“Fireman never know what they will encounter on each call but proceed with the same level of commitment and service.”

~Byron Pulsifer, Motivational Speaker
# Table of Contents

- Message from the Chief ........................................... 3
- Acknowledgements .................................................. 4
- Mission/Vision/Values .............................................. 5
- History ................................................................. 6
- Organizational Chart ............................................... 7
- Battalion 1 ............................................................ 8
- Battalion 2 ............................................................ 9
- Battalion 3 ............................................................ 10
- Operations Update .................................................. 11
- Professional Standards Update ................................. 12
- Training Update ...................................................... 13
- Incident Breakdown ................................................ 14
- Local Incidents ....................................................... 15
- California Fire Service Mutual Assistance .............. 16
- Promotions/Retirements/New Hires ....................... 17-18
- Academies ............................................................. 19
- Station 1 Grand Opening ........................................ 20-21
- Fuels Crew ........................................................... 22
- Community Events ................................................. 23
- Recognition .......................................................... 24
- Thank You’s ......................................................... 25
MESSAGE
FROM THE CHIEF

It is my sincere honor and privilege to serve the residents of Tulare County as your Fire Chief. I work with over 200 of the best trained and dedicated fire service professionals in the industry. Together, we provide high quality fire suppression, prevention, and emergency medical services to 442,000 residents in a 4839 square mile response area. Over the last 13 years the Tulare County Fire Department has grown into a full service, all risk Fire Department that continues to provide outstanding customer service in a rapidly changing environment.

Over the last year our Department has faced numerous challenges that have taxed our local resources as well as the entire California Mutual Aid system. The vast majority of our resources and time have been allocated to mitigate some very large incidents including the global pandemic, SQF Complex Fire, and numerous out of County responses during the summer lightning siege.

In Spring 2020, the Department (and entire nation) began to see the adverse impacts of Global COVID pandemic. The Department has worked diligently to provide training, equipment, and quality policy development to ensure the safety of our citizens and firefighters. We look forward to the continued reduction of COVID spread through mask use, social distancing, and the active participation of vaccine distribution.

On August 16, 2020 the SQF Complex Fire began and escalated into the largest fire in Tulare County’s recorded history. This fire destroyed over 230 structures and charred over 175,000 acres during the 3 month fire siege. This incident (coupled with the 100 other lightning caused fire) spread our State, Federal and Local resources extremely thin. Resources were deployed from as far as New York and Mexico to assist in our incident. In addition, a tremendous response from our local agency cooperators offered assistance during this long duration incident.

Despite all of the challenges of 2020; the department continued to make outstanding forward progress on many fronts. July marked the opening of Fire Station #1 located at Road 140 and Avenue 256. This project has been in the works for many years and has greatly assisted in the reduction of response times since its summer opening. The Station was designed for many generations of functional service and has the space for additional community space that will aid in our service delivery to our County residents.

In addition, staff continues diligently working on the Dispatch upgrade/re-location and Station 21 (Terra Bella) garage remodel. The Dispatch Center is estimated to be operational in Fall of 2021 and will provide “state of the art” communication and technology upgrades to assist with the rapid delivery of pre-hospital and fire suppression responses. The Terra Bella Fire Station improvements are slated for completion in 2022 and will greatly assist in the housing of future apparatus to serve our South County.

In 2020, the Tulare County Fire Department has made many strides in order to meet the needs of our diverse communities. The primary reason for our continued success is centered around our commitment to community and teamwork. The teamwork provided by our firefighters, elected officials, county staff, and members of our great County is exemplary. I am so very proud of the men and women of the Tulare County Fire Department that have worked so tirelessly to serve our communities over this long year. Please feel free to contact myself or any of our Tulare County Firefighters if we can assist you in any way.

Sincerely,
Charlie Norman
Fire Chief
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We would like to thank the Board of Supervisors and the County Administrative Officer for their ongoing support.

From Left: Larry Micari, District 1; Dennis Townsend, District 5; Amy Shuklian, District 3—Chairman; Pete Vander Poel III, District 2; Eddie Valero, District 4—Vice Chair.

The Fire Department would like to thank Supervisor Kuyler Crocker for his support throughout his tenure.

We would also like to welcome Supervisor Larry Micari to the Board.

County Administrative Officer
Jason Britt
MISSION STATEMENT

The Tulare County Fire Department is committed to providing leadership, coordination and customer based service through fire prevention, suppression, and emergency medical services.

