

# Reading Fire Department

## STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINES

### Book 3

#### Section 300

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##### Alarm Response and Procedures

	<u>Last Revision</u>
300.01 Alarms and Response Guidelines	October 12, 2009
300.02 Apparatus Response During a Recall	November 5, 2007
300.03 Mutual and Automatic Aid	April 28, 2011
300.04 Discovering Fires While Enroute to or Returning from Other Fires or Alarms	June 12, 2003
300.05 Staging Levels I and II	October 15, 2003

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##### Fire Operations

	<u>Last Revision</u>
301.01 Standard Company Responsibilities	February 10, 2004
301.02 Fireground Factors	February 11, 2004
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301.04 Fireground Strategy	December 13, 2010
301.05 Rescue	November 11, 2004
301.06 Fire Control	November 5, 2007
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	<u>Last Revision</u>
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	<u>Last Revision</u>
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**SUBJECT:** ALARMS AND RESPONSE GUIDELINES**SECTION:** 300.01**REVISED:** OCTOBER 12, 2009**PAGE(S):** 4

## PURPOSE

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- A. To provide uniform response guidelines to various emergencies and non-emergencies.
- B. To establish a time objective for turnout time.
- C. To establish a time objective for response time to alarms in the city.
- D. To identify inherent safety hazards in emergency responses.
- E. To establish safety guidelines during emergency responses.

## POLICY

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- A. The Reading Fire Department apparatus responses to emergencies, non-emergencies, and operations should endeavor to conform to those policies and procedures contained herein.
- B. It shall be the policy of this department to begin responses (turnout time) within two (2) minute of receiving an alarm ninety (90) percent of time.<sup>1</sup>
- C. It shall be the policy of this department to respond to all emergency alarms within the city limits within four (4) minutes of beginning response ninety (90) percent of the time.
- D. In non-emergency situations the department shall endeavor to handle these situations as quickly as time, equipment, and resources allow.

## CLASSIFICATION OF ALARMS

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- A. Recall Response
  - 1. Any fire reported within a structure including chimney fires.
  - 2. Any fire reported adjacent to a structure.
  - 3. Any alarm device sounding for a structure.
  - 4. Building collapse.
  - 5. Any odor of smoke inside a structure.
  - 6. Flooded basement where there is a hazard to life.
  - 7. Lockout with food on the stove.
  - 8. Vehicle extrications.
  - 9. Flammable fuel leaks of sizeable quantities.
  - 10. Automatic/Mutual aid fire calls

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<sup>1</sup> Includes NFPA 1221 7.4.2 Emergency call processing and dispatching of 60 seconds and NFPA 1710 4.1.2.1 60 seconds for turnout time.

11. Anytime the Officer in Charge feels the alarm should be a full response.

B. On Duty Response

1. Vehicle fires with no exposures.
2. Automobile accident clean-up.
3. Investigations
4. Wash downs.
5. Brush or grass fires with no exposures.
6. Tree fire.
7. Electrical emergencies, unless structure fire.
8. Lockouts.
9. Person trapped on an elevator.
10. Natural gas emergencies.
11. Carbon monoxide inside structure.
12. Service calls (broken water pipes, flooded basements) with no hazards.
13. Animal trapped or stuck in a tree.

C. Squad Response (Paramedic unit and one squad)

1. Medical emergencies

## EMERGENCY RESPONSE

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A. Emergency: Those incidents that pose a significant risk to life or property. Emergency response requires the use of audio (siren and air horns) and visual (lights) warning devices. These devices should be in use during the entire duration of the response unless the response is downgraded to a non-emergency response by a competent authority. The initial response to the following types of incidents shall be considered emergencies.

1. A reported fire in a structure.
2. A reported fire outside of a structure that involves the potential destruction of property or poses a risk to human or animal life.
3. Automatic fire alarms.
  - a. ***Dispatches to automatic fire alarms within the jurisdiction shall be an emergency response by the primary unit(s), while all other assigned companies respond non-emergency. The primary responding unit can upgrade the response of additional units, upon confirmation or suspicion of an actual fire, or emergency.***
  - b. ***Dispatches to automatic fire alarms into other jurisdictions shall be non-emergency, unless upgraded or designated as the primary unit.***
4. All emergency medical incidents unless advised otherwise.
5. Responses to a man-made or natural disaster involving the destruction of property and the potential for injury or death. This would include requests for assistance from other jurisdictions.

