

# FIRE FITFACTS

FROM THE PHOENIX FIRE DEPARTMENT  
AND THE AMERICAN COUNCIL ON EXERCISE

## WARM UP FOR SUCCESS

### On the Job

One of the difficult things about fighting fire is that you seldom get the opportunity to warm up properly. This is one of the causes of the high injury rate that fire fighters suffer. Still, even a fire fighter can do some easy exercises to help prepare their body for the demanding task of fighting fire.

### Why is a warm up so important?

#### Benefits of a Warm Up

- ◆ Increases your body temperature.
- ◆ Gradually increases the circulation to your joints.
- ◆ Enhances the ability for faster, more forceful muscular contractions.
- ◆ Improves coordination and balance.
- ◆ Improves the efficiency of burning fats for energy.
- ◆ Improves flexibility.
- ◆ Helps reduce the risk of injuries.
- ◆ Helps reduce muscle soreness.
- ◆ Helps mental preparation.

### Where to Begin

- ◆ Begin with a slow progressive aerobic activity for at least 5 to 8 minutes.
- ◆ Use the same muscle groups and similar motions that you are going to need for your sport or activity.
- ◆ Gradually increase your intensity to increase the circulation to your joints.
- ◆ After the aerobic warm up activity incorporate a light stretching routine.
- ◆ Stretching warm muscles helps increase range of motion and reduces the risk of injuries.
- ◆ Repeat each stretch 2 to 3 times.
- ◆ Choose flexibility exercises that stretch the primary muscles you will be using during your workout.
- ◆ Perform some basic balance activities.
- ◆ Begin your sport or activity at a low intensity and then gradually increase the intensity.
- ◆ Listen to your body.