CORE VALUES

INTEGRITY  
RESPECT  
LOYALTY  
TEAMWORK  
COMPASSION

VISION

We are committed to excellence through professionalism and trustworthiness achieved through our daily operations. We will continue to expand our public service delivery model through innovative and fiscally-responsible practices. We will strive to offer our workforce the best opportunities available for training and education to further enhance the public service we provide.
The Tulare County Fire Department (TCFD) was established on July 1, 2007. Prior to 2007, the County of Tulare contracted with the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, know today as CAL FIRE, to provide fire protection for the County. Through the agreement, CAL FIRE provided personnel to staff the Counties fire apparatus and fire stations as well as administrative staff to manage the Department.

The current Fire Chief was appointed by the Board of Supervisors in January 2016 and is the Department’s third Chief. The Department’s original Command Staff included three Division Chiefs as well as the Fire Chief. The Department embraced field operations and reduced the Division Chief positions to two during the economic recession. A third Division Chief was added to the Department’s Command Staff in November 2018. The Department currently has an Operations, Training and Professional Standards division.

The Department’s fire stations were originally staffed with one person. Paid Call Fire Fighters, who later became classified as Extra Help Fire Fighters, supplement staffing. Today, the Department staffs four of its stations with two personnel on each shift and continues to rely on Extra Help Fire Fighters to supplement staffing.

The Department moved its headquarters from its original location in Farmersville, CA, to 835 S. Akers St. in Visalia, CA in September 2017. The Tulare County Emergency Operations Center is located in the Fire Department Headquarters which is next to the Tulare County Sheriff’s Department. The co-location of the County’s emergency services allows for collaboration between the three Departments to improve services for the residents of the County.
Battalion 1 has a total of 9 stations.

2 of those are resident stations.

Battalion 1 accounted for 43% of our calls for service.
Battalion 2 has a total of 10 stations.

3 of those are resident stations and 1 is a community volunteer station.

Battalion 2 accounted for 29% of our calls for service.
Battalion 3 has a total of 7 stations.

Battalion 3 accounted for 28% of our calls for service.
In 2020, we faced an extremely unique year complete with unforeseen challenges. With COVID-19, we limited the calls we responded to to include only priority 3 medical calls, as opposed to responding to all calls. We wanted to ensure the safety of our personnel and that of the communities we serve, by reducing contact between them. We have also adjusted our PPE accordingly to keep personnel as safe as possible.

Grants

- **OTS Grant**—$150,000 granted for 3 sets of eDRAULICS, high press low lift air bags, and rescue 42’s
- **VFA Grant**—$40,000 for fire shelters
- **CARES Act funding**—The department was able to purchase 10 PPE Extractors, EMS Jackets, and thousands of dollars of PPE through this funding.
- **FEMA COVID Grant**—$82,000 for COVID PPE and supplies.
PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS UPDATE

Public Outreach:
Total Events: 32
Attendees (public outreach): 18,229

Events included station tours, local events, and HQ events. Due to COVID-19 we had less events than we usually do during a typical year.

Illegal Fireworks Enforcement—Approximately 500 lbs. recovered

FireComm also provides dispatch service for the Tule River Reservation, Woodlake Fire Service and Farmersville City Fire Department.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position Applied</th>
<th>Total Completed</th>
<th>% of Total Completed Investigations</th>
<th>Disqualified</th>
<th>Withdrawn</th>
<th>Hired</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EH Emergency Dispatcher I</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>EH Fire Fighter</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>57.9</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>15</td>
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<tr>
<td>EH Seasonal Fire Fighter/Fuels Crew</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>28.1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fire Apparatus Engineer</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fire Inspector</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>100.1</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>31</td>
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FireComm Calls for Service 01/01/2020-12/31/2020

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Number</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fire Alarms</td>
<td>55</td>
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<tr>
<td>False Alarms</td>
<td>455</td>
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<tr>
<td>Public Service Assists</td>
<td>451</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fires</td>
<td>2259</td>
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<tr>
<td>Medical Aids</td>
<td>9983</td>
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<tr>
<td>Vehicle Accidents</td>
<td>1631</td>
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<tr>
<td>COVID Related</td>
<td>529</td>
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<tr>
<td>Public Hazard</td>
<td>420</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hazardous Materials</td>
<td>17</td>
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<tr>
<td>Burn Complaints</td>
<td>288</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>661</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other Agency Assist</td>
<td>2960</td>
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<tr>
<td>Flooding</td>
<td>38</td>
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<tr>
<td>Swift Water Rescue</td>
<td>24</td>
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<tr>
<td>Technical Rescue</td>
<td>18</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>19789</td>
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TRAINING UPDATE

2020 Training Hours

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<tr>
<th></th>
<th># of Personnel</th>
<th>Hours</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Company Officers</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>12,912</td>
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<tr>
<td>FAE's</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>4,062</td>
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<tr>
<td>EH Firefighter</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>2,59.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>EH Engineer</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>51</td>
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<td>Totals</td>
<td>142</td>
<td>17,285</td>
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Trainings included: HazMat, Facility, Driver, etc.

