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# KIRKSVILLE FIRE DEPARTMENT

## CAREERS IN THE MUNICIPAL FIRE SERVICE

A career in the fire service offers an individual a multitude of opportunities and challenges. In spite of routine entry into environments where the potential for panic and confusion prevails, the job of the Firefighter remains one of the most rewarding in the field of public service. New technology and building construction allows for buildings of great height with increased fire load creates challenges to the fire service which were unthought-of of in the 1930's and 1940's. Yet, this same technology has given fire service personnel improved firefighting equipment, dependable breathing apparatus, and lighter weight, more serviceable protective clothing to combat and scourge of fire. The changes technology has brought to the fire protection field have made it imperative that all persons functioning in the fire service be fully qualified and capable of efficiently performing the wide range of services that are necessary for protecting life and property from fire.

The fire service has many unique management needs. It requires a distinct team spirit. It has a need for a strong disciplinary influence for concerted and instant reaction on the fire ground. It requires a high quality of leadership from its officers. It has a continuing training demand. It requires a wide range of technical confidence and the ability to deal with the public in both minor and major crisis situations.

### FIREFIGHTING—A CAREER FOR YOU?

Choosing the fire service as a career can prove to be one of the most interesting and personal choices one can make. Such a choice should be made with careful thought and deliberation.

You may have some ideas as to the duties of a Firefighter. We have all seen a fire apparatus pass by with sirens wailing, headed for an emergency. You have seen firefighters at the scene of a fire, dragging hose lines into burning buildings, raising ladders, operating rescue equipment, using different types of fire extinguishing equipments, or firefighters at a medical emergency giving first aid or lifesaving CPR. Such acts are an important part of the Firefighter's job, but there are many other duties and functions of the Firefighter's job, of firefighters which go unnoticed and unseen by the general public before, during, and after a fire.

### DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Let's take a more in-depth look at some of the duties and responsibilities of a Firefighter. A Firefighter must perform many tasks prior to responding to any

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emergency to make certain the apparatus and equipment are ready to go. The fire apparatus is cleaned and checked for proper function. The fire equipment is checked and tested regularly. Self-contained breathing apparatus are checked daily, and all items must be in their proper positions for quick access and in top condition because a Firefighter's life and the lives of others may depend on it.

While it is important that apparatus and equipment are functioning correctly, it is just as important that firefighters be able to perform their duties at the emergency scene. Unlike members of many other professions, firefighters cannot afford to make mistakes while gaining experience, since it is difficult to remedy errors or second guesses at an emergency. A Firefighter cannot wait until a fire or emergency happens to obtain practical knowledge and experience. The ability to do one's job correctly must be learned and practiced prior to the necessity. It is essential that all members keep up to date on new developments and maintain basic skills. Regular training in the fire station and at the training center insures standardized practices city wide.

**THE FIRE SCENE**

At the scene of the fire, the Firefighter is required to do a variety of different tasks. Many of these tasks depend upon which company a Firefighter has been assigned to work. Firefighters assigned to truck companies, for instance, generally are responsible for the rescue of trapped victims in the involved building, and also for the ventilation of the building. The engine company personnel are responsible for rescue just as the ladder companies are, and in addition, supply the water to the fire through hose lines which they have to lay out, drag to the scene of the fire, and effect extinguishment. After the fire has been extinguished, both the truck and engine companies work together in the dirty job of cleanup called overhauling.

In addition, all firefighters are expected to perform the following duties when necessary:

*A. Perform Rescue Operations*

1. Locate and rescue victims trapped in burning, smoke filled or contaminated buildings.
2. Carry or assist conscious or unconscious victims up and down ladders and stairs.
3. Locate and remove victims trapped in tunnels, pipes, cave ins, etc.
4. Calm distraught victims, relatives, or spectators at emergency scenes.
5. Extricate trapped and injured victims from auto accidents or other entrapments, using rescue tools and equipment.
6. Administer first aid or CPR when necessary.

*B. Perform Hose Evolutions and Apply Extinguishing Agents*

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1. Making and breaking hose connections to water source (hydrants, pumps, and other hoses).
2. Operate hydrant using hydrant wrench.
3. Advance, operate and control hand lines, applying water streams.
4. Operate all classes of fire extinguishers.
5. Mount and operate master stream appliances at ground level and from the aerial truck.

*C. Apply Ventilation Procedures*

1. Create ventilation openings by opening or forcing doors, windows, roofs, ceilings and walls, using hand tools, mechanical devices, and power tools.
2. Position ventilating fans in openings to inject fresh air or reject contaminated air.

