



ROCK HILL

SOUTH CAROLINA

Rock Hill Fire Department Introduces the Future: Recruit Class 7

After 10 grueling weeks of classroom and outside skills training, six firefighters graduated from the Rock Hill Fire Department Recruit Training program as Class #7 on July 7. The ceremony was held in City Hall's Council Chambers and attended by the graduates' families, friends, training instructors and fellow firefighters. The graduates of Recruit Class 7 are:

Alfredo R. Benavides, RHFD Ladder 1
Wesley G. Leach, RHFD Engine 1
Charles T. Mazingo, RHFD Engine 1
Deanna W. Pepler, RHFD Engine 2
Roland E. Scott, Lancaster Fire Dept.
Rhett G. Stuart, Lancaster Fire Dept.

The Rock Hill Fire Department collaborated with the Lancaster Fire

Department to include two Lancaster recruits in the training program. Typically, neighboring towns send their new recruits to seven weeks of training in Columbia, SC, requiring them to pay for lodging and meals. By joining the RHFD recruit training, the Lancaster recruits could return home each night to their families. They also had the added benefit of three extra weeks of training with many of the same instructors who conduct recruit training in Columbia.

This year's graduates come from a variety of backgrounds and experience, from Ecuador to York County to New York, some with firefighting experience, but most without. Business and sociology degrees, a college athlete, a brick



The members of Recruit Class 7. Top row (L to R): Alfredo R. Benavides, Charles T. Mazingo and Wesley G. Leach; bottom row (L to R): Roland E. Scott, Deanna W. Pepler and Rhett G. Stuart.

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Flood of the Century?

Important Numbers

for 24-Hour Automated Service

803/329-5555 Outage Reporting
 803/329-5588 Billing Inquiries and
 Payment Processing

Other Important Numbers

803/325-2500 Customer Service
 Requests
 803/329-5610 City-Maintained
 Road Pothole Reporting
 803/327-6186 State-Maintained
 Road Pothole Reporting

On June 27, just a week before the Fourth of July, Rock Hill citizens heard peals of thunder and saw crackles of lightning that signify the typical summer afternoon storm. Except this was no typical storm.

The city was suddenly deluged with water, falling fast and hard, with some areas believed to have experienced as much as 3.76 inches in just two hours. Yards turned into lakes, and some areas experienced problems with sanitary sewer backups.

Some officials believe that this storm qualifies as between a 50-year and a 100-

year flood. This means that there is statistically only a 1-percent to 2-percent chance that a flood of this magnitude could occur annually.

While the City is working hard to update its storm water system, there are few, if any municipal systems capable of withstanding a storm of this severity. "The City's storm water system was simply overwhelmed," said Jimmy Bagley, Rock Hill Utilities Director.

Bagley explained that the City's storm water system meets state regulations, being designed and built to withstand a

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Flood continued from cover



ABS and PVC extendable backwater valves (as shown) can protect your home and property from sewage backups. This particular brand, made by Clean Check Inc., can be installed outside at virtually any depth without the use of a manhole.

10-year flood. This is the accepted standard for city storm water systems. He further explained that if the City were to revamp its storm water system to the 50-year floodwater standards, the costs would likely be prohibitive, causing utility rates to skyrocket. And, he pointed out, there is only a 1-percent to 2-percent chance that a storm of this size can occur in a year.

Rock Hill's Utility Division does have some advice for home owners who want to minimize the chances of sanitary sewer backups in their homes. Water and Sewer Superintendent Scott Turner offers the following advice:

- First, when you're considering a home for purchase, find out where the lot sits in relation to the nearest manhole. If it is below the grade of the manhole cover, you're more likely to have sanitary sewer backups during a storm or when there's a blockage in the system.
- Second, be sure your home has a check valve or backwater valve. This is a flap in the sewer line that allows sewage to flow out; in the event of a backup, this valve serves as a barrier, preventing sewage from flowing back up the line into your home. If your home doesn't have one of these valves, you should consider installing one. If your home is situated below

the grade of the nearest manhole, your plumber is required to install one of these valves according to International Plumbing Code Section 715.

- Finally, **never** pour oil or grease down your sink. It may look like soft butter or liquid when it goes down the drain, but when it mixes with sediment and sand in the sanitary sewer system, it turns into a hard material similar to concrete. When this material backs up in a line, it literally has to be drilled and chiseled out, which can cause major damage to the line, and can increase the chance of a sewer backup in the home.

If you have questions about installing a check-flow valve, call your local certified plumbing contractor. For questions about information included in this article, contact Lyn Garris at **803/329-7009**.



