

APPARATUS OPERATOR TRAINING

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Purpose: *Driving and operating fire apparatus is a tremendous responsibility. Fire fighting operations cannot take place unless fire apparatus arrives at the scene safely. While at the scene, the safety of firefighters is often in the hands of the apparatus operator. This document sets out the procedures for becoming qualified to drive fire apparatus, and to eliminate any confusion on how apparatus operator training is to be handled. This document also covers the procedures for periodic evaluations and re-qualification of apparatus.*

Procedure:

Initial Apparatus Operator Training

1. Members who wish to begin apparatus operator training must meet the following prerequisites: Satisfactory completion of the basic engineers class, satisfactory completion of recruit training and one year of current service with the fire department.
2. For the purposes of this procedure, for career firefighters the Training Officer is the member's station chief officer.
3. A member wishing to begin apparatus operator training must submit a written request to his/her station chief officer. The request will be approved by the station chief officer after consulting with the other officers assigned to the members station.
4. When the member's station chief officer has approved the request to begin training, the station chief officer shall notify the training bureau in writing or by e-mail.
5. The following is the sequence for becoming qualified to drive fire apparatus:
 Station 1: 8037, 8034, 8032, 8051
 Station 2: 8073, 8035, 8031, 8052
 Station 3: 8036, 8033, 8053

The above sequence may be waived by the member's station chief officer in certain circumstances which benefit the fire department. This waiver will apply on a case by case basis and is not meant to be precedent setting.

6. The amount of time a member must wait after becoming qualified on one unit and beginning training on a subsequent unit shall be at the discretion of the member's station chief officer in consultation with the other officers at the member's station.
7. After becoming qualified on all apparatus housed at a member's assigned station, the member may begin training on apparatus assigned to other fire stations

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8. The department Training Officer shall develop an apparatus operator training schedule for the member. The following factors shall be considered in developing this schedule: Member's availability, Instructor Availability and make-up trainings. Copies of the training schedule will be provided to: the member, the member's station chief officer and the scheduled instructors at least one (1) week prior to the beginning of the training.
9. Whenever practical, training on apparatus should be done in groups as organized classes, however this is not mandatory if there is sufficient reason for individual instruction and a burden will not be placed on instructors.
10. In addition to the training schedule provided to the member, there shall also be copies of Apparatus Lesson Plans, and Class Attendance Check-off Sheet. It is the member's responsibility to retain these documents without exception.
11. As a member completes a class, it is his or her responsibility to get the approved instructor to sign off on the applicable portion.
12. If a member is absent for two (2) scheduled training classes and has not given reasonable notice to the instructor, the member shall be dropped from the training program on the unit.
13. A member dropped from an apparatus training program for lack of attendance must re-start the training program from the beginning, unless approved by the member's station chief officer and department training officer.
14. If a member is unable to attend a scheduled class for reasonable cause, the member may make up the missed class. This can be done by contacting the on-duty career supervisor and making arrangements for a make-up class. There shall be no unreasonable burdens placed on either the member, or the on-duty career supervisor in scheduling the make-up training.
15. In addition to the scheduled classes, a member can request additional training or practice on the unit. This can be done by contacting the on-duty career supervisor and making arrangements for an additional class. There shall be no unreasonable burdens placed on either the member, or the on-duty career supervisor in scheduling the additional training.
16. When all the applicable classes have been completed, the member is to return the completed Class Attendance Check Off sheet to the department training officer. The training officer shall schedule a time for the member to take the qualification exam on the unit and give the exam administrator a copy of the exam. The date and time shall be agreeable to the member and the person who will be administering the exam. No exams shall be given if the Class Attendance Check Off sheet is not fully completed.
17. No person instructing the member on a unit may administer the exam to the member.

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18. Training on apparatus shall be done on a year round basis, however a class may be canceled by the instructor in the event of inclement weather. Canceled class can be made up as previously described.
19. When a member successfully completes the apparatus exam, the person administering the exam shall forward the original exam to the training officer and give a copy of the exam to the member.
20. The member shall give the copy of the completed exam to the member's station chief officer. The member's station chief officer may approve the member's qualification on the unit. A station chief officer may consult with the officers of station as part of the decision making process. Even though a member has passed the exam on a unit, he/she is not qualified to engineer the unit until approved by his/her station chief officer.
21. Anyone who believes he or she is not receiving adequate attention on either apparatus training or testing is to bring this matter to the attention of the member's station chief officer within 30 days.
22. The training officer shall develop and post a list of those members approved to give apparatus operator training and apparatus qualification examinations. The list shall be updated as necessary.

