



FIRE & EMS NEWS

September 2003

Volume 2 – Issue 3A (updated on 08/31/03)

Welcome to the latest issue of the Fire & EMS News! My goal is to provide you with information about your Chabot College Fire Technology Program, the local Fire Departments, in addition to other information that might be beneficial to you in your pursuit of better preparing yourself for the career of your dreams! Some of the highlights of this issue include:

- **FREE** Oral Board Seminar – Postponed due to scheduling conflicts
- Chabot College Student Firefighter Work Experience Program
- Firefighter employment opportunity - Sacramento Fire Department
- Firefighter employment opportunity – Phoenix Fire Department
- Firefighter employment opportunity – Salt Lake City Fire Department
- Firefighter employment opportunities – FIREHIRE testing process (added 08/31/03)

FREE ORAL BOARD SEMINAR

Unfortunately, we have had to postpone the free oral board seminar that was to be hosted by Captain Bob. Due to scheduling conflicts, Captain Bob is not available on the original date we had planned to host the seminar (Sunday November 2). Stay tuned to this newsletter for a new date once I am able to work out a mutually agreeable date. I apologize for any inconvenience this may have caused you. For more information about Captain Bob, including numerous web pages of free information to better assist you during your oral interviews, visit his website at <http://www.eatstress.com>

STUDENT FIREFIGHTER WORK EXPERIENCE PROGRAM AT CHABOT COLLEGE

Two of the biggest challenges of becoming the best firefighter candidate you can be are having quality experience that you can sell to a fire department during the oral interview, and also having experience that not everyone is able to say that they have (meaning you are unique). One of the ways to gain valuable experience and also be unique is to become a student firefighter through the Chabot College Work Experience program. Many of you might not be aware of this unique and incredible program that is available to students. To the best of my knowledge, this program has been around for at least 15 years (and probably more). I was a student firefighter with the Oakland Fire Department during 1992 and 1993. I saw more fires in the 21 months I participated in the program than most people will see in a 25 to 30 year career (unless of course you get the opportunity to work for big city fire departments such as Oakland, San Francisco, Stockton, Los Angeles, New York, Detroit, etc.).

What are the minimum requirements to participate in the program?

- **You have to be presently certified as an EMT** (this can be done by having completed Health 81 and 83 at Chabot **or** EMT training at another college or private institution).
- **You have to have completed a firefighter 1 academy** (this can be done by having completed Fire Technology 90A, 90B, and 90C at Chabot College **or** by having completed another approved firefighter 1 academy through another college).
- **You have to be presently certified in CPR** (either CPR for the Professional Rescuer through the American Red Cross **or** BLS: Healthcare Provider through the American Heart Association).

If I have completed all three of the above requirements, how do I apply for the program?

- You have to register for **both** Fire Technology 95 (Work Experience) **and** 96 (Work Experience Seminar).

When is the program offered?

- The program is offered year-round (Spring, Summer, and Fall semesters).

Which fire departments are presently allowing student firefighters?

- Presently, the college has agreements with the following departments:
 - [Alameda Fire Department](#)
 - [Alameda County Fire Department](#)
 - [Oakland Fire Department](#)

NOTE: Other fire departments have expressed interest at participating, but those are the only three departments presently participating.

How does the program work?

- The Fire Technology 95 class is the actual time that you are assigned as a student firefighter. On the first night of the 96 class, you are expected to sign up for one of the above fire departments. You are then assigned to a specific station and platoon. It is then up to you to make contact with your assigned officer and discuss your planned work schedule with them. Signing up for this class ensures that you are covered by the College's insurance carrier in case of injury.
- The Fire Technology 96 class is a seminar class. We usually meet on six (6) different occasions throughout the semester (in the evening from 6 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.) to discuss your experiences and get more in depth about what it takes to become a firefighter and how to better prepare yourself to become a firefighter.

How much of a time commitment am I expected to put in?

