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Ad Number: F84886
Description: Etc
Ad Size: 6 x 10.5"
Ad Builder: Julie Beacham-Hooie
Insertions: 1

Code: 001300000
Revision No.: 3
Sales Rep: Blank #1
Rep Phone:
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Date: Tue, Nov 18, 2008 - 12:39 PM

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 Thu, Nov 20, 2008 Local

Education Today / Career Tomorrow

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Fire Science

Every year, fires and other emergencies take thousands of lives and destroy property worth billions of dollars. Fire fighters help protect the public against these dangers by responding to fires and a variety of these emergencies. In addition to putting out fires, they are frequently the first emergency personnel at the scene of a medical emergency.

Fire fighters must be prepared to respond immediately to fire or emergency calls. Fighting fires is dangerous and complex, therefore

requires organization and teamwork. At fires, fire fighters connect hose lines to hydrants and operate a pump to send water to high-pressure hoses.

Some carry hoses, climb ladders, and enter burning buildings to put out fires. Some find and rescue occupants who are unable to safely leave the building without assistance. They also provide emergency medical attention, ventilate smoke-filled areas, and attempt to salvage the contents of buildings.

Fire fighters work in a variety of settings, including metropolitan areas, rural areas with grasslands, airports, chemical plants and other industrial sites. They have also assumed a range of responsibilities, including emergency medical services. In fact, most calls to which fire fighters respond involve medical emergencies.

Source:
The Occupational Outlook Handbook

Job Outlook

Fire fighting occupations are expected to increase.

A trend towards more people living in and around cities increases the demand for fire fighters.

Applicants with the best chances are those who are physically fit and score the highest on physical conditioning and mechanical aptitude exams.

Those who have completed some fire fighter education at a community college or technical school and have EMT or paramedic certification will have an additional advantage.

Money Matters

Career: Fire Fighter

Job Description: Responds immediately to fires and other emergency situations. Provides protection to public and property. Familiar with a variety of the field's concepts, practices, and procedures. Relies on experience and judgment to plan and accomplish goals. Performs a variety of complicated tasks. A wide degree of creativity and latitude is expected.

Salary: \$20,460-\$57,890

For more information on how to start your career in Fire Science, please contact:

Career Counselor Vickie Miller
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Education Needed

Most fire fighters have a high school diploma, however, the completion of community college or technical school courses in fire science may improve an applicant's chances for a job. An increasing proportion of new fire fighters have had education after high school.

Entry-level workers in large fire departments are trained for several weeks at the department's training center or academy. Through classroom instruction and practical training, the recruits study fire fighting techniques, fire prevention, hazardous materials control, local building codes, and emergency medical procedures. They also learn how to use axes, chain saws, fire extinguishers, ladders, and other fire fighting equipment. After successfully completing this training, recruits are assigned to a fire company.

Many fire departments have accredited apprenticeship programs. These programs combine formal instruction with on-the-job training under the supervision of experienced fire fighters.

Almost all departments require fire fighters to be certified as emergency medical technicians.

Applicants for municipal fire fighting jobs usually must pass a written exam, tests of strength, physical stamina, coordination, and agility, and a medical examination.



"This is one of the most rewarding and dynamic careers you can choose. Our program prepares students to enter the job market understanding all of the requirements. The training they receive gives them the skills necessary to compete. In class, we are covering hoses and ladders right now. Our new facility gives us the opportunity to provide all training necessary and to do so with state-of-the-art equipment." - Larry Swartz

"I got into the MTI Fire Science program because I wanted to make fire fighting my career. (24 hours on and 48 hours off sounded pretty good!) In class, we get to actually practice fighting fires; I have fought LPG propane tank fires, car fires, and structure fires. My goal is to become a fire fighter and work my way up to Battalion Chief. This career is very rewarding because I get to help the community and save lives." - Justin Badgley

Teacher

Student

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