

## **TRAINING TIPS: Preparing for Success in Completing Firefighter 1**

### ***Attention: Chiefs/Training Officers/Firefighter 1 Candidates***

Based on observations and experiences with other training courses, I'd like to offer a few suggestions to help your candidates be successful in completing Firefighter 1:

Prior to the start of class, candidates should begin aerobic and strength training. They will have to pass a [TOAC-Task Oriented Air Consumption](#) test in full gear and on SCBA air, which simulates typical fireground duties.

Many new students find this test to be very taxing, especially those who are not in the best of physical condition. If they fail to meet the objectives of the TOAC in the time allotted, they are offered one more chance to pass. If failed the second time, they will be not be permitted to continue in the Firefighter 1 course and will be directed into a BEFO-Basic Exterior Firefighting Operations course.

I suggest a Crossfit style workout or full body exercises that incorporate high intensity training; as well as running to improve cardio endurance. Workout programs can be found online at: [www.bodybuilding.com](http://www.bodybuilding.com) and other similar sites.

It will also be helpful if chiefs, training officers and/or other firefighters can review and practice with them how to don and use their full PPE and SCBAs correctly including how to change out the cylinder, turning on and off the SCBA, and activating, preventing unnecessary activation, and deactivating the PASS alarm. This will put them at an advantage when it comes to the donning and doffing skills, and escape procedures that will be practiced and tested during the first 14-hour orientation phase of the course. Available time to teach and practice hands-on skills during the course is limited by all of the material that must be covered, so anything that your home department can do to prepare them will help them and you.

We instructors are excited to start your new members into the fire service and we are all dedicated to their safety, wellbeing and the opportunity for them to succeed. While ultimately it is up to them, their commitment and attitude – chiefs, training officers and fellow firefighters play an important role in helping them determine and improve both their capabilities and limitations in performing the tasks and duties of a firefighter.

A video that demonstrates all of the stations of the TOAC course as well as other preparation tips can be found at: <http://www2.erie.gov/fire/index.php?q=resources#FIREFIGHTER1>. We encourage you to review all of this material with your candidate prior to arriving at orientation.

Please don't hesitate to contact me or any other SFI-State Fire Instructor should you have any questions or are interested in more information or guidance in helping your students be successful. Thank you.

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