- The Fire Technology 95 class can either be a 1-unit class, a 2-unit class, or a 3-unit class.
 - If you sign up for 1 unit, you are expected to average five (5) hours a week.
 - If you sign up for 2 units, you are expected to average ten (10) hours per week.
 - If you sign up for 3 units, you are expected to average fifteen (15) hours per week.
- Most students attempt to do average one 24-hour shift per week (regular firefighters usually work 56 hours per week). Some do more hours per week, some do less hours per week.
- As much as we all have so little free time, it can be to your benefit to complete as many hours as possible. In the 21 months I was in the program, I completed over 1800 hours of service. I put that on my resume and also mentioned that during every oral interview I had. How do you think that came across - even though I was not a true "volunteer firefighter," I was still spending a great deal of time preparing myself to be the best I can be.

Will the college provide me with my uniforms or safety gear?

- The college will not provide your uniforms. You will have to purchase them on your own. Details will be provided on the first night of class.
- The college will provide safety equipment that will include a helmet, structure firefighting jacket and pants, and wildland firefighting jacket and pants. The college does not provide safety gloves, nomex hoods, or boots. Because those items tend to be very user-specific (meaning that once you have used a pair of gloves or boots for a year or more, they tend to form fit you) it has been agreed upon that the student will provide those items for themselves.

Will I be able to put this experience on my resume under the heading of Volunteer Firefighter?

- **NO! BY PARTICIPATING IN THIS PROGRAM, YOU ARE NOT CLASSIFIED AS A VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTER!** The participating fire departments do not have volunteer firefighters and if you call yourself one, I am willing to bet that I will be hearing from their administration and/or their firefighter's union local. Some of you might be saying that the Alameda County Fire Department has volunteers, so why didn't he mention them? If I am not mistaken, in early 2003, the Alameda County Fire Department eliminated their Volunteer Firefighter program and instead created their Reserve Firefighter program. Two different classifications and programs.
- However, you will be able to put the program under the heading of "EXPERIENCE" on your resume. Even though it is not true volunteer firefighter experience (even though you are volunteering your time), or true community service experience (because the community really isn't directly benefiting from your participating), it is still valuable work experience that can make you unique and more marketable. You are a Student Firefighter participating in the Chabot College Work Experience program. That is how you will need to market it.

If I participate in the program, do I guarantee myself a job with that department?

- Of course not. Just like with anything else, your participation can either hurt your chances or help your chances. It all depends on how you perform, how you interact with the crews, how you react and handle yourself on both the emergency scene and non-emergency scene (at the fire station, during training evolutions, during company inspections, etc.).
- It all depends on timing. Even if you are doing a great job, that department might not even be hiring firefighters for a few years. Because of that, you can't bank on doing well with that department. You have to continue taking every test you qualify for and better preparing yourself every waking minute.

Consider my situation. I would have taken a job with Oakland in a second when I was testing. Remember that I was a student firefighter from 1992 through 1993. They had last tested around 1988 or 1989 (I don't remember exactly which year) and they did not test again until 1995 or 1996. There was about a 6 to 8 year gap in testing! If I had just waited or banked on Oakland who knows what have happened. By then, I had already been hired as a firefighter with the department I presently work for. It was meant to be I guess. Plus, I had no guarantee that I would have even been offered a job with Oakland. The point I'm trying to make is that you have to take every test you can take, don't count on one department to give you the badge, and continue preparing yourself to become a firefighter at all times!

How do I get more information about the program?

- Contact me (Steve Prziborowski) via any of the methods listed on the last page of this newsletter.

FIREFIGHTER EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY – Sacramento City Fire Department

The [Sacramento City Fire Department](#) is one of the larger fire departments in the State. They operate out of 22 fire stations, protecting 458,000 people over 144 square miles. They are a full-service fire department that includes ALS transporting ambulance service. They will be testing quarterly for the position of FIRE RECRUIT. The remaining (tentative) year 2003 testing dates are:

- **October 18, 2003.** Cut off for filing for this test is September 19, 2003

Note: Cut-off deadlines and test dates are tentative and are subject to change without prior notification.

