



# CENTRAL FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT of Santa Cruz County

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## Press Release

### Central Fire District Announces the Appointment of Board of Director Gene Benson

In the early part of 2010, Director Mills Ridgeway resigned his position as director on the Central Fire Board of Directors. In response to this, the Board of Directors interviewed six applicants for the position vacated by Mills Ridgeway. Gene Benson was selected as the replacement to serve out the remainder of the term for Mills Ridgeway.

Director Gene Benson started work in the Electronics Component Industry in Santa Clara Valley. Gene went on to become a second generation firefighter as a Capitola Paid Call Firefighter in 1976. Gene's father was a Federal Firefighter. Gene worked as a fire dispatcher from 1978 to 1979, and became a full time firefighter for Capitola Fire District in 1980.

Gene has worked in various capacities within the Capitola Fire Department, which merged into Central Fire District in 1986, such as Fire Prevention, Hazardous Materials Specialist, Fire Investigator, and Union President in 2001. Gene was promoted to the rank of Fire Captain and served as an Acting Battalion Chief on several occasions. Gene retired from Central Fire in December of 2008, and has been involved as a Volunteer as the Weapons Range Master for the City of Capitola Police Department.

Gene has published two nationally recognized texts on Hazardous Materials Emergency Incident Management, and his second edition continues to be the standard for the State of California Fire Officer Training.

Gene lives in the City of Capitola with his wife Patty, and is the City of Capitola Representative on the Santa Cruz County Hazardous Materials Advisory Committee, reporting to the City of Capitola.