



FIRE & EMS NEWS

February 2003

Volume 1 – Issue 8

Welcome to the latest issue of the Fire & EMS News! Some of the highlights of this issue include:

- Fall 2003 Fire Technology Program changes at Chabot College
- Bay Area Firefighter testing opportunities – Annual CPS test that will be utilized by at least eight different fire departments to hire firefighters and firefighter / paramedics
- Congratulations to various students for moving closer to their goal of becoming a full-time firefighter
- Volunteer Opportunities – focus on the San Francisco Paramedic Association

FALL 2003 – FIRE TECHNOLOGY PROGRAM CHANGES

Effective fall semester 2003, there are going to be some significant changes to *your* Fire Technology Program at Chabot College. Here are the highlights:

1. The name of the program will officially change from Fire Service Technology to **Fire Technology**
2. The prerequisites to get into the Firefighter 1 Academy (Fire Technology 90A, 90B, and 90C) have been reduced to:
 - Fire Technology 50
 - Fire Technology 51
 - Fire Technology 52
 - Health 61 **or** Health 81 (EMT)

NOTE: Health 81 cannot be taken at Chabot or Las Positas the same semester you are taking the Firefighter 1 Academy at Chabot. This is due to overlapping scheduling (Health 81 is on Thursdays from 0800 to 1700 hours at Chabot, and the Academy is from 1700 to 2100 hours in San Leandro at the Alameda County Fire Department training tower. Las Positas' Health 81 is on Tuesday evenings and Saturday mornings, both of which conflict with the academy schedule. *If you are trying to decide which to take first (EMT or the Firefighter 1 Academy), I would suggest getting your EMT certification first because that will open up more doors for you in regards to testing opportunities.*

3. Fire Technology 50 is no longer a prerequisite to get into Fire Technology 51, 54, or 56. What this means to you is that you can potentially complete the prerequisites to get into the Firefighter 1 Academy in one semester (as opposed to two or three now).
4. You may have noticed that Fire Technology 53 is no longer a prerequisite class to get into the Firefighter 1 Academy. It is still a required class for your Certificate of Achievement or A.A. Degree in Fire Technology. ***Don't cheat yourself - just because it is no longer a requirement to get into the academy doesn't mean that you shouldn't take it and work towards your degree.*** Too many candidates just want to get their EMT and Firefighter 1 Academy certificates and then stop. They think that is all they will need to get hired. Well folks, if that is you, wake up and smell the coffee! Remember you are competing against many candidates that have their two-year degrees, and many have four-year degrees. Also, some departments require a two-year degree just to take the entry-level firefighter test, in addition to taking promotional exams. **Spend the time now getting your AA - you'll appreciate it in the long run.**
5. Fire Technology 65 is going to be broken up into two separate classes: Fire Technology 91B and 91C:
 - 91B will be the I-200, Basic ICS
 - 91C will be the Hazardous Materials First Responder Operational level class
 - Both classes will still provide State Certification.
 - Both classes will now be offered after the academy
6. Fire Technology 86 (Wildland Interface Firefighting) will be changed to Fire Technology 91A, and also be offered after the academy.
7. The Firefighter 1 Academy will now look like this:
 - Fire Technology 90A - 4 weeks total (Tue/Thu from 1700-2100, Sat from 0800-1700)
 - Fire Technology 90B - 4 weeks total (Tue/Thu from 1700-2100, Sat from 0800-1700)
 - Fire Technology 90C - 4 weeks total (Tue/Thu from 1700-2100, Sat from 0800-1700)
 - Fire Technology 91A, 91B, and 91C - 4 weeks total (Tue/Thu from 1700-2100, Sat from 0800-1700)
 - The academy will now be 16 weeks in length
 - If you have already taken Fire Technology 65 **and** 86, you will not have to repeat them under the new numbering system.
 - If you have taken 65 **or** 86, you will only have to sign up for the classes you need.
 - The content of the classes hasn't changed, just the numbering and scheduling.
 - There is nothing to say that you cannot take 91A, 91B, 91C before you are eligible to sign up for the academy (**91A, 91B, and 91C do not have any prerequisites**).
 - Fire Technology 91A, 91B, and 91C are still requirements of State Firefighter 1 Certification, so if you're wondering why you have to take them - now you know.

BAY AREA FIREFIGHTER TESTING OPPORTUNITY

Cooperative Personnel Services (CPS) is going to be accepting applications for their annual Firefighter examination until **February 17, 2003**. This process is similar to the FIREHIRE examination that was held late last year. I highly suggest that you don't miss out on this opportunity - some of the departments listed below *only* hire off of this list. It is a great opportunity to take one exam and be eligible to be hired by multiple fire departments.

Fire Departments that will be participating in this process include:

- Mountain View Fire Department
- Piedmont Fire Department
- Rincon Valley Fire Department (near Santa Rosa)
- San Bruno Fire Department
- Santa Clara County Fire Department
- Santa Rosa Fire Department
- Vallejo Fire Department
- There is also the possibility that other fire departments may "buy into" the list at a later date, giving you more opportunities for employment.