What is the position of fire recruit?

The Sacramento City Fire Department is responsible for the protection of life and property and for providing EMS to the community. Fire Recruits attend the Sacramento Fire Training Academy for 20 weeks and receive basic training in firefighting methods, equipment operation and maintenance, physical fitness, fire science concepts, and a variety of other subjects.

Candidates who satisfactorily complete the training and graduate from the academy are given probationary status and assignments as firefighters. Some graduates who hold current certification as paramedics may be assigned as Firefighter/Paramedics. In addition, all candidates must pass a background investigation, fingerprinting, medical examination, and drug testing prior to becoming a firefighter.

What are their requirements?

In order to qualify for entrance into the Recruit Academy, you must:

- Be at least 21 years of age.
- Have a high school diploma or GED equivalent.
- Have a current EMT-1 certificate or higher.
- Have 20 semester units or 30 quarter units from an accredited college or university. Three years as a paid firefighter may be substituted for the above college units.
- Be a citizen of the United States.
- Pass a written examination.

Special qualifications:

- You have not smoked or used any tobacco products during the 12 months prior to testing.
- Possess a valid California Class C driver's license at the time of appointment.
- Ability to obtain a Class B driver's license with appropriate endorsements during the Sacramento Fire Training Academy. Failure to obtain the license will be cause for termination.
- Wear respiratory protective equipment at times. When assigned to such work, facial hair must be shaved when it interferes with the safe fitting of such equipment.
- Reside within a 35 air mile radius from the freeway interchange at W-X streets and 29th – 30th streets within one year following appointment as a firefighter.
- Pass the physical ability test each year as a condition of employment

Additionally you must

Pass a physical ability test which includes the following events:

- Hose drag
- Hose Carry / Stair climb
- Hose Hoist
- Smoke Ejector
- Citizen Rescue
- Dry Hose Load

A videotape of the physical ability test is available at the following locations:

- Any branch of the Sacramento City or County library system.
- American River College Library, 4700 College Oak Drive, Sacramento, CA 95841
- Consumnes River College Library, 8401 Center Parkway, Sacramento, CA 95821

For more information you may contact:

- Sacramento City Personnel Department (916) 264-5726
- The Fire Recruit Hotline: (916) 264-8172
- The City 24-hour jobline: (916) 264-8568

To download an application:

Go to the JOB OPPORTUNITIES section of their website at <http://www.cityofsacramento.org/fire/jobopportunities.html>

To find out more information about the Sacramento City Fire Department - Visit their website at <http://www.cityofsacramento.org/fire/>

FIREFIGHTER EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY – Phoenix Fire Department

The [Phoenix \(Arizona\) Fire Department](#) is considered to be one of the most progressive fire departments in the world. The Phoenix metropolitan area is one of the fastest growing areas in the United States. Their website is one of the best I have seen, in regards to providing a large amount of information to not just other fire departments, but to the public in general. I noticed on their website that they plan to test for the position of firefighter in January of 2004. That leaves you only about 4 months to prepare for their testing process. This test would be worth your time, money, and effort because of their size (almost 50 fire stations with many more planned and/or under construction), their reputation, and their career opportunities that are offered.

To view the latest information regarding their recruitment process (including updates), go to <http://phoenix.gov/FIRE/recruit.html> - you can also call their Fire and Police “Recruitment Hotline” at (602) 534-5627 for a recorded message announcing recruitment dates, requirements, and salary information. You might not find their salary to be the same as the Bay Area. However, most firefighters working in the Bay Area cannot afford houses anywhere near where the department they work for while in Arizona and other states, you can easily find a wide variety of affordable housing. Your dollar should go farther than it would out here.

To qualify for their testing process, you must satisfy the following requirements:

1. Must be at least 18 years of age by date of the written examination.
2. Must possess the mental and physical/medical health to adequately perform the duties of a firefighter.
3. Must have a good driving record (fewer than eight points during the previous three years) and be able to obtain and maintain a valid Arizona operator’s license.
4. Fingerprints of all applicants will be taken prior to each part of the examination process for identification and validation purposes.
5. May be subject to pre-employment drug screening test.