A plumbing contractor installs an ABS and PVC extendable backwater valve. The Clean Check extendable backwater valve is fully listed as complying with both the Uniform Plumbing Code (UPC) and the International Plumbing Code (IPC). Contractors should contact their local wholesale plumbing supply house or water and sewer wholesale supplier to purchase the valve. Home owners should contact a local plumbing contractor about the purchase and installation of a backwater valve.

Photos and information regarding Clean Check backwater valves were provided by Clean Check Inc. (www.cleanccheck.com)

mason, even a former corrections officer comprised the group. Despite the diversity, graduate Chuck Mozingo says the recruits share more similarities than differences. The group formed good relationships, organizing special study sessions on the weekends and even gathering for a Fourth of July picnic.

At the graduation ceremony, Training Division Battalion Chief Mike Caudill presented a slide show of photos set to music from the 10-week training program, along with statistics about the number of training hours and the graduates' increased physical stamina. Training to be a firefighter is no easy task. Class #7 completed 14 classes, 11 written exams and seven practical skills evaluations. At the beginning of training, the six recruits together completed 243 push-ups per minute but, by the end of the 10 weeks, the group increased to 371 per minute! The group total for the bench press was 995 pounds the first day, which went up to 1,170 pounds the last



Chuck Mozingo demonstrates his newly acquired ladder skills.

day. Each recruit ran an average of four miles per day, for a class grand total of 648 miles at the end.

Mozingo's advice to anyone considering the recruitment process? "Start running," he said. He added that the most challenging aspects of the 10 weeks were the physical fitness training and the classroom lessons, but in the end, he felt a great sense of accomplishment. Mozingo said he's dreamed of being a firefighter from the time he was 5 years old and received a badge and letter from a relative who was a firefighter. Now his 2-year-old son suits up in snow boots, yellow raincoat and plastic fire hat to impress his daddy.

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Kenny Martin (left) instructs recruits Alfredo Benavides (center) and Wesley Leach (right) on the proper techniques for auto extrication.

A Firefighter's Prayer

When I am called to duty, God,
whenever flames may rage,
give me the strength to save some life,
whatever be its age.

Help me embrace a little child
before it is too late,
or save an older person
from the horror of that fate.

Enable me to be alert and
hear the weakest shout,
and quickly and efficiently
to put the fire out.

I want to fill my calling
and to give the best in me,
to guard my every neighbor
and protect his property.

And if according to my fate
I am to lose my life,
please bless with your protecting hand
my children, my husband or my wife.



Instructor David Coates (middle) leads the six recruits in Flammable Liquids and Gases (FLAG) Training at the York County Fire Training Center on Ogden Road.

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After hours of training and state-regulated testing on such topics as search and rescue, fire behavior, hose skills, auto extrication, hazmat, ladder skills, ropes and knots skills, ventilation, forcible entry and crime scene preservation, these graduates have joined their shifts at the national certification level of Firefighter II.

Congratulations, Recruit Class 7 and thank you for your commitment to serving the citizens of Rock Hill and Lancaster.



Recruits experience live fire training, during which they learn about the starting and building processes of fire.

Upcoming Events

Check our Web site — www.cityofrockhill.com — for details.

October 1-7

Public Power Week

October 7

Operations Center Customer
Appreciation Day
City Operations Center,
349 Columbia Avenue

October 8-14

Fire Prevention Week

October 14

Firelight Fright Tale-telling
Fewell Park Recreation Center

October 31

BooHaHa
Downtown Rock Hill

Oil Recycling Facts

- Motor oil never wears out, it just gets dirty. Oil can be recycled, re-refined and used again, reducing our reliance on imported oil.
- Motor oil that is poured onto the ground or dumped down a storm drain pollutes groundwater.
- One gallon of oil, when reprocessed, can generate enough energy to meet the electricity needs of your home for half a day.
- Recycling used oil would save the United States 1.3 million barrels of oil per day.

Litter Facts

- Litter can kill aquatic life directly and indirectly through its effects on water quality.
- Litter can cause blockages of the drainage system and, consequently, flooding.
- Litter can be dangerous to people, particularly when it involves such items as broken glass, needles and syringes.
- Litter costs the community huge sums of money to clean up every year.

A Look at the Law

Make Sure Fire Hydrants are Clear!



According to City law and in conjunction with the International Fire Code, no obstructions, posts, fences, vehicles, grass growth, flowers or plants, trash, storage or other materials should be placed near a fire hydrant. A minimum of 3 feet of clear space should be maintained around fire hydrants to ensure that they are easily accessible in case of fire.

Trash Collected on Labor Day

City of Rock Hill trash collection takes place as regularly scheduled every day — including holidays — with the exception of Thanksgiving Day and Christmas Day. Please ensure your rollcarts and recycling bins are placed at the curb on Labor Day if Monday is your normal pickup day.