Dr. Corbet Lamkin New Chancellor of SAU Tech

Dr. Corbet Lamkin assumed his duties as new Chancellor of SAU-Tech January 2, 2008, replacing Dr. Steve Franks. Dr. Franks has assumed his duties as the President of Central Alabama Community College.

Dr. Lamkin comes to SAU-Tech after serving as Vice President for Academic Affairs at SAU Magnolia. He is a native of Ouachita County and brings many years of experience both in the academic world and in community service. He is committed to working with the Arkansas Fire Academy to bring quality training to the fire departments and firefighters of the State of Arkansas.
A Letter From The Director

There have been a number of questions regarding Act 362 (24 hour training). I hope to address many of the questions that have been posed to me. The Act states “Firefighters shall maintain a minimum of twenty-four (24) hours per year of certifiable training meeting the standards of the Arkansas Fire Training Academy (AFA).” This means classes you take or teach, should meet the requirements of the AFA so that a certificate can be issued and a permanent record maintained by AFA.

Instructor qualifications:
A Certified Training Officer (CTO) may teach:

Introduction to Fire Protection – Firefighter Track Module 1

Personal Protective Equipment – Firefighter Track Module 2

School Inspections (NEW)

If a firefighter is an Instructor I and Firefighter II, or Instructor I and has taken the module as well as three years or more experience in the department, he/she may teach the following:

Firefighter Track Modules 1-6, module 9a and 9b, 13 – 16

In order to teach the First Responder course, the instructor must be a current EMT with some type of methodology class (i.e. CPR Instructor, ITCO, Instructor I Module I etc.).

The classes in modules are set up in 16-hour blocks. When teaching these classes, it may require up to 6 months finishing that module. There is no requirement that a module be completed in a weekend or a week.

When a person is ready to teach the class, contact the AFA which will provide the lesson plan and PowerPoint, as well as skill sheets. The lesson plan must be taught as presented and all content covered. However the skill sheets may be completed as the opportunity arises, just check off the skill that has been successfully completed.

If a fire department does not have the personnel to teach the class, the AFA will provide an instructor to your location to teach the class. A minimum of 10 people are required for most classes, however, exceptions will be considered on a class by class basis. No exceptions in the minimum number students will be made if there is a safety issue involved, such as the structure fires and exterior fire attack classes. Coordination with other departments in your area is strongly encouraged and appreciated. For example, if your department is having a PPE class, another department may have firefighters in need of that training.

There are many other courses the instructor can teach. They are handled on a case by case basis. The instructor’s experience in that subject level is reviewed prior to allowing that instructor to teach the class.

If you are a CTO and wish to be Instructor I level, you may take Instructor I Module II (8 hours) also called the bridge program. Upon completing the class, schedule someone through the AFA to watch you do a 20-minute teach and if successful, an Instructor I certificate will be issued. That’s it!!!!

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**Personnel Eligible to Teach Courses**

Instructors may teach courses for the Arkansas Fire Academy if they qualify in one of the following ways:

1. An instructor may teach all Firefighter Track modules plus other courses upon completion of Instructor I and Firefighter II.

2. An instructor may teach all Firefighter Track modules plus other courses upon completion of Instructor I and the successful completion of the course to be taught.

The instructor must have been an active member of the department for three years. All instructors must be approved by the assistant director of off-campus training at the Fire Academy.

Qualified instructors are not restricted to teach only in their department but may teach for other departments as well.

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**Training Needs of Firefighters Being Met**

The mission of the Arkansas Fire Academy is to meet the training needs of the fire departments and firefighters in the State of Arkansas.

There are currently 1,010 fire departments listed at the Fire Academy. Enrollment figures for July 1-December 31, 2007 reflect 641 classes that were taught with 7,040 students. These were classes that were taught statewide and students received certificates for these classes.

Fire Departments needing training should request this training through the Fire Academy. Classes are to be requested and approved prior to teaching. Course request forms can be downloaded from www.arfireforms.com or by contacting Kilatha Steelman (870-574-1521).
2008 Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program

It’s nearly time for the Open Application Period of the Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program. The AFG is looking forward to another year of providing much needed assistance to our First Responders across the nation in 2008 and we hope you will be among those that apply.

It has been our custom to start our AFG Workshops in late January and early February, but this year the workshop schedule has been pushed back to the middle of February through the middle of March, more specifically February 18th through March 19th. At this time we believe the application period will start around the first of March and run through the first few days of April. Watch for the official start date on our web site.