[Click here](#) to download the **Phoenix Fire Department Recruitment Information Packet**

[Click here](#) to download the **Phoenix Fire Department Overview of Operations and Programs**.

Other requirements include:

1. You must have certification as an EMT with the State of Arizona at the time of employment (by your hire date). Classes are offered at your local community college.

NOTE: For more information about EMT reciprocity with the State of Arizona, go to the [State of Arizona EMS website](#) for more information.

FIREFIGHTER EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY – Salt Lake City Fire Department

The [Salt Lake City Fire Department](#) will be testing for entry-level firefighters in the spring of 2004! They are currently accepting names to compile an interest list. **They will contact those on the list in March of 2004. No other information is available at this time.** To leave your contact information, [click here](#). Be sure to include your name, current address (including city, state, and zip code) and contact phone numbers (home, cellular, etc.). You will not need to contact them again unless you have a change to your address or phone number.

Minimum requirements include:

- Applicants must be a U.S. Citizen
- Applicants must be at least 18 years of age by the date of the written exam.
- Drivers license and driving record – applicants must possess or be able to obtain a valid Utah driver's license by the time of employment and have a good driving record.
- Applicants must have a high school diploma, G.E.D., or equivalent by the date of the written exam.
- Applicants must pass a physical examination on an annual basis and maintain their physical fitness after being hired.

For salary information, [click here](#).

For more information:

Salt Lake City Human Resources / Recruitment
315 E. 200 S. 7th Floor
Salt Lake City, UT 84111
(801) 799-4204

Salt Lake City Fire Department website: <http://www.ci.slc.ut.us/fire>

Salt Lake City website: <http://www.ci.slc.ut.us>

BAY AREA FIREFIGHTER TESTING OPPORTUNITIES - FIREHIRE

FIREHIRE is going to be accepting applications for Firefighter / EMT and Firefighter / Paramedic positions until September 30, 2003. For a list of departments that will be hiring off of this list, take a look at the list on the next page.

Benefits of taking this test include:

- You're only taking one test (as opposed to separate tests for each fire department)
- The hiring list will be in effect for one year
- There is a chance other fire departments will hire off of this list

To participate in the entry-level firefighter examination process, you must possess or meet the following minimum requirements:

- High school diploma or GED
- At least 18 years old
- California Drivers License – Class “C” by date of appointment
- Proof of citizenship or legal ability to work in the U.S.

Some of the fire departments might have other requirements (view the firehire web site at <http://www.firehire.com> for more specific information) such as:

- EMT
- Paramedic
- Firefighter – 1 Academy
- Firefighter – 1 Certificate

To download an application and related application materials, or for more information, visit their website at <http://www.firehire.com> - if you do not have internet access, call them at 1-800-755-5891.

The examination process consists of the following:

- Completion of the application packet that is sent to you by FIREHIRE
- Written examination – 130 question test which you must pass with a score of at least 70%. There are 65 EMT questions from the AAOS Emergency Care and Transportation of the Sick and Injured, 7th Edition textbook, and 65 firefighter questions from the IFSTA Essentials of Firefighting, 4th Edition textbook. This portion of the exam is weighted 75% of your total score. **The Written examination is scheduled to be given on Saturday November 1, 2003 at The College of San Mateo South Cafeteria in San Mateo.**
- Physical Ability Test – this portion is pass / fail. It consists of the following events:
 - 35 Foot ladder extension / retraction exercise
 - Pike Pole exercise
 - Hose load/unload exercise

- Ladder manipulation exercise
- Hose manipulation exercise
- Rescue exercise
- Cardiovascular (step test) exercise
- Emergency Medical Assessment Center – this event consists of a patient involved in a trauma and/or medical setting. The treatment is commensurate with your level of training. There are critical care criteria points that must be addressed or it is an AUTOMATIC FAILURE. You are graded on the criteria established by the National Registry of Emergency Medical Technicians. This event is weighted 25% of your total score.

