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Media Contact: James Schuelke
jschuelke@vcccd.edu
(805) 678-5275

**Oxnard College Reopens Regional Firefighter & EMT Program To Support
Region's Emergency Preparedness**
Fall 2020 Application Deadline Extended to May 1, 2020

OXNARD, Calif. (April 28, 2020) – Oxnard College recently reopened on-site classes and operations for its [Regional Firefighter Academy](#) and [Emergency Medical Technician \(EMT\) program](#) after closely collaborating with local and state officials to implement strict COVID-19 screening and safety guidelines. The facility plays a crucial role in training the next generation of firefighters and emergency response professionals who protect communities in Ventura County as well as throughout the state. The Fire Academy has also extended the application deadline for its Fall 2020 semester through May 1.

“With the advent of the current COVID-19 pandemic and the state’s upcoming brush fire season, it is essential to maintain a highly trained and professional workforce of firefighters and EMT professionals for our community,” said Luis Sanchez, interim president of Oxnard College. “That’s why I’m proud of the diligent steps our faculty and staff have implemented to keep our team and students safe as they complete their instruction.”

To reopen the facility, Oxnard College worked with the California Fire Technology Directors Association, Ventura County Community College District and Ventura County Public Health. A comprehensive series of guidelines and safety precautions were designed to guard against the spread of COVID-19 and to protect the programs’ students, faculty and staff. After moving all lecture-based instruction online, on-site and skills-based instruction continued on April 13. Among numerous steps taken by the program’s expert staff, pre- and post-class health screening protocols have been implemented, smaller cohorts of students have been created and spread across multiple class times in order to allow for social distancing, and an electronic health screening documentation system has been established.

Additionally, medical professionals monitor and ensure on-site screening processes while using a “Seek Thermal Imaging Thermometer” to quickly and accurately measure students’ temperatures prior to each class. A second temperature is taken through a handheld device at a safe range. All Fire Academy cadets and EMT students have also received extensive guidance about “staying home” and limiting their out-of-class exposure while away from the training facility.

“Now more than ever it is clear how essential our emergency response professionals are to our community,” said Matthew Jewett, assistant dean for Oxnard College’s public safety programs. “We encourage anyone interested in this challenging and rewarding work to apply to our Fire Academy’s Fall 2020 semester.”

The occupational demand for firefighters and EMTs has recently skyrocketed. As the “Baby Boomer” generation of emergency responders continues to retire and the fire season lengthens, there is an increasing number of vacancies in Public Safety Departments throughout the country.

The Academy’s Fall semester classes are set to begin on August 17. The 17-week program provides education and training in structural firefighting, hazardous materials response, confined space rescue, vehicle extrication, wildland fire behavior, wildland firefighting skills, portable water delivery systems, wildland fire chain saws, basic land navigation, and leadership values and principles. Students receive hands-on training constructing fire lines, using personal protective equipment and evacuations in the wildland urban interface.

All applicants must be in good physical condition, be registered with the National Registry of Emergency Medical Technicians or have the California State EMT Card, and have completed the Academy’s FT 151 Fire Protection Organizations course by the end of the 2020 Spring semester. Applications can be accessed at <https://www.oxnardcollege.edu/departments/academic/public-safety-fire-technology/public-safety-regional-fire-academy/apply-to-the>. Once completed, applications must be emailed to Assistant Dean Matthew Jewett at mjewett@vcccd.edu.

For additional information regarding Oxnard College’s reopening of the Regional Firefighter Academy and Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) program, contact James Schuelke at jschuelke@vcccd.edu or (805) 678-5275.

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