

VERNONIA RURAL FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT

Training Officer

At Vernonia Rural Fire Protection District (VRFPD) the training officer plans, coordinates, and often executes the training program for the Fire District. Training officers work with the Oregon Department of Public Safety, Standards and Training (DPSST) to ensure that Vernonia Rural Fire Protection District responders are properly trained, qualified, and certified for their positions.

The training officer position at Vernonia Fire has been held by numerous volunteers over the past several years. Being a training officer is extremely demanding of a person's time, patience, and drive. Firefighter training requirements and training courses are constantly in a state of flux, creating its own deficiencies. Ever increasing minimums are being mandated by the State of Oregon on all personnel involved with emergency response. These continually increasing training requirements, coupled with the lack of available training time for a volunteer force, means that any and all provided training needs to be quick, powerful, and to the point. In the past, every Vernonia Fire volunteer that has operated in the training officer position, in time, has left the Fire District due to "burn out."

"Burn out" is a term used, when a person has given all they have, and still can't seem to get caught up with even a

majority of the tasks. At Vernonia Fire, training officer burn out happens when the training officer is asked to work, on top of their regular career paying job, an additional 20-30 hours a month performing in this high level position. Please, make no mistake, burn out can happen to anyone, at any level, or position if training is inadequate or stale. When someone stops learning, or is not challenged, they often lose interest.

Utilization of a paid training officer can alleviate burn out with long term consistent training programs, allowing uniform growth of fire department personnel within the district, to a level of their choosing.

The number of incidents Vernonia Fire responds to has been increasing every year on an average of 7% each year over the last three years. Vernonia RFPD responded to 521 calls for assistance, with only 11 responders on our roster in 2014. To cover 500 calls per year with a volunteer work force is a great feat by itself. To cover that many calls with only one paid administrator is even greater. Incident response and volunteer levels at the time of the district's last Levy approval, 1998, stood at 250 incident responses, and 26 volunteers.

An operating levy will allow the Fire District to employ a second full time employee at the fire station. This person

would be titled as a training officer, and public education/prevention advocate, as well as being able to respond to incidents. Having a full time training officer will improve and stabilize the Fire District's training program, with the added possibility of bringing in volunteers from outside the Vernonia community for shift coverage commitments. This in turn will boost the district's personnel response per call, especially during week days when it is most needed, creating a safer work and community environment, as well as boosting our ability to provide quality training to the volunteers and the community.

A full time person at the Fire District possessing the certifications necessary to respond to incidents, train Fire District personnel, and perform other assigned duties will cost roughly \$68,000 a year. An operating levy spans a five year period bringing the total to roughly \$340,000.00. All added up, salary and benefits, equates to \$0.32 cents per thousand dollars of valuation of



the home/property. The Fire District Board of Directors knows that there is a real need for an additional paid staff member. The issue, as always, is being able to fund the need, while at the same time, prove to the community that the Fire District is frugal, and the need is urgent.

Calls responded to December 1-31

Fire	1
Emergency Medical Service	37
Hazardous Condition	4
Service Call	5
Good Intent	1
Severe Weather & Natural Disaster	2
Special Incident	0
No Emergency Found	0
False Alarm	1
Total	51



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**"TO BETTER SERVE
OUR COMMUNITY
THROUGH
PREPARATION
AWARENESS
AND
PERSISTENCE"**

Please visit our
website at:
www.vernoniafire.us

Vernonia Rural Fire Protection District

VRFPD is Hiring a Volunteer Public Information Officer

Vernonia Rural Fire Protection District located in Vernonia, OR is currently hiring a Volunteer Public Information Officer.

VRFPD is comprised of volunteers that dedicate their time to make their community safe! It takes enthusiasm, time, motivation, and commitment from those volunteer's to ensure the safety of our district. VRFPD's Volunteer Staff is comprised of many diversely skilled people who share their spare time every day to help keep their district a better and safer place to live.

GENERAL STATEMENT OF DUTIES

VRFPD's Public Information Officer (PIO) position has been established to keep Vernonia citizens informed about the activities of this agency, and to build a bridge between VRFPD and the community it serves.

Examples of Principal Duties

- The Public information officer will serve as a liaison between VRFPD and the media. The PIO will write news releases, plan news conferences and respond to inquiries from the media. He/she may escort reporters and photographers who come to our facility for interviews or photographs. The designated PIO will be expected to maintain an archive of news clippings about the agency, and will also respond to open records requests submitted by reporters.
- In addition to facilitating media stories, he/she will keep the public informed through direct communication, VRFPD's website and Facebook. VRFPD's PIO will prepare printed and electronic newsletters, brochures, and posters, and may write/place newspaper, radio and/or television ads. He/she will answer phone calls from citizens, may represent the agency at public meetings, and plan for the agency's presence at conferences, state fairs or community events.
- VRFPD's PIO will be expected to commit 5-10 hours of their time per week and be available to respond to incidents as needed.
- VRFPD's PIO must have a valid ODL and reliable transportation. Skills, Abilities and Personal Traits.
- Public information officers need strong writing skills and should be proficient in Microsoft Office products. Photography skills are a plus, as is familiarity with Adobe Photoshop. PIOs should have strong grammar, spelling and punctuation skills and may also need to be fluent in Associated Press style.
- PIOs need to be outgoing, detail-oriented individuals with strong communication abilities. They must work well under stress and be able to meet tight deadlines.

Education and Experience

- High School Diploma
- Work experience in communication, journalism, public relations or a related field is preferred.
- VRFPD is willing to provide the right candidate with continued education to meet these job requirements,.

If you would like to apply for this Volunteer Position with VRFPD, please pick up your application at: Vernonia Fire Station or contact Chief Dean Smith at: 503-429-8252 if you need additional information.

The deadline for this application is February 18, 2015.

VERNONIA FIRE

★★ RECRUITMENT ★★
We Need Volunteers
www.vernoniafire.us

Have you ever wondered what it would be like to be a firefighter? Have you ever wanted to volunteer in your community? The Vernonia Rural Fire Protection District is in need of additional personnel and we have positions for everyone. From firefighting to support positions, we can use your help. All training and equipment is provided free of charge. Being a volunteer firefighter is a very rewarding job. Vernonia Rural Fire Protection District provides a vast array of Emergency Services ranging from Vehicle Extrication to fire scene Rehab & Firefighting. We respond to over 400 calls per year. We hold our general membership meeting every second Monday of the month at the Fire station. You can call Dean Smith at 503-429-8252 with any questions. Feel free to email us at anytime at vrfvolunteers@gmail.com