



Statement from Chief J.J. Hoffman

June 1, 2020

I would like to apologize to the entire Lyons community, Lyons Fire Protection District crew members and staff, and the Fire District Board of Directors, for the thoughtless remark I made in a social media post late last week. It reflected poorly on the district and me, and I regret that. I am sorry.

Like many in our community, I was frustrated that peaceful protests in Denver were hijacked by some violent rioters who committed property crimes that hurt a number of small business owners and overshadowed what the peaceful protesters were trying to accomplish. In response to a post in my social media feed, I remarked that I would turn fire hoses on those groups.

As someone who has dedicated my life to protect people and property, and has witnessed the devastating impacts of fire, I was troubled by the destructive actions of some of the rioters. While my remark was made in jest, and was meant to refer to the rioters whose actions followed the peaceful daytime protests, it was brought to my attention by several community members that my remark was insensitive, particularly given the historical context of the use of water cannons to break up civil rights demonstrations. Those community members are right, and I acknowledge that my remark was thoughtless and inappropriate. For this, I sincerely apologize.

I requested the opportunity to meet face-to-face with one of the community members who was angered by my comment. His son had participated in the peaceful protests in Denver, and he took great offense at my post. We had a very healthy and productive conversation, and it helped me understand the impact that my comment had on him and other members of our community. I apologized to him directly, and he graciously accepted it.

It is an incredible honor to serve the Lyons community as Chief of the Lyons Fire Protection District, and I do not take the responsibilities associated with that role lightly. My goal is to protect and earn the respect of our entire community, and I regret that my comment on social media undermined that goal. I want to assure the community, crew members and staff, and the board that I will continue to work hard to represent all of you in the most honorable way possible. Thank you.