



FIRE RESCUE ***ALBEMARLE COUNTY***

Wellness & Fitness Program



June 2006



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Wellness & Fitness Initiative

The Department has adopted the [IAFF/IAFC Wellness & Fitness Initiative, Second Edition](#) as its recommended guidelines for wellness & fitness.

- Reference [SAP-DEP-005](#) for more information.

Also visit the website at www.ACFireRescue.org.

- Click on [Wellness & Fitness](#).





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All Personnel Participate

- **Wellness & fitness is important for all personnel.**
- **Some individuals may gravitate to job tasks other than firefighting because of personal necessity or interest.**
- **All “jobs” are important and involve significant physical and emotional stress.**



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Components of Wellness & Fitness Program

- **Medical Fit-for-Duty Exams (annual physicals)**
- **Fitness Assessments**
- **Fitness Equipment**
- **Immunizations & Infection Control**
- **Wellness Education (forthcoming)**
- **Medical/Fitness/Injury Rehabilitation (if needed)**
- **Critical Incident Stress Management**
- **Behavioral Health (EAP)**
- **Data Collection and Reporting (forthcoming)**



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Wellness

- **Wellness is a comprehensive term that includes all of the following:**
 - Medical Fitness
 - Physical Fitness
 - Emotional Fitness
 - Access to rehabilitation, when indicated

Wellness programs in the fire department are intended to strengthen uniformed personnel so that their mental, physical, and emotional capabilities are resilient enough to withstand the stresses and strains of life and the workplace.



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Wellness Program

- **A wellness program is not just another program, it is a total commitment to:**
 - **The health, safety, and longevity of all uniformed personnel**
 - **The productivity and performance of all personnel**
 - **The cost effectiveness and welfare of the Department and the County**



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Commitment



Wellness is a personal commitment that all uniformed personnel must make to survive and to sustain a career in the fire service. When uniformed personnel are ill or injured, malnourished or overweight, over stressed or out of balance, it affects their ability to effectively do their job.



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Wellness Benefits

- Greater strength and stamina
- Weight reduction and/or control (maintenance)
- Lower cholesterol and blood pressure levels
- Decreased risk of death, injury, or disability from disease
- Heightened job performance and enjoyment from work
- Improved performance in physical activities
- Better posture and joint functioning
- Reduction of anxiety, stress, tension, and depression
- Increased energy, general vitality, and mental sharpness
- Enhanced self-esteem and self-image
- More restful and refreshing sleep
- Enhanced capacity to recover from strenuous and exhaustive work
- Increased tolerance for heat stress and more effective body cooling
- Improved mobility, balance, and coordination



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Labor & Management Partnership

- **Responsibility for wellness/physical fitness programs cannot just be given to management**
- **Without labor input and cooperation in the process, members will not “buy in” to the program**
- **Labor and management must develop a wellness program that is educational and rehabilitative and not punitive**



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Cost-Benefit

- The program is not free; but it is cost-effective!
- Many large corporations, including AT&T Communications, Union Pacific Railroad, DuPont Chemical Company, and The Travelers Corporation tout returns of \$1.50 to \$3.40 for every dollar invested in their wellness efforts.
- In January 1997, the City of Phoenix, Arizona conducted an audit of their disability retirement program for all city employees.
 - Annualized cost of disability pensions for fire fighters = \$100,000
 - For police officers (with twice as many personnel as fire) = \$721,000
 - General city employees (with five times as many personnel as fire) = \$623,000
- The reduced disability pension cost for the Phoenix Fire Department reflects their twelve-year commitment to an effective wellness program and thorough rehabilitation for all personnel.

