



FIRE & EMS NEWS

January 2003

Volume 1 – Issue 7

Welcome to the latest issue of the Fire & EMS News! It is hard to believe it is already 2003! I hope everyone had a great holiday season and are ready to start off the New Year with a bang! I want to welcome everyone to the spring 2003 semester. I hope you are doing everything you can to become a firefighter. That means taking every test you are qualified to take, taking every class you can fit into your schedule, working closer to obtaining your EMT certificate, your Paramedic license, your firefighter 1 academy completion certificate, your firefighter 1 state certificate, your 2-year degree, and/or your 4-year degree. All of those items are very valuable in your pursuit of becoming a full-time firefighter. Remember – if you snooze, you lose (and somebody will get your badge instead!)

Some of the highlights of this issue include:

- Oral Interview tip of the month
- California Department of Forestry (CDF) is accepting applications for seasonal firefighter
- The City of Sacramento Fire Department is accepting applications for Firefighter
- Websites of the month

ORAL INTERVIEW TIP OF THE MONTH

How many of you feel that public speaking or passing the oral interview comes naturally or easy to you? I bet very few of you. Don't feel bad – public speaking has been known to be the number one fear of many individuals. The oral interview is usually the most critical portion of the testing process because most fire departments use the oral interview as 100% of your total score to rank you on the hiring list. Passing the written test with at least 70% usually just allows you to proceed to the next step, which is either the physical ability test or the oral interview. So if public speaking is not one of your strongest qualities, how are you going to expect to get hired? If a department is hiring 10 people and 1,000 people applied, that means you have to be in the top 1%. Do you have what it takes to be in the top 1%? You have to be flawless – that means everything from the way you dress and enter the room, to the way you answer your questions, to the way you leave the room.

How good do you have to be to be in the top 1%? Well think of it this way. Normally, if you take a class at school, to get an A, you need 90 – 100%; to get a B, you need 80 – 89%; and to get a C, you need 70 – 79%. That is how most fire departments grade their candidates. Who do you think gets the job – the person at 72% or the person with 98%? You need to shoot for 90%

or better every test you take. How many can honestly say they are getting at least 90% on every oral exam? Probably not too many of you can say that. Don't be discouraged – it can be done.

When you take an oral interview, you are usually getting evaluated on various dimensions such as:

- Oral communication skills
- Problem solving / decision making skills
- Maturity
- Motivation
- General impression
- Preparation
- Interpersonal skills
- Education and experience
- Understanding of the job duties and requirements

NOTE: These items can vary from department to department.

If you know you are getting evaluated on some or all of the above items, shouldn't you strive for 100% in all of those areas? I would sure hope so. By realizing in advance what you are getting evaluated on, you should be able to better prepare yourself to get the maximum points for each dimension. Instead of just "answering the question," answer the question with the above dimensions in mind, to insure you are hitting all of the bases and scoring the most points.

CDF IS NOW ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS FOR SEASONAL FIREFIGHTER

The California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CDF) is now accepting applications for Firefighter I. Applications will be accepted through January 31st for the 2003 fire season, which generally starts in the end of May and goes through October. If you are interested in applying you must complete a Firefighter I application (CDF Form 215) and return it to each unit you are interested in working for.

There are 21 units through-out the state and they are divided between two regions, North Region, and South Region. In the Northern Region you can mail the completed application to each unit that you are interested in applying for. In the Southern Region they must be hand delivered. A list of the units can be found at the end of this announcement.

What you can expect working as a firefighter for CDF:

A firefighter 1 is a temporary position. You work a 96-hour workweek, four days on and three days off. You work the same four days in a week. Your responsibilities will include responding to vegetation fires, vehicle fires, structure fires, vehicle accidents, medical aides, public assist calls, or any other emergency. You are responsible for maintaining equipment and tools, following oral and written directions, cooking and cleaning around the station and other duties as

assigned. At some stations you may get only one call per shift and others may get as many as four or five calls on a busy day.

Because CDF is a statewide fire department, you can get sent to any area within the state on a strike team assignment. You may only be gone one or two days or as many as fourteen days depending on the needs throughout the state. You may be assigned to an incident, usually a large fire, or may be assigned to cover behind other engines on an out-of-county assignment.

