

## The Firefighter Bunker Gear Workout

### **What I noticed:**

Much heavier than I thought,  
40# not 30#

The helmet weights the neck forward or anterior to the plumb line causing sustained contractions of the posterior neck muscles and weight bearing facet joints

Weight of the tank vest is straight down on AC joints and back  
Making for pregnancy belly opposed that of female cops  
Need to work abs so much more

Lifting the arms and legs for climbing a ladder is weighted and heavy

Core exercises and anything above the head requested

Balance work is a must for training for unexpected work loads

### **What you need to concentrate on:**

Work eccentrics, more than concentrics  
The exercise is the return, or controlled relaxation not the contraction.  
Work the breaking force, not the impact

Engage core muscle at all time, with all exercise routines, just think about it

Hydration 1 ounce per pound

Also, start slow 1 set of reps for a couple of workouts to allow for your muscles to learn the routine.

# **The Firefighter**

## **Bunker Gear Workout**

**Dr. Sue Bercuk, DC, EMT-IV, CCSP**

**One hour, 3 times weekly**

### **1. Quick three minute Warm up**

3 sets of 30 flat half squats on to a chair as warm up alternating with  
3 sets of 30 non weight bearing push ups in a door way or against a wall

### **2. Get the gym ball**

#### **Engage lower belly core muscles**

3 sets of individual deltoid clocks with weight alternating arms  
3 sets of 10 overhead shoulder presses with individual weights alternating arms as is climbing  
3 sets of right and left balanced tricep extension with weights  
3 sets of balanced core bench presses with individual weights  
3 sets of 10 balance upper abdominal crunches with weights  
30 seconds alternating hip flexors

### **3. Get the balance board, engage lower core belly muscles:**

#### **Contemplate your navel!**

1 minute bilateral standing rows with weights

3 sets of 10 each with weights  
shoulder rolls forward  
shoulder rolls back  
shoulders up

3 sets of 10 Rhomboid reverse flys

3 sets of 10 standing, reaching spinal twists

3 sets of ten leg extensions alternating sets, right and left

3 sets of 10 weighted half squats with individual weights

3 sets of 30 seconds alternating hip flexion and arm climbing with weights

### **4. Get the toy ball against a wall; always maintain a good weighted posture**

Strengthening in neutral position, Keep head straight, chin parallel to floor, eyes up

#### **ISOMETRIC Contractions**

6 ranges of a cervical neck motion

Front, forehead

Back, make a double chin

Right ear

Left ear

Right turn

Left turn

1 set of 10 pumps

1 set of a 10 second hold

1 set of 10 pumps

#### **What you need to concentrate on:**

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**Work the breaking force, not the impact**

**Engage core muscle at all time, with all exercise routines, just think about it**

**Hydration 1 ounce per pound**

#### **4. Get a towel and use your hands**

Shoulder stretches right, left, & doubles  
6 ranges of motions in 10 second  
sweeps of resistance

Repeating each extreme of  
motion and median to neutral  
So three different patterns for  
each range of motion

Front

Back

Right ear

Left ear

Right turn

Left ear

#### **5. Abdominals Always engage a press back abdominal tone or belly to spine**

30 seconds upper crunches – sternum to  
knees

30 seconds right obliques – flat long  
heel, shoulder to ground

30 seconds left obliques

30 seconds toe touch – sternum to sky

30 seconds roly pollies – stretch  
sacrum in flexion, counters pregnancy  
belly

30 seconds right side crunches – use  
grab hand technique to engage serratus

30 seconds left side crunches

30 seconds push throughs – work the  
burn

30 seconds leg pushes – use good hip  
flexion

30 seconds alternating crunches – close  
in and rotate

30 seconds lower crunches - hands on  
belly

#### **7. Get the ropes and wrist weights**

3 sets of 10 right and left rope ups

3 sets of 10 right and left rope downs  
both with ankle weights

Codman's shoulder exercises 1 minute  
clockwise, 1 minute counter clockwise

Right and left

#### **8. Cool Down**

30 seconds of Cat/Camels

15 seconds Spinal T's right

15 seconds Spinal T's left

15 seconds Hamstring right

15 seconds Hamstring left

all repeated twice

#### **9. Breathing**

**Grab towel roll up under upper  
thoracic spine and lie on it, opening  
pecs and chest**

1 minute controlled breathing and snow  
angels

**Dr. Sue Bercuk**

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