

October 1, 2012

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Members of the Burleson Police Department's Citizens On Patrol earned their CPR and First Aid certification Thursday night with the help of the Burleson Fire Department.

Fire Lt. Casey Davis taught 10 new COPs members the basics of CPR and First Aid during the group's fourth and final week of training.

COPs are trained to patrol neighborhoods, parks, and businesses; report suspicious people and vehicles; report traffic hazards; perform traffic control at special events such as the City's July 4th fireworks celebration; complete vacation checks and close patrols; co-host community events; host fund raising activities; educate the community about crime prevention; report City ordinance violations such as junk vehicles, curfew violations, and park violations; and patrol major retail parking lots during the holidays.



COPs are also certified, via a four-hour class, for handicapped parking enforcement. COPs are trained to recognize violations and write citations to put on the windshields. COPs do not confront drivers.

To join COPs, you must first complete the Burleson Citizens Police Academy. That 10-week academy takes place each year, June-August. The COPs training begins in September. There are currently 20 active COPs members.

COPs recruits must be at least 21 and undergo a criminal background check before they are trained by members of the police department. Recruits must have a valid driver's license, must be of good moral standing in the community (at least two references are required), and vision that is correctable to 20/30.

Training for the COPs program includes a 16-hour certification course, four-hour orientation and riding out with a patrol officer. COPs members are trained in patrol procedures, patrol safety, laws and jurisdictions, preparing for patrol,

courtroom testimony, observation skills and communication procedures, incident command for volunteers, civil liability and community policing.

After completing certification, COPs recruits attend an eight-hour orientation that covers COPs standard operating procedures, radio and communication procedures, handicapped parking enforcement and how to fill out forms. Recruits are required to ride with an officer for eight hours to learn the layout of the city and how to spot suspicious activity. The recruit is then eligible to patrol with another COPs member and is assigned to a COPs captain. For more about the Citizens On Patrol program, contact Sgt. Brian O'Heren, 817- 426-9881.

If you are interested in CPR and First Aid certification, the fire department has been training City employees and City volunteers during the past year, but in Fiscal Year 2013, which just started Oct. 1, they will be offering CPR classes for citizens. Those will be scheduled every other month at Fire Station #1 on Alsbury Boulevard. Call Fire Station #1 at 817-426-9176 if you are interested.