



City of Hinesville News Release
Contact: Heather Teter
hteter@cityofhinesville.org
912-408-3569 (office) • 912-271-6421 (cell)

Hinesville Fire Department Launches New, In-House Training Program *Firefighter Recruits to Train at Home, Saving Time and Money*

HINESVILLE, Ga. (March 23, 2021) - For the first time in history, the Hinesville Fire Department (HFD) will offer its very own basic firefighter training program to new recruits. The new, in-house training program will now allow new recruits to train at home versus traveling to the Georgia Public Safety Training Center in Forsyth, Ga. The inaugural training program for HFD's newest recruits will begin on Monday, March 29, and will last approximately eight weeks.

The move to form its very own basic firefighter training program has been a work in progress for some time. In order to conduct this high level of training, a qualified instructor cadre must be in place. Instructors must be trained to a much higher level of skill and understanding in order to provide the experience and knowledge necessary to produce safe and efficient firefighters.

The basic firefighter training program is what would be considered a "high demand" offering through the Georgia Fire Academy, which currently limits the number of students each department is allowed per class to two. Due to current departmental needs, the decision was made to "train our own," giving HFD the opportunity to train more recruits and to train them in-house.

"By launching our very own basic firefighter training program, we're saving money for the department and making things a little easier for our new recruits," Hinesville Fire Chief Robert Kitchings said. "Instead of sending our firefighters far away, costing time and money, we plan on keeping them here locally to receive the same level of training they'd be receiving elsewhere."

Not only is the new training program cost-effective and convenient, it will be better in the long run.

"There are many advantages to training our new recruits in-house," Alex Mason, Training Officer with the Hinesville Fire Department, said. "Not only are the new recruits getting to know one another and the firefighters they'll one day be working alongside, they'll also be using our very own equipment, which is customized to our department. Good team work and knowing your equipment well help us to better respond to life-and-death emergencies."

Throughout the basic firefighter training program, recruits will have a daily schedule that includes physical fitness training and classes in fire history, fire behavior and fire chemistry. Practical, hands-on classes and demonstrations will focus on firefighting skills and tactics, personal protective equipment, ropes and knots and search and rescue. With training taking place locally, members of the community may see recruits out and about each morning, marching through town.



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One section of the training program will take place in neighboring Bryan County - the live-fire simulation, which cannot be accommodated locally since HFD does not currently have its own burn building. That, however, is on the horizon.

Recently, HFD received funding for construction of a burn building. Once complete, the full training program will be taught in Hinesville, further saving money and potentially becoming a revenue generator for the City of Hinesville.

Construction of the burn building is set to begin soon. The 1,760 square-foot building will be three stories tall and constructed of six modular steel structures. The cost to construct the burn building will total \$150,000 and will be fully funded through the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act.

Once recruits complete the new, in-house basic firefighter training program, they will receive certification as a Firefighter I. They will also receive Hazmat Awareness and Hazmat Operations level training. These certifications will be tested through the National Board on Fire Service Professional Qualifications (NPQ).

The City of Hinesville owns and operates the Hinesville Fire Department. HFD utilizes two fire stations and 48 firefighters, along with two administrative staff members, to provide professional fire services to the community. HFD is the largest fire services provider in Liberty County and works 24/7 to protect citizens. For more information about HFD, visit cityofhinesville.org and follow [Facebook.com/HinesvilleFD](https://www.facebook.com/HinesvilleFD).

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ABOUT THE CITY OF HINESVILLE:

The City of Hinesville was established in 1837 and is recognized as one of the fastest growing cities in the State of Georgia in both size and population. As the largest city in Liberty County, it serves as the county seat and is home to more than 35,000 people. To learn more about the City of Hinesville, visit cityofhinesville.org.