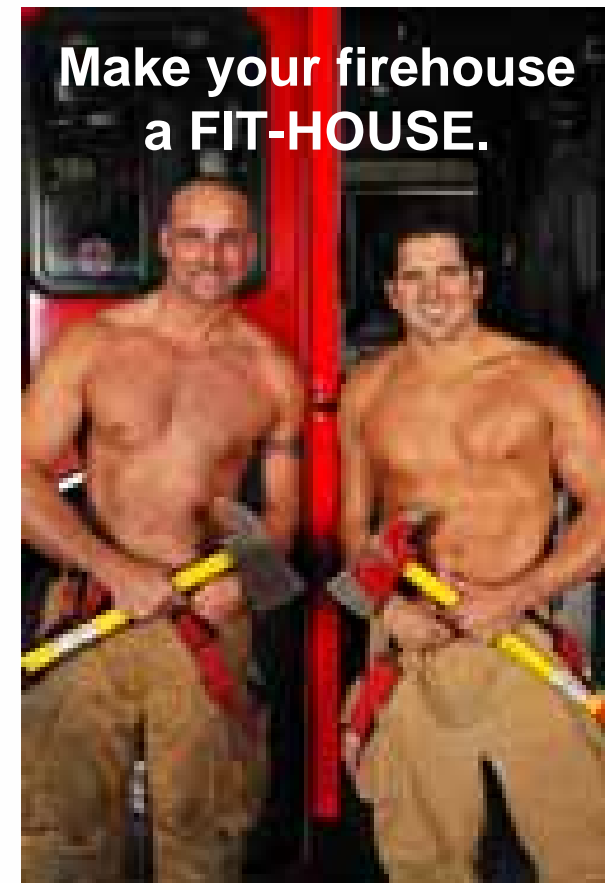


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Greatest Asset

- The fire service's greatest asset is not equipment, apparatus or stations, but rather its personnel.
- It is through personnel that the fire departments serve the public, accomplish their missions, and are able to make a difference in their communities.





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Fitness Assessments

- Research has shown the need for high levels of aerobic fitness, muscular endurance, and muscular strength to perform safely and effectively in the fire service.
- Physical fitness is critical to maintaining the wellness of our uniformed personnel.
- Fitness must be incorporated into the overall fire service philosophy.



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Fitness Assessments

- **Mandatory**
- **Non-Punitive**
- **Confidential (Maintained Separately from Personnel Files)**
- **Positive Individualized Program**
- **Conducted by Peer Fitness Trainers**
- **Component Results Measured Against the Individual's Previous Assessments – *Not Against a Standard or Norm***
- **NOT a Physical, Medical Assessment, or Fitness for Duty Exam**



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Before Fitness Assessment

- Prior to involvement in any exercise regime – or a fitness assessment – all personnel must be medically cleared to participate.
- This means a physical/medical assessment within the last twelve (12) months.

Fitness-for-Duty exams (physicals) will be phased over to occur during the month of hire.

It is the individual's responsibility to ensure that his/her annual physical and fitness assessments are scheduled and completed within a one (1) month window of his/her date of hire annually.



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Time to Participate

- **Dedicated on-duty time for exercise must be provided.**
- **Individual must commit to exercise off-duty as well.**
- **Scheduling on-duty time may vary.**
- **All uniformed personnel will accomplish four (4) hours of fitness training (cardiovascular & strength training) per calendar week.**
- **Training must be accomplished on-duty or off-duty.**
- **Personnel working a forty-hour or other similar administrative shift shall also be provided the opportunity to exercise.**

Minimum time for fitness training should be four (4) hours per calendar week.



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Promoting Fitness

- **Company Officers**
- **Recruit Training (Assignment to Academy)**
- **Candidate/Applicant Preparation**
- **Fitness Assessment**





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Fitness Evaluation

- All uniformed personnel shall participate in a mandatory, annual, non-punitive, and confidential fitness assessment, following medical clearance.
- Feedback provided to personnel and the Department's physician.
 - Individual's current level of fitness,
 - Level of improvement since past assessments,
 - Realistic evaluation of his or her physical capacity to safely perform assigned jobs,
 - Suggested exercise program,
 - Some of the data collected will be entered into a confidential database to be used for future research.



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Fitness Evaluation Components

- **Pre-Evaluation**
 - Self-Assessment Tool
 - Medical/Lifestyle History (Health History Form)
- **Aerobic capacity**
 - Treadmill
- **Muscular strength**
 - Hand-Grip, Leg, & Arm
- **Muscular endurance**
 - Push-Up & Sit-Up
- **Flexibility**
 - Sit & Reach
- **Post-Evaluation**
 - Body Composition
 - Nutrition/Dietician referral if necessary





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Pre-Evaluation

- Must have had physical and medically cleared within last twelve (12) months.
- If resting heart rate exceeds 110 beats per minute and/or resting blood pressure exceeds 160/100 mm Hg, 5 minute wait and re-test.
- If the heart rate and/or blood pressure remain at these levels, reschedule the evaluation.
- If the heart rate and/or blood pressure remain at these levels, cancel the fitness evaluation and refer the individual to physician.
- Record weight & age.
- Complete appropriate forms.