*D. Forcibly Opening Structures and Enclosures*

1. Make forced entry into grounds by climbing walls and fences or cutting locks, chains, and bolts.
2. Use of cutting tools, pick head axe, wire and bolt cutters, pneumatic cutting tools, hydraulic equipment and power jaws to cut through wood and metal barriers.
3. Using pulling and prying tools, wrecking bars, crowbar, pipe pole, to pull down ceilings, wall boards, and siding or walls.

*E. Perform Ladder Operations*

1. Carry out and place into position various size ladders to be used for rescue or ventilation operations. Ladders have to be raised by halyard ropes to designated heights with precision and quickness, sometimes calling for the help of six firefighters.
2. Must be able to climb up a ladder to trapped victim, remove them from ledges and windows and assist them down.
3. Must be able to work with tools and hose lines off ladders in a force position, sometimes from a fully extended, 75 foot unsupported aerial truck.

*F. Salvage and Overhaul*

1. Once the fire has been extinguished, firefighters perform salvage and overhaul operations, along with the removal of the fire debris. This involves the use of shovels, mops, buckets, brooms, and squeegees. Water poured on the fire to extinguish it remains on the floor after the fire is out. It is the firefighters duty to see that as much of the water as possible is removed after the fire. Damaged structural components such as walls, roofs, or floors, must be torn down or shored up to prevent them

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from becoming a safety hazard to others. Smoldering mattresses or furniture must be removed from the building to prevent further smoke damage or possible rekindling of the fire. Broken windows and doors must be covered and secured to protect the building and its contents from the weather and possible theft and vandalism.

2. Even after they have accomplished all of the above, the firefighters are still not finished. When they return to the station, the firefighters check all of their equipment for any damages that might have occurred in the emergency and a general cleaning of the apparatus is conducted. Hoses used to combat the fire are removed from the engine, cleaned and reloaded for use. All supplies used at the emergency scene are replenished. At this point, the firefighters are once again fully equipped to respond to the scene of a new and different emergency.

**MEDICAL EMERGENCIES**

Kirksville Fire Units respond to a wide variety of medical emergencies. The Fire Department is strategically located with a response time of less than four minutes to arrive at any type of emergency within the City.

**DAILY ACTIVITIES**

When units are not responding to emergencies, the Firefighter's days are filled with other activities.

Cleaning

a. Routine daily cleaning of the fire station and apparatus is essential.

Inspections

b. Regular inspections of all businesses are made to give firefighters a chance to familiarize themselves with potential fire locations and point out possible hazards to the occupants and issuing citations.

Prevention

c. Public demonstrations of firefighters abilities and fire safety lectures are presented to a wide variety of citizens.

Training

d. In addition, training in the fire stations and in the field enhances skills and teaches new techniques to each and every Firefighter.

**FIRE SERVICE FUTURE**

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A. Your future in the fire service is up to you. Once you have become a Firefighter, what then? Well, you may choose to remain a Firefighter for your entire career in the fire service, as many firefighters do. Or, if your interests lie in becoming a fire inspector or fire captain, the Kirksville Fire Department will give you every opportunity to become one. The progress of any member of the Kirksville Fire Department depends largely on the firefighters knowledge, ability, and motivation to assume additional responsibilities.

B. Firefighting demands a high level of dedication and professionalism from those who choose it as their career. The Firefighter represents both the Kirksville Fire Department and the City of Kirksville to his/her fellow citizens and as such, must bear in mind that the actions and behaviors displayed by Firefighter reflect back upon the entire fire department and the city.

C. Firefighters must possess the courage and stamina to risk their lives for the sake of others. Firefighters must also study long, and go through extensive periods of training to become good and efficient professional firefighters. In return, the professional Firefighter is offered a life's work of challenging and exciting services to the community. Job security and opportunities for advancement are a part of this.

**ABOUT THIS BOOKLET**

The information in this packet is intended to assist you in determining if a fire service career is for you. This packet is for information only, and is not intended as an official rule book and is subject to change by departmental rules and regulations.

# PRE-EMPLOYMENT SCREENING/TESTING

Application Procedure

The applicant must retrieve and complete an application as provided through Job Service of Kirksville. An initial screening of each application will then be completed.

Written & Physical Agility/Ability Test(s)

Each person seeking employment must pass a battery of tests designed to demonstrate both mental and physical ability. A general aptitude test is given followed by a physical ability test. All of the physical exercises that are performed simulate the skills used daily by firefighters. Other physical tests are designed to determine endurance, along with upper and total body strength.

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Oral Interview

Candidates are given an oral interview by a selection committee. Because of the many locations a Firefighter may be called to perform his/her duty, his/her character must be above reproach.

Physical Examination

Upon successful completion of the testing and oral interview, a list of candidates for employment is developed. Prior to hiring, the candidate will be required to pass a complete examination by a physician selected by the City.