



COALINGA FIRE DEPARTMENT

GREG DUPUIS, FIRE CHIEF

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Date: January 12, 2026

To: Sean Brewer, City Manager

From: Greg DuPuis, Fire Chief

Re: 2025 Firefighter of the year

It is with great pride that the Coalinga Fire Department recognizes Firefighter Darren Burke as Firefighter of the Year.

Firefighter Burke has been a valued member of the department since May of 2022. In a relatively short period of time, he has consistently demonstrated the dedication, reliability, and professionalism that represent the highest standards of the fire service and the Coalinga Fire Department

While employed full-time with the department, Firefighter Burke successfully completed a fire academy, an achievement that required exceptional commitment and perseverance. He balanced the demands of academy training while continuing to work and manage his family life, an effort that did not go unnoticed by those around him. One peer noted, *"Darren impressed me by going to the academy, working, and still managing a family life."*

Firefighter Burke comes to work every shift prepared to perform his duties without complaint. His work ethic and consistency are frequently highlighted by his peers. As one firefighter stated, *"Darren is hard working and never really complains, he just does his job and does it really well."* Another shared, *"Darren is the best; I can always count on him."*

In addition to his strong work ethic, Firefighter Burke has taken on an informal leadership role within the department by welcoming new rookies and taking them under his wing. He consistently helps train, guide, and mentor newer firefighters, ensuring they feel supported and confident as they begin their careers. His willingness to invest time and effort into others demonstrates his commitment not only to his own success, but to the long-term strength of the department as a whole.

Firefighter Burke's potential has not gone unnoticed. One peer summarized it best by saying, *"Darren is going to promote rapidly in this department, he just has 'it.'"*

For his dedication, perseverance, professionalism, and the respect he has earned from his peers, Firefighter Darren Burke is truly deserving of the 2025 Firefighter of the Year award.