Continuing Training of Apparatus Operators:

1. For a member to remain qualified to operate apparatus, he/she shall have four (4) hours of driving time and four (4) hours of pumping time for each calendar year. This is total time for all apparatus the person has been qualified on, and NOT four hours per each unit. Members must also complete an driving and operation evaluation on the largest apparatus in which they are qualified, in addition to aerial evaluation on each aerial device they are qualified on. Driving and aerial evaluations shall be done every 4 months as scheduled by the training bureau. The driving and operation evaluation will consist of practical driving, pumping and aerial operation (if applicable). The training bureau will post charts showing information necessary for a member remain aware of his/her evaluation requirements.
2. Time will be allocated during two (2) scheduled Monday trainings each four month period that can be used for these evaluations. Sign up sheets will be posted at each station so members may reserve a place for evaluations during normal training hours. It is permissible for a member to perform the evaluation other than on scheduled Monday trainings. If a member elects this option he/she shall make amicable arrangements with any shift supervisor.

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3. The following driving/pumping skills will be evaluated:
 - a. Operator must demonstrate properly entering traffic using signaling devices where applicable and compliance with posted speed limits. Operator drives on Cooper Chapel Road, Mount Washington Road or Ireland Drive to demonstrate proper narrow road driving.
 - b. Operator drives west on Mount Washington Road and turns right at Waycross Road to demonstrate proper ability to compensate for narrowing and tight street corners.
 - c. Operator must properly explain the Engine Retarder.
 - d. Operator must demonstrate proper backing skills using ground guide and mirrors.
 - e. Operator must demonstrate properly pump engagement and charge the smallest diameter hand line on the apparatus.
 - f. Operator must properly locate (6) pieces of equipment at the evaluators request.

Aerial Device Operation:

4. Apparatus operators on units having aerial devices, must successfully take a practical evaluation (aerial device only) each 4 month period. The evaluation will be done on each aerial device on which the member is qualified. The periods will be the same as described above

The following aerial device operation skills will be evaluated:

- a. Operator must demonstrate proper apparatus positioning.
- b. Operator must demonstrate proper outrigger placement and aerial device operation
- c. Operator must properly describe safety hazards concerning operation of ladder racks, vertical exhaust, wires, and aerial device weight limitations.
- d. Operator must properly energize lights at the tip of the boom/ladder.
- e. Operator must properly describe operation of self-contained breathing systems on aerial devices.
- f. Operator identifies the location of safety harnesses and the remote controllers.
- g. Operator must demonstrate lowering aerial device using emergency power, hand cranks and other available methods if loss of engine power occurs.

Other:

1. Any member not accruing the required hours described above will have the opportunity to take a requalification test on each unit he or she is qualified. These tests will be offered in October and November and will NOT be given during regularly scheduled trainings.
2. Any member not having the required driving and pumping time or not successfully completing the requalification tests as of November 30, shall be disqualified as an apparatus operator. A member may request the officer board to grant an extension of this deadline for good cause prior to November 30.

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3. Persons who leave the department for more than 90 days will be disqualified as apparatus operators, regardless of the circumstances for absence. Upon return, the member may take a refresher training program approved by the training bureau, and upon successful completion, become re-qualified to as an apparatus operator.
4. An apparatus operator may be required to undergo additional remedial training in those areas in which he/she is deficient. The need for additional training may be identified when practical evaluations are given, or during observations made when the member is driving apparatus. Such additional training may be directed by an evaluator or officer of the fire department. When such training is directed, the person making the requirement shall notify the member's station chief officer.
5. Whenever additional training is needed, the member shall complete the additional training within thirty days of being notified. If the member fails to complete the training, or does not bring his/her skills up to satisfaction, the member will be disqualified on the affected unit. The member's battalion chief may also disqualify the member on other units.
6. An apparatus operator may be disqualified as an apparatus operator based upon unsatisfactory performance. Such disqualification may be made by a chief officer. When a member is disqualified for poor performance, the disqualifying officer shall identify which skills are unsatisfactory.
7. The disqualified apparatus operator may be re-qualified after taking additional training, and satisfactory completion of the applicable portion of the apparatus exam. For example, if a member cannot satisfactorily operate the pump of a unit, he/she will be required to take only the pumping component of the exam.