The following fire departments are expected to be participating (based on the information I had available at the time I printed this document) in this recruitment and will be using the list that is established to hire for open positions:

Fire Department

Positions available

- | | |
|---|---|
| ● Albany Fire Department – | Firefighter/Paramedic |
| ● Burlingame Fire Department – | Firefighter/EMT & Firefighter/Paramedic |
| ● El Cerrito Fire Department – | Firefighter/Paramedic |
| ● Foster City Fire Department – | Firefighter/EMT & Firefighter/Paramedic |
| ● Fremont Fire Department – | Firefighter |
| ● Half Moon Bay Fire District – | Firefighter/Paramedic |
| ● Kentfield Fire Protection District – | Firefighter/EMT |
| ● Millbrae Fire Department – | Firefighter/EMT & Firefighter/Paramedic |
| ● Novato Fire Protection District – | Firefighter/Paramedic |
| ● Oroville Fire Department – | Firefighter/EMT & Firefighter/Paramedic |
| ● Petaluma Fire Department – | Firefighter/Paramedic |
| ● Piedmont Fire Department – | Firefighter/EMT & Firefighter/Paramedic |
| ● Redwood City Fire Department – | Firefighter/EMT & Firefighter/Paramedic |
| ● Ross Valley Fire Authority – | Firefighter/EMT & Firefighter/Paramedic |
| ● San Bruno Fire Department – | Firefighter/Paramedic |
| ● San Mateo Fire Department – | Firefighter/EMT & Firefighter/Paramedic |
| ● San Rafael Fire Department – | Firefighter/EMT & Firefighter/Paramedic |
| ● San Ramon Valley Fire Protection District – | Firefighter/Paramedic |
| ● South County Fire Authority – | Firefighter/EMT & Firefighter/Paramedic |
| ● South Lake Tahoe Fire Department – | Firefighter/Paramedic & FF/P trainee |
| ● Woodside Fire District – | Firefighter/Paramedic |

I believe that the **Fremont Fire Department** is the only Fire Department **NOT** requiring EMT, Paramedic, Firefighter 1 Academy, or Firefighter 1 Certification. So you have no excuse to NOT take the exam, even if you are just starting out!

To join the FREE FIREHIRE mailing list and find out about their latest updates, go to http://www.firehire.com/mail_list.htm

CLOSING COMMENTS

I hope you have found this newsletter somewhat valuable. If you have learned one new thing, then I think I've done my job. I truly want to see everyone succeed, and I also really enjoy doing what I do. This program is your program. It can only get better with your assistance. There is an old saying, don't just give me problems – give me solutions! I can't read your minds, so please provide me with feedback. Feel free to contact me if you have any questions or want me to clarify any rumors you might have heard. Thank you very much!

Steve Prziborowski, Fire Technology & EMS Coordinator - Chabot College

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- **Cellular:** 408-205-9006
- **Fax:** 510-782-9315
- **Email:** sprziborowski@chabotcollege.edu

- **Chabot College Fire Technology & EMS web site:** www.chabotfire.com
- **Chabot College web site:** www.chabotcollege.edu

***** PLEASE FEEL FREE TO PASS THIS ON TO YOUR FRIENDS OR CO-WORKERS*****

The Fine Print:

- If you would like to be added to our mailing list (no, I won't give your email address out to others), email me at sprziborowski@chabotcollege.edu and I will add you to the list. Benefits of being on the mailing list include being notified when the latest Fire & EMS news is published, and being notified of firefighter testing opportunities, volunteer opportunities, or training opportunities.
- If you know of someone who wants to receive this newsletter (as well as other updates) email me at sprziborowski@chabotcollege.edu and I will place them on the mailing list.
- If you want to take your name off of the mailing list, just send me an email at sprziborowski@chabotcollege.edu and in the subject heading, and type in "unsubscribe from mailing list" and I will remove your name.