Minimum requirements vary from department to department, but usually consist of being at least 18 or 21 years of age, and having an EMT certificate or Paramedic license. For specific requirements, visit the CPS web site section of Candidate Information / Fees at http://www.cps.ca.gov/test_registration/bayarea_RFPR/info.asp

NOTE: the only minimum requirement I could find to take the exam is to be at least 18 years old and possess either a high school diploma or GED. Make sure to view the information on the website and/or the application to verify this information. If that is true, what do you have to lose by taking the exam? NOTHING!

Candidates must take and successfully pass the written examination at one of the sites throughout the state (last year, we were fortunate enough to be one of the Bay Area written examination test locations – I'm hoping we will be able to do the same this time). There is a \$30.00 test registration fee payable to CPS in the form of a cashier's check, money order, VISA or Master Card only – NO PERSONAL CHECKS! Test fee waivers are available for test registrants who meet financial hardship guidelines.

The written examination will be held on **Saturday March 15, 2003**. *Mark your calendars!*

For application materials and more information, you can visit their web site at http://www.cps.ca.gov/test_registration or by calling their 24-hour Automated Information line at (916) 263-3644. You should be able to also stop by any of the participating fire departments for application materials as well.

Completed test registration forms and applications **must be mailed** to:

Bay Area Regional Firefighter Registry
CPS Human Resource Services
241 Lathrop Way
Sacramento, CA 95815

CONGRATULATIONS ARE IN ORDER FOR THE FOLLOWING CHABOT STUDENTS:

The following students were picked up by the Alameda County Fire Department as Reserve Firefighters:

- Garret Brown
- Karina Brown
- Josh Cordeiro
- Josh Ellis
- Michael Franklin
- Tony Giustino
- Chris Hartsinck
- Justin Hoguland
- Carlos Olivarez
- William (Conrad) Sweeting

Let's wish all of them the best of luck! If there are any other names that I have left out, please let me know so I can include them in the next issue. Congratulations on getting one step closer to your dream of becoming a full-time firefighter! Make the best of this incredible opportunity!

VOLUNTEER INFORMATION – Focus on the San Francisco Paramedic Association:

I would like to take the time to let you all now about the San Francisco Paramedic Association (SFPA). If you have not heard about them, you are missing out on a valuable resource.

The SFPA was established in 1987. Their mission is to improve the delivery of emergency medical services in the San Francisco Bay Area. They strive to meet their mission through education. The SFPA is dedicated to providing up-to-date, emergency health care classes to both the public and professional health care communities. Classes offered include: CPR/Basic Life Support (BLS), AED/Emergency Care, First Aid, Advanced Cardiac Life Support (ACLS), Dysrhythmia Recognition and Cardiac Pharmacology, Pediatric Advanced Life Support (PALS), Pediatric Education for Pre-Hospital Providers (PEPP), Advanced Medical Life Support (AMLS), Pre-Hospital Trauma Life Support (PHTLS), and 12-lead ECK Interpretation.

The SFPA is a resource to the Emergency Medical Service community, in the nine Bay Area counties, providing a voice for its members who are professional pre-hospital care providers, as well as a biannual conference and free or low cost continuing education (CE) to its members. Their goal is to provide an enjoyable, but challenging, hands-on interactive learning atmosphere to help prepare students for any possible medical emergency.

SFPA classes are taught by experienced health care professionals, who combine interactive and fun-filled instructional techniques to ensure that students are able to retain the skill-intensive training. I can agree with that statement because I have been fortunate to have been both a student, as well as an instructor for the SFPA.

Volunteering with the SFPA

Besides offering EMS related courses to pre-hospital professionals, the SFPA is always on the lookout for volunteers. Volunteers have been the cornerstone of the success of the SFPA. They have always played an important role with the SFPA, and can further help build them into the leading provider of emergency training in the Bay Area. Professionals must continuously hone their skills and training base in order to handle medical and trauma emergencies. Their volunteers have helped instill the realism of scenario based training as they role-play the decorated patient in their classes.

EMTs, nursing students, and others interested in trauma emergency care, are encouraged to be a moulaged patient volunteer to see what kind of courses they may need to take in fields associated with trauma assessment. Volunteers are also needed on an on-going basis for special projects.

Individuals that are encouraged to volunteer include:

- Anyone interested in the medical profession
- Paramedic students
- EMTs
- EMT students
- Health Care Providers of Elderly
- Critical Care Nurses
- First Responders
- Physicians

Why should you volunteer?

- As a moulaged patient you help install realism in the scenario based training
- As a professional or student having interest in trauma care, you can observe critical points needed to cover in rapid assessment of a trauma patient.
- To feel good about yourself since you are “giving something back” to the EMS field.
- To provide some experience you can place on your resume as community involvement / volunteer experience.
- To become a better EMT and/or Paramedic. Watch the professionals and learn from both their good points as well as their not-so-good points.

