



SFFMA
SPECIALIZED
CERTIFICATION
PROGRAMS

Revised July 2009



State Firemen's and Fire Marshals' Association of Texas
Texas Volunteer Firefighters' and Fire Marshals' Certification Board

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TO: Texas Fire Chiefs and Certification Coordinators

FROM: Texas Volunteer Firefighters' and Fire Marshals' Certification Board

RE: SFFMA Specialized Certification Programs

Enclosed is a copy of the Specialized Programs for Volunteer Firefighters. Included in this packet are the necessary forms and required training for: Driver/Operator, Fire Prevention Specialist Level I and II, Fire and Arson Investigator, and Fire Officer I and II, Incident Safety Officer, Public Information Officer, Public Fire Educator I and II, Wildland, Technical Rescue Apprentice, Wilderness Rescue Technician I & II, Rope Rescue Technician I & II, Vehicle Extrication Technician. The program is administered by SFFMA staff in Austin, under the guidance of the Texas Volunteer Firefighters' and Fire Marshals' Certification Board.

Included in the materials are forms necessary to apply for certification, along with training requirements which must be completed in order to obtain certification. As you will note, applications for certification must be sent to the Austin office for approval. Proper fees and sufficient documentation must also be included to substantiate training indicated on the applications.

The Texas Volunteer Firefighters' and Fire Marshals' Certification Board welcomes you to these programs and urges you to help us upgrade the training standards for Volunteer Fire Prevention and Investigation personnel.

An information packet on the Firefighter Certification Program is available upon request from the Austin office or from the Certification page of the SFFMA website (www.sffma.org/certification.html).

WE ARE SENDING ONLY ONE COPY OF EACH FORM AND SUGGEST THAT YOU REPRODUCE THE NUMBER YOU NEED. If you have no means of reproducing these forms, please contact the Austin office and we will supply the number of forms you need.

Each of the Association's member departments has access to the SFFMA Online program which enables the department to: maintain current contact information and membership rosters; track and report training hours; generate dues invoices and certification applications. Access information can be obtained by contacting the Austin office.

If you have any questions regarding any of these programs, contact your Area Board Member or the Austin office at the above address.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

I.	Recommendation	Page 3
II.	Board Members.....	Page 3
III.	Procedures of the Board	Page 3
IV.	Certification Implementation Method	Page 4
V.	Minimum Standards for Fire Prevention and Investigation Personnel	Page 6
	Fire Prevention Specialist	Page 6
	Fire/Arson Investigator	Page 12
VI.	Minimum Standards for Driver/Operator.....	Page 13
VII.	Minimum Standards for Fire Officer.....	Page 17
VIII.	Minimum Standards for Incident Safety Officer	Page 30
IX.	Minimum Standards for Public Information Officer	Page 31
X.	Minimum Standards for Public Fire Educator	Page 32
XI.	Minimum Standards for Wildland Fire Fighting.....	Page 33
XII.	Minimum Standards for Technical Rescue Apprentice	Page 37
XIII.	Minimum Standards for Wilderness Rescue Apprentice.....	Page 40
XIV.	Minimum Standards for Rope Rescue Technician	Page 45
XV.	Minimum Standards for Vehicle Rescue Technician	Page 48

I. RECOMMENDATION

That Certification Programs for volunteer firefighters be established in the State of Texas on a voluntary basis and said programs be administered through the State Firemen's and Fire Marshals' Association of Texas (SFFMA) office: Volunteer Fire Prevention and Investigation Personnel programs updated effective January 1, 2000; Driver/Operator program effective August 1, 2000; Fire Officer I, Public Information Officer, Incident Safety Officer and Public Fire Educator programs effective January 27, 2006; Fire Officer II program effective June 9, 2007; Wildland and Search & Rescue programs implemented January 31, 2009; Vehicle Extrication Technician effective August 1, 2009. Additional programs will be implemented as deemed necessary by the Certification Board.

II. BOARD MEMBERS

That a Board of no more than twenty-five (25) members, appointed by the President of the SFFMA and known as the Texas Volunteer Firefighters' and Fire Marshals' Certification Board, administer the program.

- A. Board Members will be appointed to serve four-year terms on the board.
- B. Vacancies of the Board will be filled by the President of the SFFMA to fill unexpired terms caused by any reason.
- C. No two Board Members are to be from the same zone area.
- D. Board Member must be an active member of a regularly organized volunteer or combination fire department that holds current membership in the SFFMA.
- E. Board Member must maintain a current individual membership in the SFFMA.
- F. Board Member must have at least eight (8) years experience with a recognized fire department or combination of recognized fire departments and meet the criteria for Certification Coordinator.
- G. Board Member must reside in the zone that is to be represented.
- H. Prospective new Board Member's name and resume must be submitted in writing by the SFFMA District to the President and Executive Director of the SFFMA.
- I. There may be up to two (2) assistants per zone, designated by the Board Member from that zone. Assistants will be non-voting members.
- J. Board Member must hold at least an SFFMA Basic Accredited Firefighter certification.
- K. One Board Member (Zone 20) shall represent Texas Engineering Extension Service (TEEX).
- L. One Board Member (Zone 21) shall represent Texas Forest Service (TFS).

III. PROCEDURES OF THE BOARD

- A. Meetings
 - 1. The Board shall meet at such times and places in the State of Texas as it deems necessary.
 - 2. Meetings shall be called by the Chairman upon his own motion, or upon the written request of five members.
- B. Quorum – A majority of members shall constitute a quorum.
- C. Orders of Business – Robert's Rules of Order shall prevail for all meetings.
- D. Officers:
 - 1. Officers of the Board shall consist of a Chairman, Vice Chairman, Secretary and Assistant Secretary.
 - 2. The Board shall elect its officers from the appointed members at its first meeting succeeding the June State Convention.

