

Join Us!

We're always happy to welcome new prospective firefighters. The information below can help you decide if you would like to consider joining us at Station 51 as a member of the Carterville Volunteer Fire Department (CVFD).

Prerequisites

- Applicants must have completed high school or obtained a GED.
- Applicants must live within 5 miles of our primary coverage area before the membership process is finalized. If you plan to move inside this area in the near future, you can still apply now.
- Due to insurance coverage restrictions, applicants must be at least 18 years of age before the membership process can be finalized. To drive our apparatus, you must be at least 21 years of age.
- Applicants must be of good moral character, must not abuse alcohol, and must not use illegal drugs. (We reserve the right to perform random and post accident/injury alcohol and drug testing.)
- Applicants understand that they will be serving as a volunteer, without compensation.
- Applicants must be in good health and capable of performing vigorous physical activities requiring strength, agility, and stamina. The Application Process Prospective members must first fill out an application. You can e-mail the Fire Chief (chief at station51 dot org) to obtain a written application, or you can complete an on-line application right here on our web site. Once the application is submitted, the you'll need to attend any three regular meetings (meetings are generally held on the first Tuesday and third Thursday of each month-- we'll contact you with specifics) before your application is finally acted upon. The "three meeting" requirement allows you to get to know us, allows us to get to know you. It also demonstrates your genuine interest in becoming an active member of our department. At the third meeting, current members will vote on whether to grant you probationary membership. If the Fire Chief concurs, only a simple majority of "yes" votes is required. The probation period is six months, beginning on the day the vote was cast. As a Probationary Member, you'll have all the voting rights and other privileges afforded to regular members. However, probationary members may be removed with, or without cause during the probation period. Conversion from Probationary Member to Regular Member is automatic at the end of the probationary period. (FYI: Permits to operate emergency lights and siren on personal vehicles are provided at the sole discretion of the Fire Chief and are almost never issued to probationary members.)
- Member Responsibilities After acceptance, your duties and responsibilities are basically the same as a Regular Member. We will, of course, take your current level of training and experience into account and will not expect you to perform activities for which you have not been properly trained. You will be issued firefighter's protective clothing (turnouts), and a pager and/or portable radio. You will be expected to respond to the fire station (when available) any time our station is paged to respond to a call for service. Responding to the incident in your personal vehicle is almost always prohibited (Requires prior approval of the Incident Commander). Station 51 does not subscribe to the "Blue Aurora" method (massive numbers of personal vehicles clogging the scene-- all with blinking blue lights). When you arrive at the station, you'll receive further instructions. Don't worry, one of the "old hands" will be there to help you and look out for your safety. After the call is over, you'll be expected to stay a few minutes and take part in a team effort to clean things up and make everything ready for the next call. In addition to responding to calls, you'll be expected to attend most of our regular meetings. At these meetings, we'll conduct business, have a training class, or possibly both - depending on time constraints. Training occurs often, including special training sessions scheduled in addition to the regular meeting times. The last, and possibly least attractive, activity you'll be asked to help with is routine housekeeping. Each member is placed in a rotation schedule for these routine chores. The housekeeping duties are divided so that no one is asked to do more than their fair share. Housekeeping consists of things like sweeping the floor, taking out the trash, ... that kind of thing. Plan on being asked to put in an average of an hour once every two weeks or so on these tasks.
- Member Benefits
 - You'll receive extensive, free training in a wide range of disciplines related to the modern Fire Service.
 - You'll gain experience in managing critical incidents and dealing with hazardous environments.
 - Your training and experience can prepare you for a career in a paid service. Many of our current and former members are currently employed by paid fire departments and ambulance services throughout the Midwest.
 - You'll find yourself a member of an elite and close knit group of dedicated individuals. You'll literally be able to walk into any fire station on planet and be treated like a member of the family.
 - If you're injured "in the line of duty," our insurance will pay for your doctor or emergency room visit and various other medical expenses up to the policy limit.
 - Our general liability policy covers you while responding to or participating in any department sanctioned activity. If you feel you would like to become a member of our organization, click here to go to the on-line application form.