## NON-EMERGENCY RESPONSE

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- A. Non-emergency: Those incidents that do not pose a significant risk to life or property. Audio and visual warning devices should not be used during non-emergency responses unless ordered by a competent authority to upgrade the response to emergency status. The initial response to the following types of incidents should not be considered to be emergencies:
1. Public service calls to assist the public when there is no immediate threat to life or property.
  2. Medical incidents where the patient does not have a life threatening condition, i.e. Assistance off the floor.
  3. Odor investigations not identified as hazardous.
  4. Automobile fuel leaks.
  5. Elevator emergencies unless medical problems are present.
  6. Hydrant struck
  7. Police assist.

## PROCEDURE

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- A. Alarm Responses
1. It shall be the policy of this department that sounded fire alarms within the city should be answered with a single alarm response.
  2. All responses within the city that are On Duty alarms shall be answered with one (1) engine company and/or one (1) ALS unit as appropriate. The officer in charge should use his discretion as to what apparatus responds where lives and property are not in danger.
  3. EMS squad response within the city should be answered with one (1) ALS unit and/or one (1) engine and one (1) squad. Additional units can be requested as necessary.
  4. EMS responses to identified industrial occupancies shall be answered with a minimum of one (1) ALS unit, one (1) engine, and one (1) squad.
  5. Mutual aid requests for fire responses shall be answered with a *minimum* of 3 personnel.
- B. Safety
1. Apparatus and vehicles engaged in a non-emergency response shall obey all applicable traffic safety rules and regulations and shall not exceed the posted speed limit.
  2. Apparatus and vehicles engaged in an emergency response shall at all times govern their response by the traffic, weather, and road conditions present at the time of the response.
  3. All apparatus shall proceed to emergency alarms with appropriate emergency warning devices operating (sirens, lights, horns).
  4. All personnel shall wear seat belts while apparatus is in motion.

5. The maximum speed of travel shall **not** exceed posted limits by more than 10 mph or maximum of 65 mph.
6. During an emergency response, drivers shall bring their vehicles to a complete stop for any of the following:
  - a. When directed by a law enforcement officer.
  - b. Stop signs.
  - c. Red traffic signals.
  - d. Negative right-of-way intersections.
  - e. Blind intersections.
  - f. When the driver cannot account for all lanes of traffic in an intersection.
  - g. When other intersection hazards are present.
  - h. When encountering a stopped school bus with flashing warning lights.
7. Drivers shall proceed through an intersection only when the driver can account for all lanes of traffic in the intersection.
8. Drivers shall bring their vehicles to a complete stop at all unguarded railroad crossings and shall not cross the tracks until determining that it is safe to do so.
9. All apparatus shall take a staging position, approximately two (2) blocks short of any scene involving any reported/suspected violence, until the scene is deemed secure by law enforcement.
10. The railroad crossing located on East Voorhees St. shall not be used by any fire department vehicle due to the elevation of the railroad crossing grade.
11. Multiple responding apparatus should communicate when approaching common intersections.
12. Emergency responses on Reading Rd. south of Benson St. should be made via the intersection of Reading and Vine St.
  - a. Response across Benson St., to Jenny Linn, to Maple St. to Reading Rd should be avoided also.

## RESPONSIBILITY

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- A. Drivers shall be directly responsible for the safe and prudent operation of their vehicles in all situations.
- B. When a driver is under direct supervision of an officer, the officer shall assume responsibility for the actions of the driver and shall be responsible for immediately correcting any unsafe condition.

**SUBJECT:** APPARATUS RESPONSE DURING A RECALL**SECTION:** 300.02**REVISED:** NOVEMBER 5, 2007**PAGE(S):** 1

## PURPOSE

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To establish emergency vehicle response of apparatus from both stations in a Recall situation.

## POLICY

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Emergency apparatus should respond in the following order.

