



## FIRE & EMS NEWS

August 2002

Volume 1 – Issue 2

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Welcome to the second issue of the Fire & EMS News! Based on comments I have received on the first issue, I have decided to branch out a bit and call this publication the Fire & EMS News, to better reflect what we do, who we serve, and our overall mission. Since EMS calls make up anywhere from 60 to 80% of the call volume for most fire departments, it is probably something we should recognize.

As for why you are getting the August issue so soon after the July issue, there was some valuable time-sensitive information that I felt the need to pass on to everyone.

### Paramedic School Entrance Examination Information

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Northern California Training Institute (NCTI) is holding entrance examinations for their upcoming Paramedic classes. The dates and locations are as follows:

For their **February 2003 Paramedic Course** that will be held in **Emeryville**, the examination dates are:

- Tuesday August 6, 2002 – 1:30 pm to 4:30 pm at their Livermore Classroom
- Tuesday August 13, 2002 – 9:00 am to 12:00 pm at their Livermore Classroom

For their **February 2003 Paramedic Course** that will be held in **Brentwood** (partnership with Los Medanos College), the examination dates are:

- Wednesday August 21, 2002 – 1:30 pm to 4:30 pm at their Livermore Classroom
- Wednesday August 28, 2002 – 9:00 am to 12:00 pm at their Livermore Classroom

For their **May 2003 Paramedic Course** that will be held in **Livermore**, the examination dates are:

- Wednesday November 13, 2002 – 1:30 pm to 4:30 pm at their Livermore Classroom
- Wednesday November 20, 2002 – 9:00 am to 12:00 pm at their Livermore Classroom

There is a \$50.00 entrance exam fee. To apply for admission, applicants must be at least 18 years old, have a high school diploma or GED, and possess a current EMT certificate and current CPR certificate. For more information, go their web site at <http://www.ncti-online.com>

This is not meant to be an endorsement or recommendation of their program. It is listed as a service and a resource for you to evaluate and determine on your own.

### Fire Department Reality TV Show on NBC Dateline!

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If you haven't heard yet, NBC is doing a Reality TV show based on the lives of actual firefighters! The episodes are expected to run on Friday nights at 9:00 p.m. (Pacific Time) on NBC, starting Friday July 19 and ending Friday August 16, 2002. Departments being covered include:

- Friday July 19 – Fire Department New York (FDNY), Rescue 4
- Friday July 26 – Camden (NJ) Fire Department
- Friday August 2 – Miami-Dade (FL) Fire Rescue
- Friday August 9 – San Francisco Fire Department (SFFD)
- Friday August 16 – FDNY, Ladder 4

### **Fire Department Employment Opportunities**

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- The **Hanford Fire Department** (Kings County) is testing for the position of **Firefighter**. Applications are being accepted until **August 9, 2002** at 12:00 p.m. Requirements include an EMT certificate, Firefighter 1 academy completion or Firefighter 1 certificate, CPR certificate, and a valid class “C” California Driver’s License. Applications can be obtained on their web site at <http://www.ci.hanford.ca.us> and must be turned in personally, or through the mail. No faxed applications! Their phone number is (559) 585-2544 and their address is City of Hanford, Personnel Department, 319 N. Douty St., Hanford, CA 93230.
- The **Oxnard Fire Department** (Ventura County) is testing for the position of **Entry Level Firefighter**. Applications are being accepted until August 17, 2002 at 4:00 p.m. Requirements include being 18 years old, with a high school diploma, a valid class “C” California Driver’s License. *An EMT certificate is not required to take the test, just at the time of employment.* The application, disclosure form, and supplemental questionnaire can be downloaded (in addition to more information on the position and process) on their web site at <http://www.ci.oxnard.ca.us> **Applications will be accepted one day only, on Saturday August 17** between 8:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m., at the City of Oxnard Human Resources Department.
- The **Town of Hillsborough Fire Department** (San Mateo County) is testing for the position of Firefighter / EMT and Firefighter / Paramedic. For more information, go to their web site at <http://www.hillsborough.net> The information did not list exact minimum requirements; it did say lateral candidates were encouraged to apply, but **NO PRIOR EXPERIENCE WAS REQUIRED!** The web site did not list a final filing date, so get your application in soon! They want to hire 2 firefighters for their Fall 2002 Fire Academy.
- Why am I including jobs that are out of the bay area? Because if you want to be a firefighter, you must expand your search and take as many tests as you can. Many people end up taking between 20 and 50 tests prior to getting hired as a firefighter. It is not easy, it just takes practice. Think of it this way: every test is experience for that one department you really want to work for. Since very few, if any, fire departments charge an applicant to take a test, look at it as free experience. You will get to experience a written test, a physical ability test, and if you are lucky, an oral interview. If you’re really lucky (in addition to being prepared), you might get to go farther in the process and maybe even get a job offer! Isn’t that your ultimate goal? **YOU NEVER KNOW UNLESS YOU TRY!** Plus, by taking every test you can, you should hopefully get better while improving your score every time.

- This should not be the only place you look for firefighter positions! Don't expect me to do all of your work. You should be subscribing to various services such as Perfect Firefighter Candidate – <http://www.firecareers.com> and Careers in the Fire Services – <http://www.firerecruit.com> Money spent on such services are worthwhile. Don't expect to read about job openings in the newspaper or through word of mouth – You'll be left in the cold! Do the work yourself. YOU ARE IN CONTROL AND IN CHARGE OF YOUR OWN DESTINY – Don't forget it! If you put time and effort into the pursuit of becoming a firefighter, it will happen. If you don't, well you probably won't be happy with the results.

