

FIRE ACADEMY AND FIRE TECHNOLOGY

FIRE SERVICE OVERVIEW

Every year, fires and other emergencies take thousands of lives and destroy property worth billions of dollars. Firefighters help protect the public against these dangers by controlling and extinguishing fires and responding to emergency situations where life, property, or the environment is at risk. Their duties may include fire prevention, emergency medical service, hazardous material response, search and rescue, and disaster assistance.

In 2021, median pay for professional firefighters in the state of Texas was \$25.79 per hour (\$53,635 annually), and for first-line supervisors of firefighters was \$37.63 per hour (\$78,264 annually). Both amounts are above the national average.

A rewarding and exciting career can be had as a professional firefighter. Jobs can be found with municipal fire departments or with private firms that provide fire protection for industrial sites. Firefighters are highly trained professionals who typically must meet certain requirements for certification in order to be employed or advance in the field. 83% of firefighters have at least some college education, and 41% have an Associate's degree or higher.

YOUR CAREER AS A FIREFIGHTER

Your career as a firefighter begins by attending the SPC Basic Fire Academy. Many fire departments require prospective employees to be certified by the Texas Commission on Fire Protection (TCFP) as a Basic Structural Fire Suppression personnel before applying for employment. Students who complete the SPC Basic Fire Academy Level 1 Certificate have taken the first step towards this certification.

After the Fire Academy, the next step in a firefighter's career is to seek advanced training by attaining the Advanced Fire Technology Level 2 Certificate. This Certificate gives students the option of specializing in either Emergency Medicine or Fire and Emergency Service Higher Education (FESHE) courses. Students at this level also have the opportunity to take classes that can lead to advanced certifications with the TCFP, such as Fire Instructor, Fire Inspector, Fire Investigator, Hazardous Materials Technician, and many more.

Ultimately, firefighters seeking first-line supervisory positions in the fire service should earn SPC's Associate of Applied Science in Fire Technology. 87% of first-line fire officers have at least some college education, and 47% have an Associate's degree or higher. Not only do many fire departments offer advancement or pay incentives for advanced education at the college level, but state law allows both paid and qualified volunteer firefighters to attend many of the courses in this degree plan tuition-free.



FIRE TECHNOLOGY AT SPC

SPC's 3-tiered Fire Technology program is designed to meet student's needs through each step of their career in the fire service. The 3 tiers, or steps, are:

1. *Basic Fire Academy Level 1 Certificate*
2. *Advanced Fire Technology Level 2 Certificate with either*
 - a. *Emergency Medicine specialization, or;*
 - b. *Fire and Emergency Services Higher Education (FESHE) specialization*
3. *Associate of Applied Science in Fire Technology*

Each step builds upon the previous one; credits earned in the Basic Fire Academy apply towards the Advanced Fire Technology Certificate, and Advanced Certificate credits earned apply towards the Associate Degree. Our goal is to be with you through every step and provide the most current, highest-quality training available.

BASIC FIRE ACADEMY – LEVEL 1 CERTIFICATE

The Basic Fire Academy Level 1 Certificate program is for students who want to become certified structural firefighters in the state of Texas. It provides the knowledge and hands-on skills needed for students to pass the Texas Commission on Fire Protection (TCFP) basic structural firefighter examination.

The Basic Fire Academy curriculum is based on the TCFP Basic Fire Suppression Curriculum Manual, and includes classroom lectures and activities, hands-on firefighter skills training, and physical education training. The Basic Fire Academy is a 2-semester program, consisting of 25 credit / 672 contact hours. The curriculum is incorporated into the following courses:

FALL SEMESTER (13 Credit Hours):

- *FIRS 1301, Firefighter Certification I*
- *FIRS 1407, Firefighter Certification II*
- *FIRS 1313, Firefighter Certification III*
- *FIRS 1319, Firefighter Certification IV*

SPRING SEMESTER (12 Credit Hours):

- *FIRS 1323, Firefighter Certification V*
- *FIRS 1329, Firefighter Certification VI*
- *FIRS 1433, Firefighter Certification VII*
- *FIRS 1203 Firefighter Agility and Fitness Preparation*

FIRS 1203 Firefighter Agility and Fitness Preparation is a required class designed for skill development in firefighter physical ability testing methods. It includes rigorous training in skills and techniques needed in typical fire department physical ability tests.

The Basic Fire Academy begins in the Fall semester and continues through the Spring semester. The Academy schedule is the same for Fall and Spring, with classes meeting Monday through Thursday from 6 p.m. to 10 p.m., and every other Saturday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Classes meet at Lubbock Fire Rescue's Training facility.

The entry process for the Basic Fire Academy is competitive, consisting of both written and physical tests, and class size is limited. Application information can be found online at southplainscollege.edu/FireAcademy.

ADVANCED FIRE TECHNOLOGY – LEVEL 2 CERTIFICATE

The Advanced Fire Technology Level 2 Certificate adds 20 credit hours of approved specialty electives in either Emergency Medicine or Fire Service specialization training to the 25 credit hours already earned during Basic Fire Academy training, for a 45-credit-hour award.

Students who choose the Emergency Medicine specialization will receive 20 credit hours of training in both EMT-Basic (5 credit hours) and Advanced EMT (13 credit hours) courses, successful completion of which leads to Texas Department of State Health Services (TDSHS) certification in those respective areas.

Students who choose the Fire Service specialization will receive 20 credit hours of training in advanced fire service topics, including the six Fire and Emergency Services Higher Education (FESHE) core courses.

Students earning the 45-credit-hour Level 2 Certificate can apply those credits toward the Associate of Applied Science in Fire Technology.

ASSOCIATE DEGREE

The Associate of Applied Science (AAS) in Fire Technology adds 15 credit hours of general education requirements (3 credit hours each) in:

- *English*
- *Speech or Computers*
- *Math or Natural Science*
- *Humanities or Fine Arts*
- *Social and Behavioral Science*

The 15 credit hours of general education courses are added to the 45 credit hours previously attained in the Level 1 and Level 2 Certificates, for a 60-credit-hour award.

TUITION EXEMPTION

According to the Texas Education Code 54.353, professional firefighters currently employed by a fire department in Texas are eligible for an exemption of tuition and lab fees for courses offered as part of a fire science curriculum.

This exemption is also available to certain qualified volunteer firefighters as well. See southplainscollege.edu/FireAAS for more information.

OTHER COURSES

SPC also offers many courses that can lead to various TCFP certifications for those who are qualified, including:

- *Basic Wildland Firefighter*
- *Fire Officer I - IV*
- *Fire Instructor I - III*
- *Fire Inspector*
- *Fire Investigator*
- *Incident Safety Officer*
- *Hazardous Materials Technician*
- *Hazardous Materials Incident Commander*

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Prospective Students: You may view SPC's Annual Security Report and Fire Safety Report online at https://myspc.southplainscollege.edu/ICS/Safety_and_Health/Annual_Security_Report.jnz. Printed copies are available upon request from the Vice President of Student Affairs, 806.716.2360. This contact information should only be used to obtain these reports.

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