In addition to being assigned to working on an engine, a firefighter 1 may be assigned to work at an Air Attack Base refueling aircraft, and reloading tankers with retardant. Another opportunity that is available to firefighter I is to work as a helitack firefighter assigned to one of nine helicopters throughout the state.

There is the opportunity to work as a fire fighter assigned to a Schedule A Contract. This is where a city, county, or fire protection district makes a contract with CDF to provide fire protection for the community. For example in the Santa Clara Unit, the South County Fire Protection District has contracted with CDF to provide the personnel to operate their fire department. As a result CDF personnel operate very much like any other municipal department with firefighter, engineers, captains, and chiefs, operating type I engines, and providing advanced life support medical care.

The hiring process:

After submitting an application, it is reviewed and given a preliminary score based on your education, training and experience. The more boxes you can check the more points you can get. By mid March you should receive a letter indicating weather you passed the preliminary evaluation. If a passing score is given you may then be invited to an interview. The interview is 100 percent of you score. Because each unit must follow the same guidelines for hiring you can expect to hear the same, or close to the same questions at each interview. This can be a big help when trying to improve your interviewing skills. So the more units that you apply to the better chance you have to interview and improve.

Typically an interview panel is made up of an engineer and a captain. In some cases at the completion of your interview you are given your score, in other cases it is mailed to you. Your score is based from 0 to 100 points. Typically you need to get a score in the upper 90's to be considered for employment. By mid May you should have received a letter indicating weather or not you are being considered for employment. From here one of a number of things can happen, you could get a letter stating that you will not be considered for future employment, or you can be contacted and offered a job, or you could be contacted and offered a slot in an academy but not a job.

The presumption is that a position may open up in the future and you would already be trained to take it. Typically a new hire academy is scheduled for the first or second week in June and

consists of learning basic skills needed to work as a fire fighter. The end result is that by attending the class you can obtain the CDF 67 hour Certification.

What generally happens around August or September is some firefighters quit and go back to school opening up position to hire more firefighters. So this provides some people second chance to get hired. If you stay in contact with the hiring coordinator in each unit and are willing to start later in the season you might get picked up as a late hire. After you get hired with CDF and work three months you have automatic rehire rights. Meaning you don't have to go through the same process to get hired the next season.

What CDF can offer you?

CDF is an all risk fire department. They respond to an average of 6,400 wildland fires annually and more than 275,000 non-wildfire emergencies each year. As a firefighter I you will gain experience in working on an engine as part of an engine company. You will get experience working at emergencies under stressful situation. You will learn what station life is like and how to work with people of different backgrounds in that environment.

You will have the opportunity to earn additional certifications including Incident Command Systems, Confined Space Rescue Awareness, Haz Mat Operations, Swift Water Rescue, Auto Extrication, and many other classes. You will gain experience working with the ICS system as part of an engine company at small and large incidents.

Just like anything else you can get out of CDF what you put in. Because of the number of people retiring you have a very good opportunity to gain a permanent position if you put the effort into it. It is now up to you to make the first step.

To view the job flyer and download an application, go to the CDF Careers website at:

<http://www.fire.ca.gov/CDFCareers/CDFCareers.asp>

For a list of Contacts including units and stations with in units:

<http://www.fire.ca.gov/MiscDocuments/CDFContacts.asp>

Minimum Qualifications for Seasonal Firefighter positions: Must be 18 years of age by time of appointment

For additional information, contact:

Northern Region Headquarters:	(707) 576-2275
Northern Operations Center:	(530) 224-2445
Human Resources Office:	(916) 445-7801
Southern Region Headquarters	(559) 222-3714
Southern Operations Center:	(909) 782-4140
Equal Employment Opportunity:	(916) 445-8113

CDF - NORTHERN REGION

File-in-person OR mail-in applications accepted at the units listed below:

Butte Unit

176 Nelson Avenue
Oroville, CA 95965
(530) 538-7111

Humboldt-Del Norte Unit

118 S. Fortuna Blvd.
Fortuna, CA 95540
(707) 725-4413

Lassen-Modoc Unit

697-345 Highway 36
Susanville, CA 96130
(530) 257-4171

Mendocino Unit

17501 N. Highway 101
Willits, CA 95490
(707) 459-7414

Nevada-Yuba-Placer Unit

13760 Lincoln Way
Auburn, CA 95603
(530) 823-4904

San Mateo-Santa Cruz Unit

6059 Highway 9
Felton, CA 95018
(831) 335-5353

Santa Clara Unit

15670 Monterey Street
Morgan Hill, CA 95037
(408) 779-2121

Shasta-Trinity Unit

875 Cypress Avenue
Redding, CA 96001
(530) 225-2418

Siskiyou Unit

1809 Fair Lane Road
Yreka, CA 96097
(530) 842-3516

Sonoma-Lake-Napa Unit

1199 Big Tree Road
St. Helena, CA 94574
(707) 963-3601

Tehama-Glenn Unit

604 Antelope Blvd.
Red Bluff, CA 96080
(530) 529-8548

CDF - SOUTHERN REGION

**Applications accepted on a FILE-IN-PERSON basis ONLY at the units listed below.
Each applicant must appear in person Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.**

Amador-El Dorado Unit

2840 Mt. Danaher Road
Camino, CA 95709
(530) 644-2345

Fresno-Kings Unit

210 S. Academy Avenue
Sanger, CA 93657
(559) 485-7500

Madera-Mariposa-Merced Unit

5366 Highway 49 North
Mariposa, CA 95338
(209) 966-3622

Riverside Unit

210 W. San Jacinto
Perris, CA 92570
(909) 940-6900

San Benito-Monterey Unit

2221 Garden Road
Monterey, CA 93940-5385
(831) 647-6208

San Bernardino Unit

3800 Sierra Way
San Bernardino, CA 92405
(909) 881-6900

San Diego Unit

2249 Jamacha Road
El Cajon, CA 92019
(619) 588-0364

San Luis Obispo Unit

635 N. Santa Rosa
San Luis Obispo, CA 93405
(805) 543-4244

Tulare Unit

1968 S. Lovers Lane
Visalia, CA 93277
(559) 732-5954

Tuolumne-Calaveras Unit

785 Mountain Ranch Road
San Andreas, CA 95249
(209) 754-3831

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NOTE: A special thank you to Andrew Hunter, former Chabot College Fire Technology student for providing me with this information. Andrew works as a firefighter for the California Department of Forestry. I appreciate your time and assistance!

FIREFIGHTER TESTING OPPORTUNITY – SACRAMENTO FIRE DEPARTMENT

The City of Sacramento will be testing for the position of Fire Recruit (this is their entry-level position if you want to work there as a firefighter) on four separate occasions this year.

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 professional firefighter may be substituted for the above required college units.
- Be a citizen of the United States
- Pass a written examination

The City of Sacramento will test quarterly. The *tentative* year 2003 testing dates are:

- **February 8, 2003** – Cut off for filing for this test is January 10, 2003
- **April 26, 2003** – Cut off for filing for this test is March 28, 2003
- **July 12, 2003** – Cut off for filing for this test is June 13, 2003
- **October 18, 2003** – Cut off for filing for this test is September 19, 2003

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 and view more detailed job information, go to:

- Sacramento Fire Dept. Website: <http://www.sacto.org/fire/jobopportunities.html>

WEB SITES OF THE MONTH

Fire Department: Livermore-Pleasanton Fire Department - www.ci.livermore.ca.us/fire.html
City Web Site: City of Livermore – www.ci.livermore.ca.us
City of Pleasanton – www.ci.pleasanton.ca.us
Ambulance Company: Stanford Lifelight (Air Helicopter) – www.med.stanford.edu/shs/lifelight
Fire / EMS Publication: Fire Apparatus Journal – www.fireapparatusjournal.com

Fire Organization: Northern California Training Officers Association – www.norcaltos.org
EMS Organization: National Registry of EMT's – www.nremt.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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<http://chabotde.clpccd.cc.ca.us/users/sprziborowski>

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.