### **Congratulations are in order for the following Chabot College Students**

- Kaitlin Waterman, who was hired as a Firefighter for the Richmond Fire Department.
- Nathan Hagenbach, who was picked up as a Reserve Firefighter for the Livermore-Pleasanton Fire Department.

Way to go! Good luck in your new positions and do us proud!

### **Volunteer Opportunities**

- The Union City and Newark Fire Departments are having a Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) drill on August 5, 6 and 7. They possibly will need approximately 10 to 15 volunteers to assist. The exact times are not known yet, but it will probably start early and last most of the day (on each day). For more information, contact Union City Fire Department Captain Ricky Hurtado at 510.675.5473, or Firefighter/Paramedic John McInnis at [jnmci@yahoo.com](mailto:jnmci@yahoo.com) This is a great chance to get some experience, be able to put something on your resume, actually learn something, network with firefighters, serve the community, and probably have some fun!
- The Union City Fire Department's Firefighters Association, also known as their International Association of Firefighters (I.A.F.F.) Union Local, is hosting a Barbeque for the James Logan High School Band on August 28 and August 29. The 28<sup>th</sup> will consist of food preparation and the 29<sup>th</sup> will be the actual event. Times are to be determined. This will be a fun union event serving great food for up to 1,000 people. For more information, contact Union City Fire Department Captain Ricky Hurtado at 510.675.5473, or Union City Fire Department Firefighter/Paramedic John McInnis at [jnmci@yahoo.com](mailto:jnmci@yahoo.com)
- The Union City Fire Department's I.A.F.F. Union Local will also be hosting the annual Tropics Barbeque on September 21. The Firefighters local puts on this BBQ for the seniors in the Mobile Home Park. It will be a great place to learn from the public what they actually think firefighters do and just what people think of them. This event may only last about half of the day. Times are yet to be determined. For more information, contact Union City Fire Department Captain Ricky Hurtado at 510.675.5473, or Union City Fire Department Firefighter/Paramedic John McInnis at [jnmci@yahoo.com](mailto:jnmci@yahoo.com)

### **Resume Tips for this issue**

- You should have about 3 to 6 major headings on your resume (not counting your name and contact information). Examples include:

- **OBJECTIVE** – A one line statement, specific to the position and agency you are applying to.
  - **EXPERIENCE** – List about two to four positions you have held. Can be volunteer or paid. A simple format is Name of employer, City and State of Employer, Position(s) held, and one to two lines of duties or responsibilities. If you’re writing more than five lines for each employer, you’re wasting space! Start with your present employer and then work backwards.
  - **EDUCATION** – List one or two of the colleges you’ve attended. Just like you put for your employer information, I like it kept simple: Name of college, City and State of College, Major, and expected completion date. Start with your present educational institute and work backwards.
  - **CERTIFICATES** – Your most important certificates should be listed first. The most important ones would probably be EMT, Paramedic, CPR, Firefighter 1 Academy or Firefighter 1 certificates. Keep it short and sweet. One line per certificate. I like three things only for each certificate: 1. The exact name of certificate (as taken from the certificate). 2. Who issued the certificate to you (as taken from the certificate). 3. Expiration date of the certificate (if applicable – usually only medical related certificates have expiration dates).
  - **SPECIAL SKILLS** – If you are proficient in a second language, or with various office tools, such as computers, this would probably be an appropriate heading.
  - **VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE (OR COMMUNITY SERVICE)** – This is an area that many people do not include. How many candidates say they want to be a firefighter because they want to “help people?” You have all probably said that at one point or another (me included). Then put your money where your mouth is & start doing some volunteer work for the community, & get credit for doing so?
- Students ask me which of the above major headings should go first. Experience? Education? I personally think it can vary from candidate to candidate. Your strongest selling points should go first, and then go down from there. Why? Because someone reading your resume only has about 30 seconds or so to do so. Having your key points at the top increases your chance at having them read.
  - Keep your wording to about three lines of complete text. Any more than three lines in a row read like a paragraph. Just look at my sentences above. In 30 seconds, are you going to catch everything? Probably not. Spice it up. Keep it short. Paragraphs are hard to read.
  - On that line of thinking, alternate type styles: bold, underline, italics, uppercase, lowercase, etc. Having the same type size or style is BORING! Alternating them keeps it interesting for the reader.

### **Application Tips for this Issue**

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- How many of you keep copies of each application you fill out? If not, I suggest starting now. You should keep a file on each department you test for. In that file should include copies of the application, the resume, the job flyer, any research you have done on that department, and any correspondence from that department.

- Major differences between an application and a resume:
  - Almost every department or company expects you to fill out an application
  - Many departments do not allow resumes to be turned in
  - A resume is just a “snapshot” of your background, specific to the position you are applying for. There are no set rules for resumes, as opposed to applications. You put what you feel is necessary on a resume, where a department tells you what to put on an application.
  - An application is a list of “everything” regarding your background. Many applications want you to list every college you’ve attended, every job you’ve held, etc.

### ***Web Sites of the Month***

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**Fire Department:** Oakland Fire Department – <http://www.oaklandnet.com/government/government6.html>  
**Ambulance Company:** American Medical Response – <http://www.amr-inc.com>  
**Fire / EMS Publication:** Firehouse Magazine – <http://www.firehouse.com>  
**Fire Organization:** California State Firefighters Association - <http://www.csfa.net>  
**EMS Organization:** Alameda County EMS Agency - [http://www.co.alameda.ca.us/PublicHealth/organization/divisions/ems/ems\\_index.htm](http://www.co.alameda.ca.us/PublicHealth/organization/divisions/ems/ems_index.htm)

### ***Closing Comments***

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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>