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# News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
March 3, 2021

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## Melissa firefighters involved in fitness research study

MELISSA (March 3, 2021) Several Melissa firefighter/paramedics are participating in a six-week research study, in association with Texas A&M University-Commerce, on the effects that a specific set of exercises may have on the muscles in their lower backs.

Titled, "The Effectiveness of Strength and Conditioning Programs on Increasing Lumbar Region Wellness in Firefighters," the study and its accompanying elements will be conducted completely at the Melissa Fire Station.

The results of the research study, supervised by Dr. Michael Oldham of the university's Department of Health and Human Performance and assisted by students in related disciplines, can have national implications for how first responders can conduct exercises to limit or minimize injury to their lumbar region, an area that sustains particular stresses for firefighters.

Melissa Division Chief Chad Reed is overseeing the study's progress for the City and is among the participants. He says the department welcomed the opportunity to be part of what may be industry-leading research on a critically important aspect of the fire service.

"We were approached by our department's fitness instructor, asking if we'd be interested in participating in the study," he said. "After reviewing the goals of the study and realizing the difference the results could have for not only us in Melissa but for firefighters nationwide, we agreed. Of course, having Dr. Oldham and the university as sponsors made the decision to participate easier."

The Melissa Fire Department utilizes the services of Hussien Jabai, owner of Jabai Performance, as their tactical strength and conditioning instructor. Jabai is a former graduate student at TAMU-Commerce and a colleague of Dr. Oldham.

Participating Melissa firefighters are acting as volunteers and agreed to undergo a pretest measuring their physical dexterity using a DARI Motion measuring device. DARI Motion is a cutting-edge technology that triangulates multiple cameras to track and measure motion and agility.

Using the pretest as a baseline, the study then proceeds to subject the participating firefighters to a certain set of exercises that target the study area. At the end of the six-week physical activity period, a second measure with the DARI Motion device will be taken.

The results will provide evidence of the effectiveness of the exercise regimen and may provide researchers with information on modifying the exercises to improve results.

"The benefits of the study can be extremely wide-ranging for our firefighters and indeed for firefighters everywhere," said the Chief. "We're very pleased to be able to contribute to the overall knowledge base for the fire service."

The study's findings are expected to be shared through appropriate academic and professional publications.

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**ABOUT THE CITY OF MELISSA** – The City of Melissa is a fast-growing progressive suburb with a small-town feel, located 35 miles north of downtown Dallas in the dynamic growth area of northeast Collin County. Melissa sits on 21 square miles, is home to over 16,000 people, and is easily accessible by way of three intersecting highways. Melissa has ample inventory of the highly-sought-after undeveloped frontage available on US 75 and SH 121, primed to serve the commercial needs of a booming Collin County. Melissa is a home-rule municipality, governed by a council-manager form of government.

Photo files accompany this release.



Melissa Firefighter/Paramedic Justin Boyles undergoes a dexterity pretest in preparation for a Texas A&M-Commerce research study. Graduate research assistant Sierra Guggenbuehl records the movements on a DARI Motion device.



From left, fitness instructor Hussien Jabai, Melissa Division Chief Chad Reed, Firefighter/Paramedic Justin Boyles, and Texas A&M-Commerce professor Dr. Michael Oldham review the results of the pretest taken by Boyles in anticipation of participating in a six-week research study at the Melissa Fire Station.