscatine from October 2019 through December 2019. He also served as the Muscatine County Interim Emergency Management Agency manager from June through October of 2018.

Ewers has been very active in the promotion and support of the fire industry during his career. He has served as a board member of the Iowa EMS Association since 2008, serving as President for two terms, Vice-President for two-terms and as Immediate Past President. He also served as Secretary/Treasurer of the Iowa Association of Professional Fire Chiefs from October 2017 to October 2020.

He also owned Ewers Safety Consulting from 2000 to 2009 working with local businesses as a safety consultant and providing training in Tier II reporting, chemical inventory, first aid cabinets, fire extinguisher training and monthly checks, exit lights and emergency lights, first aid and CPR Training, AED training, storage rack inspections, machine guarding, OSHA training, safe work practices, and accident and injury investigation for general industry and businesses.

Ewers has been married to Angie for 33 years who is also retired from Allsteel. They have one daughter, Dr. Marissa Snider, and son-in-law, Tucker, who live in Temple, Texas.