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(For immediate release)

Fire! Fire! Fire!

ODESSA (March 20, 2014) – Smoke will be coming from the Odessa campus this Saturday, but there will be no need to sound the alarms.

The Odessa College Fire Academy will conduct its first approved live fire training from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Saturday, March 22 in the newly certified Fire Tower at the new OC Fire Technology Training Center.

Director of Fire/EMS Technology Bobby Valles has looked forward to this day since classes started in the new Center this spring. Expressing his concern for public safety, Valles said, “I wanted to alert the public that there will be smoke coming from the Fire Tower – but this is normal during live fire training.”

“We will ignite small fires inside the Fire Tower, but most of the visible smoke will be created by the ‘fake’ Smoke Generation System installed in the building to enhance the training. We received prior approval from both the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality and the City of Odessa Fire Marshals Office to conduct live fire training for future firefighters,” Valles said.

The training meets the Texas Commission on Fire Protection standards and will be held on March 22 and 29 and April 5 and 12. The public is invited to view the live fire training sessions from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. on March 22 and April 12 at the FTTC, located at 2460 Kermit Highway. Those attending should park in the parking lot south of the OC outdoor track and enter through the gate located east of the FTTC Building. To ensure public safety, all spectators will stand in a safe area identified by safety cones inside the Fire Training Field away from the Fire Tower.

OC’s new Fire Technology Training Center directly helps meet the need for training of first responders in the Permian Basin which community members identified as a critical need of our area when voters approved the \$68.5 million bond package for Odessa College.

For more information, contact Cheri Dalton, director of media relations, at 432-335-6530 or cdalton@odessa.edu.