Academy 19:
- Interviewed 28 FAE
- Hired 10 candidates

2020 EH Firefighter Interviews

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Process</th>
<th>Total Applications*</th>
<th>Interviewed</th>
<th>Candidates Selected</th>
<th>Failed Background</th>
<th>Total Hired</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Applications*</td>
<td>212</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>16</td>
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</table>

40% of the candidates chosen were hired.
7.55% of the candidates that applied were hired.

*84 applicants were rejected as they lived out of Tulare County
Incident Breakdown

Annual calls for service were reduced in 2020, due to COVID-19.

In 2020, priority 3 calls were eliminated, and remain eliminated, from our response efforts, until such time that the infection rates are lower. We remain focused on life threatening calls and fires.
Local Incidents

- Castle Fire/SQF Complex—174,178 acres burned; 15 injuries, 240 structures damaged or destroyed
- Train Derailment—this was one of the largest hazmat incidents in recent years
- Charlie’s Nightclub—Porterville; Two alarm fire, approximately 4,000 square feet
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Incident</th>
<th>Counties</th>
<th>Acres Burned</th>
<th>Fatalities</th>
<th>Injuries</th>
<th>Structures Destroyed/Damaged</th>
<th>Notes</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Apple Fire</td>
<td>Riverside</td>
<td>1,087</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>12</td>
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<tr>
<td>BTU North Complex Fires</td>
<td>Plumas, Butte</td>
<td>318,935</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>100+</td>
<td>2,455</td>
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<tr>
<td>Creek Fire</td>
<td>Fresno, Madera</td>
<td>379,895</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>927</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Crews Fire</td>
<td>Santa Clara</td>
<td>5,513</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>August Complex</td>
<td>Glenn, Mendocino, Lake, Tehama, Trinity, Shasta</td>
<td>1,032,648</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>940</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>CZU Lightning Complex</td>
<td>San Mateo, Santa Cruz</td>
<td>86,509</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1,630</td>
<td></td>
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<td>LNU Lightning Complex</td>
<td>Colusa, Lake, Napa, Sonoma, Solano, Yolo</td>
<td>363,220</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1,723</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>SCU Lightning Complex</td>
<td>Santa Clara, Alameda, Contra, Costa, San Joaquin, Merced, Stanislaus</td>
<td>396,624</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>284</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fish Creek Fire</td>
<td>Tulare</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Glass Fire</td>
<td>Napa, Sonoma</td>
<td>67,484</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>282</td>
<td></td>
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<td>Gold Fire</td>
<td>Lassen</td>
<td>22,634</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>18</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hog Fire</td>
<td>Lassen</td>
<td>9,564</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lake Fire</td>
<td>Los Angeles</td>
<td>31,089</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>60</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Loyalton Fire</td>
<td>Lassen, Plumas, Sierra</td>
<td>47,029</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>*First ever Fire Tornado Warning</td>
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<tr>
<td>Meadow Fire</td>
<td>Sequoia National Park</td>
<td>4,971</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mineral Fire</td>
<td>Fresno</td>
<td>29,667</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Power Fire</td>
<td>Mariposa, Merced</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>River Fire</td>
<td>Monterey</td>
<td>48,088</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>43</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stagecoach Fire</td>
<td>Kern</td>
<td>7,760</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>54</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Zogg Fire</td>
<td>Shasta, Tehama</td>
<td>56,338</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>231</td>
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Promotions

Captain
Tim Franks
Mat Whitendale

Lieutenant
John Alvarado
Jose Andrade
Jared Arciniega
Zane Duvall

Blake Garrison
Matt Jackson
Justin Komin
Christopher Lucero

Antonio Mendoza
Michael Rawson
William Stout
New Hires and Retirements

**New Hires**

- Fire Inspector—Jennifer Wu
- Fire Inspector—Trent Ebaugh

![Jennifer Wu](image1)

![Trent Ebaugh](image2)

**Retirements**

- Fire Captain—Hank Seguin
- Lieutenant—John Akers

![Hank Seguin](image3)