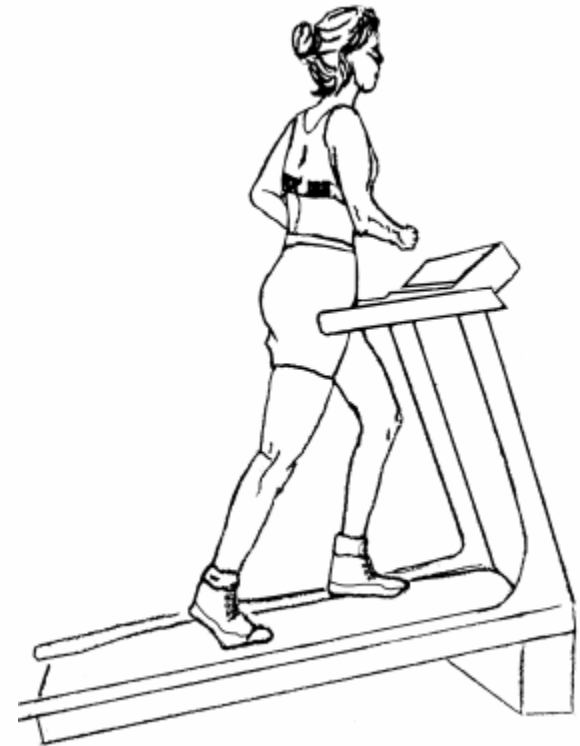


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Aerobic Evaluation

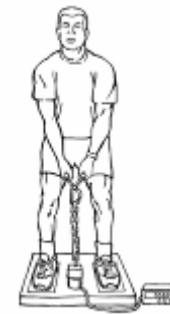
- A Polar Heart Rate Monitor shall be used for heart rate measurements and a stopwatch used for timing.
- Treadmill – Submaximal treadmill evaluations shall use the Gerkin Treadmill Protocol. (Stage-based on gradual increase in speed & grade until Target Heart Rate is reached.)





Muscular Strength

- **Hand Grip Dynamometer – Hand grip strength evaluations shall use the Wellness-Fitness Initiative Protocol for Hand Grip.**
- **Arm Dynamometer – Arm strength evaluations shall use the Wellness-Fitness Initiative Protocol for Arm Strength.**
- **Leg Dynamometer – Leg strength evaluations shall use the Wellness-Fitness Initiative Protocol for Leg Strength.**



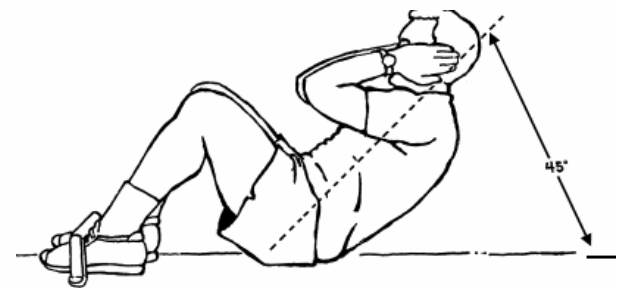


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Muscular Endurance

- **Push-up** – Push-up muscle endurance evaluations shall use the Wellness-Fitness Initiative Protocol for Push-ups. (Number of push-ups in 2 minutes.)
- **Curl-up** – Curl-up muscle endurance evaluations shall use the Wellness-Fitness Initiative Protocol for Curl-ups. (Number of curl-ups in 3 minutes.)



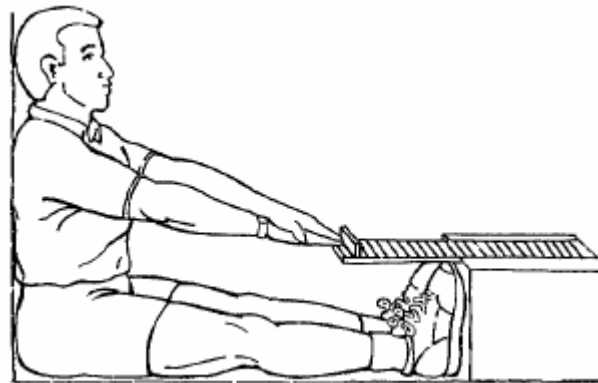


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Flexibility

- **Sit & Reach – Sit and reach flexibility evaluations shall use the Wellness-Fitness Initiative Sit and Reach Protocol. (3 Measurements.)**





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Assessment Roll-Out

- **Administrative staff will undergo fitness assessments in May-June 2006.**
- **New hires will undergo fitness assessments as part of orientation.**
- **It is the responsibility of the individual, his/her assigned Peer Fitness Trainer, and the company officer to ensure that all personnel have his/her annual fitness assessment.**
- **Assessments may be conducted more than once per year, if desired (recommended).**

**All baseline fitness assessments
must be completed by July 2007 (or sooner).**



an investment in our people

an investment in our community

WELLNESS & FITNESS



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