

Wildland Firefighter Position Descriptions for Rubicon Firefighters

Wildland firefighters and crews are expected to be readily available for assignments anywhere in the United States. An assignment typically lasts 14 days, exclusive of travel. Shifts can be up to 16 hours a day, often involving constructing fireline or performing other arduous tasks for the entire shift. Environmental factors on an incident can include working in high heat, cold, extreme weather, high elevation, and steep rugged terrain. Firefighters are commonly exposed to smoke, dust, insects, noise, and potentially dangerous situations.

Each year all on-the-line wildland firefighters must successfully pass the Work Capacity Test (“Pack Test”) consisting of carrying a 45 pound pack for 3 miles in 45 minutes to meet “arduous” level performance. Arduous is defined as duties involving field work that requires physical performance with above average endurance and superior conditioning. These duties may include an occasional demand for extraordinarily strenuous activities in emergencies under adverse environmental conditions and over extended periods of time. Physical requirements include running, walking, climbing, jumping, twisting, bending, and lifting more than 50 pounds. The pace of the work typically is set by the emergency conditions.

Additionally, each year all firefighters must also complete required Refresher Training (RT-130), including Look Up, Look Down, Look Around (S-133), Followership to Leadership (L-280), and Do What’s Right.

Firefighter Type 2 (FFT2), Rookie School

This course is an entry level wildland firefighter course. It will provide students with the skills and certification needed to function as a member of a wildland fire crew (hand crew, engine, helitack, etc.).

Course topics include: an introduction to fire behavior (S-190), weather, suppression operations and tactics, safety (10 Standard Firefighting Orders, 18 Watchout Situations, etc.), fireline construction methods, and the Incident Command System. There is a final field day exercise involving practical experience in fireline construction using a variety of hand tools.

Objectives of the Course:

- Identify the environmental factors of fuels, weather, and topography that affect the start and spread of wildland fires.
- Describe the contributing factors that indicate the potential for increased fire behavior that may compromise safety.
- Explain the LCES (Lookouts, Communications, Escape Routes, and Safety Zones) system and how it relates to the Standard Firefighting Orders.
- Construct fireline to required standards using various methods and tools.
- Strengthen, reinforce, and use holding actions on a fireline.
- Extinguish a fire with or without the use of water.
- Complete assigned tasks in a safe and efficient manner.
- Describe factors in a given wildfire environment that could impact safety.

Required Training:

- Introduction to ICS (ICS-100) – *Must be completed prior to attending Rookie School.*
- NIMS: An Introduction (IS-700) – *Must be completed prior to attending Rookie School.*
- Human Factors in the Wildland Fire Service (L-180).

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- Firefighter Training (S-130).
- Introduction to Wildland Fire Behavior (S-190).

Physical fitness level: arduous

Firefighter Type 1 (FFT1), S-131

This course is designed for any qualified Firefighter Type 2 (with prior fire experience) who desires to become a Firefighter Type 1. A FFT1 functions as a squad boss or senior firefighter on a hand crew, engine crew, or other fire crew. Qualification as a FFT1 is often a prerequisite for more advanced training courses. Upon completion of this course the student qualifies as a Firefighter Type 1 Trainee.

Course topics include: annual Fireline Safety Refresher (RT-130), Firefighter Type 1 (S-131), and Look Up, Look Down, Look Around (S-133). The Fireline Handbook, communications, tactical decision making, and the ability to apply standard operating procedures found in the Incident Response Pocket Guide (IRPG) are also covered. This course is interactive and includes decision games designed to facilitate learning the course objectives.

Objectives of the Course:

- Demonstrate the ability to use fireline reference tools to facilitate the communication and decision making processes.
- Describe how to incorporate and maintain open lines of communication with appropriate personnel.
- Demonstrate the ability to apply the standard operating procedures found in the Incident Response Pocket Guide (PMS 461).
- Demonstrate the ability to apply information found in the Fireline Handbook (PMS 410-1).

Required experience:

- Satisfactory performance as a Firefighter Type 2.

Physical fitness level: arduous.

Helicopter Crewmember (HECM), S-271

This course is designed for any qualified Firefighter Type 2 (with prior fire experience) and above who desires to become a helicopter crewmember. A helicopter crewmember functions as a member of a helitack crew, or works with helicopters during fire suppression, and project operations.

Course topics include: aviation safety, aircraft capabilities and limitations, aviation life support equipment, aviation mishap reporting, pre-flight checklist and briefing/debriefing, aviation transportation of hazardous materials, crash survival, helicopter operations, and helicopter field exercise.

Objectives of the Course:

- Upon completion of the S-271 course, the student will be able to demonstrate proficiency in all identified areas of helicopter use to safely achieve efficiency and standardization.

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Required Training:

- Aviation Transportation of Hazardous Material (A-110) – *Must be completed prior to attending training (and subsequently every three years to maintain currency).*
- Helicopter Crewmember (S-271).
- Annual Fireline Safety Refresher (RT-130).

Required experience:

- Satisfactory performance as a Firefighter Type 2.

Physical fitness level: arduous.

Wildland Fire Chain Saws Basic Faller (FAL3), S-212

This course is targeted to any qualified Firefighter Type 2 (with prior fire experience) and above who desires to become a Basic Faller (FAL3). It prepares the student to perform low complexity project and fireline tasks using a chain saw.

Course topics include safe and efficient chain saw handling and operation while bucking, limbing, brushing and slashing, and felling trees less than 12 inches in diameter.

Objectives of the Course:

- Demonstrate the ability to safely operate and maintain a chain saw.
- Define the duties and responsibilities of the chain saw operator and swamper.
- Explain the tactical application of chain saws in fireline construction and mop-up operations.
- Demonstrate the use of tools and supplies that support chain saw operations.

Required Training:

- Annual Fireline Safety Refresher (RT-130).
- Wildland Fire Chain Saws (S-212).

Required experience:

- Satisfactory performance as a Firefighter Type 2.

Physical fitness level: arduous.