Benefits offered to volunteers:

- Through role-play, become familiar with equipment used by Paramedics such as:
 - Manual defibrillators, Automatic defibrillators
 - EKG equipment, Advanced Airway equipment
- First-hand view and usage of specific crash stations

- First-hand view of critical points covered in trauma
- Free SFPA T-shirt
- All volunteers receive a thank you gift in appreciation of their efforts

Upcoming classes needing volunteers:

- Go to the Volunteer section of the SFPA website at <http://www.sfparamedics.org/volunteer.htm> and scroll down to “Upcoming Dates and Times” and then click on the blue link that says “SCHEDULE”
- Pre-Hospital Trauma Life Support (PHTLS) Volunteers are needed as follows:
 - Day 1: 7:30 a.m. to 9:30 a.m.
 - Day 2: 12:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.
- Advanced Medical Life Support (AMLS) Volunteers are needed as follows:
 - Day 1: 12:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.
 - Day 2: 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Interested in becoming a volunteer?

- Contact their office at (415) 543-1161 or email them at director@sfparamedics.org – tell them that Steve from Chabot College sent you. They will take good care of you! If you speak to Theresa or Erica, tell them I said to say hi – they have been very supportive of your Chabot College Fire Technology program throughout the years.

Still not convinced on becoming a volunteer?

- In the Winter 2002 issue of their quarterly newsletter, The Protocall, one of our Chabot Fire Technology Students, Chris Cuellar, was quoted on how he felt volunteering for the SFPA benefited him:

“In pursuing my goal to become a firefighter, I have volunteered for many activities with the community and several fire departments. One of the most informative and fun would have to be volunteering with the SFPA. As a 4-time “victim” for Pre-Hospital Trauma Life Support sessions, I have been able to view various techniques and listen to valuable information that will be useful to me as I advance towards my goal. As a volunteer I have been able to obtain a lot of the information in regards to PHTLS by sitting in on the lectures, as well as by listening to the paramedics go through their steps while treating you. I have met several people at these classes who have given me information on upcoming tests, paramedic schools, and other opportunities to strengthen a resume and make me a stronger candidate.

The ability to network is a huge plus. Imagine having an oral interview with a department and one of the medics or instructors in on the board. Do you think it would be a plus for him to remember you from the volunteering? And finally, I would have to say the fun you have being moulaged and interacting with others pursuing the same goals make the time you spend here more worthwhile. As I see it, the benefits one receives from volunteering with SFPA are top notch and will make you a better candidate for whatever goal you may be trying to achieve.”

Very well put – reprinted with permission. So, what are you waiting for? Step up to the plate and do something that someone besides you will benefit from.

SFPA Membership:

Besides volunteering for the SFPA, you are also invited to become a member of the SFPA. The SFPA strongly encourages their members to take advantage of all of the services offered by the SFPA and through its affiliation with the National Association of Emergency Medical Technician. As an SFPA member, you will receive:

- Representation at the local, state, and national levels. SFPA members sit on the various county EMS committees. SFPA representatives also attend state EMS meetings and track legislative issues pertaining to EMS and your scope of practice.
- A quarterly subscription to the SFPA newsletter, the Protocall; which covers local, state, and national EMS issues and updates in emergency care and treatment.
- The opportunity to get involved and contribute to a progressive organization.
- The satisfaction of supporting their mission of improving the quality of emergency medical services in the Bay Area.
- **Substantial** discounts on classes such as ACLS, PALS, PHTLS, PEPP, CPR, 12-Lead EKG, etc.
- Substantial discounts on conferences and special classes and workshops.
- Free Continuing Education (CE) units for lecture series and journal clubs.
- Discounts on medical supplies from PMX (Promedix), PMI, and Life Technologies
- Discounted CEs from Victory Technology's Med College.
- Discounted subscriptions to JEMS, EMS Insider, EMS Manager and Supervisor, and Fire Rescue Magazine.
- Reminders when your certifications are due to expire.
- Website access to current information, class schedules, and other EMS links.
- Last but not least, your very own SFPA shirt (blue or white)!

To become an active, voting member you must live in the 9 Bay Area counties. Otherwise, you can become an associate member and enjoy the benefits, but hold no voting rights. To become a member, contact the SFPA at the numbers below, or go to the Benefits of Membership section on their website at <http://www.sfparamedics.org/benefits.htm> and scroll down to the bottom of the page and either download a membership application form or apply online.

For more information, you can contact or visit the SFPA via the following methods:

San Francisco Paramedic Association
657 Mission Street, Suite 302
San Francisco, CA 94015

Phone: (415) 543-1161
Fax: (415) 543-0415

Email: info@sfparamedics.org
Website: <http://www.sfparamedics.org>

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!

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Chabot College web site: <http://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.