Due to the short time frame we have to work with, we anticipate that we will be doing fewer workshops in each of our five FEMA Region VI states. At this time we are in the planning process to find locations across your state that are centrally located to make the greatest impact on attendance from both the Volunteer and Career Departments. What this means to you is that you may be asked to drive a little further than you may have experienced in the past, but we believe the benefit of personally attending one of our workshops far out weighs the inconvenience of a little longer drive than usual.

As we get further along in the planning process and nail down the workshop sites, we will be back in touch with the Arkansas Fire Training Academy and get the latest information to you. You may also access workshop information at our web site www.firegrantsupport.com. Look for the Regional Workshop button and click on Region 6 for the latest update on the workshop schedule in your state. If you have questions please contact your Regional Fire Program Specialist.

James Thomason, Regional Fire Program Specialist
940 898-5175
Brad Cole, Regional Fire Program Specialist
940 898-5310

National Fire Academy Arkansas Weekend

The Arkansas Weekend will be July 12-13, 2008. The following classes will be offered:
1. Fire Behavior in Single Family Residents and Fire Modeling in Single Family Residents- this is one class.
2. Courtroom Preparation and Testimony for First Responders.
3. Training Operations in Small Departments

If you are interested in attending one of the above courses, please fill out an application, this must be the NFA 75-5A application, and fax it to attention: Kilatha at (870) 574-0817 or mail to Arkansas Fire Academy, P.O. Box 3499, Camden, Ar 71711 Attention Kilatha.

All applications have to be at the NFA (30) days before July 12, 2008. Classes are filling up fast so if interested get your application in as soon as possible. Once classes are full no other applications will be accepted.

I am building a database for the EMT-Basic testing. If there is anyone who is a Lay Evaluator who would be interested in evaluation EMT-B students here at the Academy, I will need the following information:
Name
Contact Information (home phone, cellphone, address, email)
EMT #
Certification level (EMT-B/I/P, Instructor)
Thank you very much,

Rob Chastain BS/NREMT-P Inst.
EMS/CTC Coordinator
Arkansas Fire Academy
(870)574-1521 ext.106
Fax (870)574-0817
rchastai@sautech.edu

New Faculty and staff at Arkansas Fire Academy

Camden Site: Rob Chastain: EMS Coordinator, Loren Shanek: Instructor, David Tester: Instructor, Rotya Youngblood, Secretary
Off Site: Kevin Kilcrease: Instructor, Crossett, Janet Neumann, Secretary, Lincoln
Class Procedures

When requesting a course the following guidelines and policies will help ensure timely and effective delivery of Arkansas Fire Academy programs.

☐ When requesting a course, a Course Request Form must be completed and approved by the Off-Campus Programs office prior to course delivery. This applies to EVERY class that is taught for credit from the Fire Academy. These forms are available by contacting the Off-Campus Programs office at 870*574-1521, ext. 109.

☐ Courses will be scheduled at least 30 days in advance of the class date. This gives us time to coordinate resources and instructors and enroll students in the course.

☐ No student under the age of 18 will be enrolled in classes or give credit for any class taught by the Arkansas Fire Academy. This includes In-House Classes that are taught for credit from the Fire Academy.

☐ Applications for courses must be received ten (10) working days prior to the course delivery date or the course may be cancelled if the minimum number of students has not enrolled. Exceptions: Number pre-approved by the Fire Academy.

☐ Pre-requisites will be checked for all classes that require them. Students are informed if they do not meet those pre-requisites. No credit will be given to students that do not meet those pre-requisites EVEN if they successfully complete the course being taught.

☐ All rosters and associated materials must be returned to the Fire Academy within ten (10) working days by the instructor so the paperwork can be processed, checked for accuracy and certificates issued. This includes In-House Training.

Regional Schools are Coming!

The Arkansas Fire Academy is in the process of scheduling regional school classes for Spring, 2008. This class will be Hybrid Cars and the student will receive 8 hours credit.

The sessions will follow the same format as was used in Fall, 2007. Section 1 will be taught Monday night and identical session 1 on Tuesday night and Section 2 will be taught Wednesday night and identical session 2 Thursday night.

To complete the course, the student should attend one night session of Section 1 and one night session of Section 2. Time for each class is 6:00 p.m. - 10:00 p.m. nightly.

Please be aware that these schedules are coming soon and will be on the website and FireMail as well as local papers. It would be of great assistance if the department hosting the school will notify the other departments in your area.
Many questions have risen on the issue of firefighters. This discussion addresses some of the common questions we receive from firefighters and their employing organizations.

