



West Metro  
Fire Rescue

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Fire Chief Don Lombardi  
West Metro Fire Rescue

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## A Legacy of Leadership and Service

*West Metro Fire Chief Don Lombardi to Retire*

**Lakewood, CO** – From an elementary school gym filled with kindergartners to Chief of one of Colorado’s largest fire districts, Don Lombardi has spent his life serving the public. His 33-year tenure in the fire service has seen significant life-saving advancements within West Metro and in fire agencies across Colorado. On August 1, 2025, after 14 years as Chief, Lombardi will transfer command of the district to a new leader upon his retirement.

*“It has been an honor to work alongside the dedicated firefighters and staff of West Metro,”* said Lombardi. *“I will always be grateful for the opportunity to make a difference in the lives of those who serve and in the lives of those we’re sworn to protect.”*

Just out of college, Lombardi started his professional career as a teacher at Denver’s Cheltenham Elementary School, and also served as a sports coach in the Littleton School District. His life in education was challenging and rewarding. But after a family member encouraged him to apply during a West Metro hiring process, Lombardi was sworn in as a firefighter in October 1991.

From the beginning, Lombardi’s focus was on building for the future, and as he gained experience, he put a strong emphasis on mentoring new firefighters. He helped lead the district in creating a strong foundation to support community and firefighter safety.

As Fire Chief, Lombardi implemented life and cost saving programs across West Metro, including the district’s Advanced Resource Medic (ARM car) - a service that has saved patients significant health care costs by giving them the choice to be treated at home, instead of the emergency room. For Colorado firefighters, he co-authored legislation to establish the Colorado Firefighters Benefits Trust Program, that assists firefighters and fire agencies in managing the illnesses that affect first responders: cancer, heart/cardiac issues, and behavioral health.

Under his leadership, West Metro became one of the small number of fire agencies around the world to be internationally accredited and hold an ISO (Insurance Services Office) Class 1 rating. The Class 1 rating ensures that property owners in the district pay lower insurance rates, saving hundreds, if not thousands, of dollars each year. The ISO rating is based on the resources and capabilities of the fire agency that serves the area.

While Chief, Lombardi has served in leadership roles with many organizations; including the Colorado State Fire Chiefs and the Metropolitan Fire Chiefs Association. He was named Colorado State Fire Chief of the Year in 2022. The Metropolitan Chiefs presented him with the prestigious Russell E. Sanders Lifetime Achievement Award, and the Federation of European Fire Officers

honored him with the Cross of Merit. It has been a remarkable career and an example of the profound impact one person can have on an entire organization.

The West Metro Board of Directors has identified three finalists for the Chief's position after a detailed process utilizing the expertise of a third-party consulting firm, and input from community stakeholders. They are all currently West Metro chiefs:

- Jeremy Metz, Deputy Chief of Administration
- Steve Aseltine, Division Chief of Accreditation and Risk Management
- Sean Jewell, Division Chief of Special Operations and Emergency Management

The Board will name the new Chief on April 15, during their monthly meeting. A Change of Command Ceremony is set for August 1, where the new Chief will officially be sworn in.

In the fire service, assuming command of the organization means taking responsibility for the well-being, safety, and protection of the citizens in the district and the members of the department. It also carries the responsibility of ensuring that the members of the organization who respond to emergencies have what they need to perform their jobs to the best of their ability, enabling them to return home safely to their families.

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***About West Metro Fire Rescue:***

West Metro Fire Rescue is an ISO 1, internationally accredited, full-service, all-hazard, fire and rescue agency. We serve nearly 300,000 residents in the cities and towns of Lakewood, Morrison, Golden, Wheat Ridge and Edgewater. The district also serves sections of Jefferson and Douglas County and unincorporated Littleton, Colorado.

WMFR is committed to providing professional fire protection, emergency medical services, life safety and community service with a vision that shapes the future.

Visit us at [www.westmetrofire.org](http://www.westmetrofire.org).