![John Akers](image4)
FAE Academy 19

Cole Mahoney, Senteno Aguerria, John Hesson, Darren Noe, Josh Hernandez, Manuel Infante, Daniel Sanchez, Juan Calderon, Ramiro Tapia, Dylan Foster

EH Academy 20

From Left: Guillermo Munguia, Francisco Aguila, Kyle Pinedo, Julio Palacios-Aguilar, Antonio Avila, Javier Gamez, Benjamin Allen, Carmen Castillo, Celso Sanchez, David Tackett, Bransen Berry, Ruey Rowland, Calistro Alvarado, Raul Camacho.
On July 15, 2020, the Tulare County Fire Department celebrated the grand opening of Fire Station One – Tulare County’s first new fire station in over 20 years. Located at 25456 Road 140 in Tulare (District 2), the project has been 13 years in the making and was much needed due to urban growth in the area. The 7,070 square foot building features three apparatus bays, two double dorm rooms, a training/community room, and office areas. The completed project cost $4.3 million and was built by Forcum-Mackey Construction. Fire Station One will reduce response times for residents in this portion of Tulare County and utilizes the latest technology to ensure the health and safety of the firefighters.
Station 1
Grand Opening

Station 1 Crew from Left: Captain Chris Ellorin, Lieutenant Michael Hansen, Lieutenant Zane Duvall, FAE Cole Mahoney, FAE Jason Blankinship

Mobile Command Unit
Tree Mortality

- The crew returned with 19 members in 2020
- Completed projects include South Fork in Three Rivers, Silver City, Posey, and Parker Pass.
- Approximately 7,000 trees removed in 2020

Posey—Before and After

Crew Boss:
Rafael Torres
Crew:
Joseph Amaral
Nedda Bakhtminoo
Angel Chambers
Oscar Cibrian
Jonathan Collazo
Ramon Espinoza
Cole Frazier
Joseph Gamez
Ryan Hum
Esteban Infante
Luis Melendez
Luis Nunez
Kyle Pinedo
Jose Porras
Daniel Ramos-Ruiz
Anthony Rivera
Andre Rosacia
Marisol Santillan
Alan Williamson
Community Events

Library Story Time

Leadership Group

Station 4 Yard Work

World Ag Expo

Dr. Seuss Day
Recognition

Cole Frazier—Three Rivers Heroes Celebration
Tim Franks—Visalia Knights of Columbus
Chris Ezaki and Joanne Bear—Bill Rodat Award
Jacques Rayburn—Porterville Exchange Club
Larry Mayfield—Exeter Knights of Columbus
Jared Arciniega—TCFD Firefighter of the Year
Melissa Hernandez—TCFD Dispatcher of the Year

Due to COVID-19, recognition events were cancelled for the majority of events. These employees would have been recognized at the events listed.
Dear all firefighters, my name is Roman and I am in the 8th grader at Ridgeview Middle School. I am writing this grateful letter because I want to thank you for the hard work you do. Putting out the fires can’t be easy and having people depend on you to keep us safe from harm. I appreciate you guys risking your life to make sure that we are safe, thank you for the bravery, and I appreciate that you guys never give up no matter what. Without you, the flames would have hit us all but you guys are there to make sure that doesn't happen and I am very thankful for that and many people are thankful too.

The world is a better place thanks to all your efforts and hard work. I cannot express enough how much we need all you firefighters that you deal with these fires even though that some of these fires are done by stupid human error. I hope you guys stay safe out there and look out for each other and go home safely. Again, thank you so much firefighters for all you do. God bless.

Roman
A grateful student

My name is Hunter and I am an 8th grade student at Ridgeview Middle School. I am writing to you because I want to say thank you for all you do to help me and the world. I appreciate you for sacrificing your life to save people in the valley so we can be safe inside our homes while you are risking your life. Without you the world would be in flames and the human race would go extinct so thank you for all that you have done for me and others. The world is a better place because of all your efforts and hard work to keep us all safe. I cannot express enough how much I appreciate that you are risking your life to save others. I hope you are safe and keep helping people. Again thank you so much

“Sometimes the best way to solve your problems is to help someone else”.

Hunter M

Tiny Tots and Oak Grove Elementary—Porterville

Someone gifted you a mum!
Message: Thank you for your hard work and bravery!

#thanksforgiving

Someone gifted you a mum!
Message: Thank you for all you have done to protect our community. Happy Thanksgiving to you & your family!

#thanksforgiving