Compensation

Generally, tax laws apply to firefighters in the same manner as for other types of workers. It does not matter whether firefighters are termed “volunteers”, are considered employees, or are identified by any other name, if the work they do is subject to the will and control of the payer, under the common-law rules, they are employees for Federal tax purposes. The determination of whether workers are common-law employees or independent contractors is the same for firefighters as for other workers. See IRS Publication 15, Employer’s Tax Guide, and IRS Publication 963, Federal-State Reference Guide, for more information on determining whether a worker is a common-law employee.

Similarly, it does not matter whether they are paid on a “call” basis, monthly, hourly, etc.; or whether the worker is full-time or part-time; or if the compensation is minimal or irregular. These payments are wages that should be reported on Form W-2, subject to withholding for Federal income tax, social security, and Medicare purposes. Employers are responsible for withholding on these wages and filing Form 941.

If a worker is a common-law employee, any amounts they receive, that are not exempt under some special provision, is reported on Form W-2 as wages to the employee. It does not matter what the payments are called.

Income Tax

Generally, all amounts employees received are taxable for Federal income tax purposes. This includes noncash property. Some fringe benefits are excluded by specific provisions of law. Some common benefits that may qualify to be excluded from include:

- Meals provided for the convenience of the employer
- Employee discounts
- Achievement awards
- Health insurance
- Educational benefits
What is a certified firefighter?

Am I a certified firefighter?

Over the years there have been some misconceptions about what being a certified firefighter means in the state. When a certain group of firefighters was asked this question the immediate response was “you have to have Firefighter I and or II.” Yet when another group was asked the same question their immediate response was “that you have taken Intro to Fire Protection, Personal Protective Equipment and Wildland firefighting classes”. So, who is correct?

To find the answer to this question one must go to the Arkansas Code for clarification and also look at what the National Fire Protection Association says regarding the matter. First, AR Code 20-22-805 creates the Office of Fire Protection Services and put it under the supervision of the Arkansas Department of Emergency Management (A.D.E.M.) The Director of the Office of Fire Protection Services has as their responsibilities to carry out administrative functioning and directives of the Arkansas Fire Protection Services Board.

AR Code 20-22-806 deals with the Certification and Classification of Fire Departments. As most of you know, fire departments in the state apply for annual certification and classification from the Director of the Office of Fire Protection Services. If the department meets the requirements of the AR Fire Protection Services Board, then the Office Fire Protections Services will certify the department as having met the requirements. Part of the firefighter’s requirement under this section of the AR Code is that firefighters shall maintain a minimum of six (6) hours per quarter and at least a minimum of twenty-four (24) hours per year of certifiable training meeting the standards of the Arkansas Fire Training Academy. Certifiable training by the AR Fire Training Academy simply means the training must meet at least a portion of the adopted standards, which now reflects the training tracks recently adopted by the fire academy. Part of the requirements of the Office of Fire Protection Services for fire departments to become certified is the requirement that a certain percentage of the fire department personnel must have successfully completed the Intro to Fire Protection (Intro), Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and wildland firefighting courses. Completing this requirement makes the department eligible for certification but does not make the individual a certified firefighter.

AR Code 12-13-201 establishes the legal founding of the Arkansas Fire Training Academy. AR Code 20-22-811 establishes mandatory training certification requirements for full-time entry-level firefighters. This code also states that the AR Fire Training Academy shall utilize the NFPA 1001: Minimum Standard for Firefighter Personnel, as the standard for which certification will be based. Further, the AR Code states that “The academy shall be the certifying agency for fire service personnel”.

NFPA describes a Firefighter I (according to the 1001 Standard) as one that has demonstrated the knowledge and skills to function as an integral member of a fire-fighting team under direct supervision in hazardous conditions. The standard further describes a Firefighter II as one who has demonstrated the skills and depth of knowledge for function under general supervision. So, if your department is making interior attacks, team members should be certified at the Firefighter I or II level if you want to comply with the intent of the NFPA 1001 Minimum Standard. The firefighter track recently adopted by the Academy allows personnel to take a series of modules (1-17) that eventually covers all the material required to sit for the Firefighter I & II certification exams.
ATTN: All Fire Departments

AFA wants to ensure that our Firewatch newsletter reaches all fire departments within the state. In order to maintain an accurate mailing list, we need your assistance. Please check the mailing label on this newsletter and advise us if your department has any changes with regard to the mailing address and the fire chief’s name. Please contact Sarah Hixson at Arkansas Fire Academy at (870) 574-1521 or e-mail at shixson@sautech.edu with any corrections.