IV. CERTIFICATION IMPLEMENTATION METHOD

A. General Statement

1. It shall be understood that the suggested minimum standards herein described are designated as minimum programs. Participating Fire Departments are encouraged to exceed the minimum programs wherever possible. Continuous training beyond the minimum standards and testing on a regular basis for volunteer firefighters is strongly recommended. Nothing in these regulations shall limit or be construed as limiting the powers of the fire department or other agency or department of any Texas city, town, county, or municipal corporation to enact rules and regulations which establish a higher standard of training above the minimum.

Although the Board strongly endorses and supports adequate physical ability and good moral character as entrance requirements into a fire department, the matter of establishing entrance requirements is left to the respective local department.

2. Each participating fire department must have access to current set of books from the library of any of the approved publishers, and must maintain current editions as they become available. Contact the SFFMA office for a current list of manuals required, or refer to our website at www.sffma.org.

Lesson plans, binders and all approved training manuals, slides, multimedia, and current prices are available from the SFFMA office in Austin at discounted prices. Purchase programs may be arranged on an individual need basis.

3. Training provided under this certification program should include facilities, apparatus, equipment, reference materials and records to support a quality volunteer firefighter education and training program. The resources should provide for classroom instruction, demonstrations and practical exercises for Trainee to develop the knowledge and skills required for volunteer firefighter certification.
4. Forms to apply for certification or to maintain progress of each member will be furnished upon request and are available online (www.sffma.org/certification.html). Forms shall be returned to the Association office in Austin for processing.

B. Objectives

1. The objective of the Board is to raise the level of competence of volunteer fire fighting and prevention personnel by establishing minimum standards.
2. The Board has the authority to certify volunteer fire protection training and educational programs as having attained the minimum required standards suggested by the Board.

C. Definitions

1. Certain definitions are used in describing the minimum standards and related requirements as suggested by the Board.
2. Definitions used include the following:
 - a. Board – is the Texas Volunteer Firefighters' and Fire Marshals' Certification Board.
 - b. Chairman – is the presiding officer of the Board.
 - c. Fire Chief – is the head of the fire department.
 - d. Active Firefighter – is 18 years of age or older who participates in a minimum of 40% of the drills, 25% of the fire/emergency calls, and the certification program approved by the SFFMA by the submission of an annual progress report of training hours earned.
 - e. Certification Coordinator – is the official person in charge of setting up, maintaining and validating all of the certification records.
 - f. Trainee – is a member of the fire department who has not satisfied the requirements of the certification in question.
 - g. Department – is a fire department that utilizes fire suppression and prevention personnel.
 - h. School – is any school, college, university, academy or local training program which offers fire service training and includes within its meaning the combination of course curriculum, instructors, and facilities.
 - i. Requirement – is a description of a provision, which relates to suggested minimum standards.
 - j. Specification – is a description of a requirement supplementing a section of the regulations.

- k. Examination – is a Board approved test administered by the Board and/or a Board approved examiner, which an individual must pass as one of the requirements for accredited certification.
- l. Curriculum – The objectives established by the Board as a minimum requirement for certification as an SFFMA approved Basic, Intermediate, and Advanced Volunteer Firefighter.
- m. Objective – The criteria required for mastery of each numbered statement.
- n. Eligibility – A determination of whether or not an individual has met the requirements set by the Board and would therefore be allowed to take a Board examination.
- o. Endorsement of Eligibility – A signed statement testifying to the fact that an individual has met the training hour requirements and objectives of specific levels of the Board approved curriculum and is qualified to take a Board approved examination of such level.
- p. Examinee – An individual who has met the Board requirements and therefore qualifies to take a Board approved examination.
- q. Examiner – An individual appointed and/or approved by the Board or Board member to administer a Board approved examination.
- r. Certificate of Successful Completion – A document supplied by the SFFMA which identifies and shall be used as proof that an individual has completed the required training hours and has successfully passed the Board approved examination(s) for a specific level of the SFFMA Volunteer Firefighter Curriculum.
- s. AHJ – Authority Having Jurisdiction
- t. FEMA – Federal Emergency Management Agency
- u. ICS – Incident Command System
- v. IFSTA – International Fire Service Training Association
- w. NFIRS – National Fire Incident Reporting System
- x. NIMS – National Incident Management System
- y. NFA – National Fire Academy
- z. NFPA – National Fire Protection Association
- aa. NWCG – National Wildfire Coordinating Group
- ab. TCFP – Texas Commission on Fire Protection
- ac. Fire Prevention Specialist – one who is trained to a minimal acceptable level to participate in review and examine buildings, equipment, and processes for fire and life safety rule compliance. It is not necessary to be appointed or elected a Fire Marshal to obtain this certification.
- ad. Fire Investigator – one who is responsible for determining the cause of a fire.
- ae. Arson Investigator – a commissioned law enforcement officer who is charged with the responsibilities of investigating arson.
- af. Fire Officer I – a first-line supervisory officer who has met all the job performance and certification requirements of Fire Officer I as defined in NFPA 1021: *Standard for Fire Officer Professional Qualification*.
- ag. Fire Officer II – a midlevel supervisor who performs both supervisory and first-line managerial functions who has met the certification requirements for Fire Officer II, in addition to previously meeting all the job performance and certification requirements of Fire Officer I as defined in NFPA 1021: *Standard for Fire Officer Professional Qualifications*.
- ah. Search Technician – personnel trained and qualified to locate missing, lost or trapped persons in diverse situations and environments
- ai. Rescue Technician – personnel trained and qualified to extricate and stabilize individuals in diverse situations and environments
- aj. Search and Rescue Apprentice – personnel trained to the minimum level required to perform as a trainee in any of the identified Search or Rescue specialties