

Lake Valley fire hires chief from within the department

By Kathryn Reed

Gareth Harris has been selected as the next fire chief of Lake Valley Fire Protection District.

He takes the helm from Jeff Michael who will retire June 24.



Gareth Harris

When Harris was hired in 2005 from the Half Moon Bay Fire District as battalion chief and fire marshal for Lake Valley he was the first hire at that level outside of the department.

“There is such a family culture here that once I proved I was worthy of being one of the family members, I was readily accepted,” Harris told *Lake Tahoe News*. “My goal as the new leader is to continue that culture, that tradition.”

Harris, 49, has no plans of making sweeping changes. He expects to evaluate things and continue moving forward in the direction the department has been going.

As battalion chief he is incident commander at most scenes – whether it’s a structure fire, rope rescue or hazardous materials incident. As fire chief, he will be responsible for the entire department.

In the coming weeks more changes are expected at Lake Valley.

“Nothing is cast in stone yet, but the idea is we have very qualified individuals in our department that we will be promoting,” Harris said.