## PROCEDURE

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### A. VALLEY STATION – Station 83

1. All on-duty personnel respond in the first out engine.
2. ALS unit respond with a minimum of one (1) paramedic and join first out engine.
3. Second out engine with a maximum of six (6) personnel.
4. Utility Pick-up with a maximum of four (4) personnel.
5. EMS Squad with remaining personnel, maximum of six (6).

### B. HILLTOP STATION – Station 84

1. Aerial Tower with a maximum of four (4) personnel.
2. Engine with a maximum of four (4) personnel.
3. EMS Squad with remaining personnel, maximum of six (6).

C. Officer in charge may change the order of response as the emergency dictates.

**SUBJECT:** MUTUAL AID AND AUTOMATIC AID  
**REVISED:** APRIL 28, 2011; SEPTEMBER 9, 2009

**SECTION:** 300.03  
**PAGE(S):** 3

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## PURPOSE

To facilitate the understanding and utilization of the local, county, and state mutual aid agreement in which the Reading Fire Department is a participant.

To facilitate the understanding and utilization of automatic aid agreements in which the Reading Fire Department is a participant.

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## POLICY

It shall be the policy of this department to provide aid to those jurisdictions that need assistance when the local emergency fire service resources are not available or inadequate to handle an emergency incident.

It shall be the policy of this department to provide mutual aid to outside jurisdictions as long as the city coverage is not jeopardized.

It shall be the policy of this department to honor and participate in all automatic aid agreements in which it has become a party to, on a formal, communicated basis with other neighboring jurisdictions.

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## PROCEDURE

- A. Request for Engine or RAT Company
  1. All on duty members should respond with first out engine.
  2. Minimum of three (3) personnel required for response.
  3. All other members should stand by at their assigned station ready to respond in the event of another fire/emergency or if needed at the existing emergency after a recall has been initiated.
  
- B. Request for Ladder Company
  1. All on duty members should respond with first out engine to the Hilltop station.
  2. Four members should respond with the ladder truck from the Hilltop station as assigned by the shift supervisor.
  3. All other members should stand by at their assigned station ready to respond in the event of another fire or if needed at the existing emergency.
  4. Minimum of three (3) personnel required for response.

- C. Request for ALS Unit
  - 1. Two on duty members should respond in the ALS unit.
  - 2. The remaining on duty members will assure that appropriate manpower is recalled to fill the minimum manning requirements.
  
- D. Request for Squad
  - 1. One on-duty career member and the part-time member will respond immediately in the squad.
  - 2. Scheduled personnel should respond to the station and stand-by.
  
- E. Request for Special Apparatus and Equipment
  - 1. The officer in charge should send the appropriate aid using his own discretion.
  - 2. The officer in charge should notify the Chief when sending apparatus, manpower, or equipment out of the city for any extended period of time.
  
- F. Move-up Requests
  - 1. Move-up requests shall be handled by sending only the requested company.
  - 2. E283 can be sent with appropriate personnel in place of E83.
  - 3. The company shall respond non-emergent.
  
- G. Mutual Aid requests that are unable to be answered
  - 1. Officer in charge should notify the dispatcher of the department requesting aid that we are unable to respond, i.e. ladder out of service, no manpower, etc. This should be noted on the day log accordingly.
  
- H. Automatic Aid
  - 1. The department participates in automatic aid with various jurisdictions based on CAD recommendations.
  
- I. Ohio Fire Service Emergency Response Plan
  - 1. Initiation of plan occurs once a local jurisdiction exhausts assistance through any local/regional mutual aid plans. These requests are made through the Central Dispatch Center (Columbus Fire).
  - 2. Reading units would be assigned by the Hamilton County Communications Center, using a rotating list of participating equipment.
  - 3. Time frame for deployment:
    - a. Scramble: a more rapid deployment; as soon as possible, but within thirty (30) minutes of notice. Unless otherwise stated, anticipated duration of deployment will be less than 24 hours.
    - b. Standard: unless otherwise stated at the time of request, deployment shall be within three (3) hours of notice. Duration of deployment will range from 24-72 hours.

4. Deployed resources will be provided with a password and shall respond to the designated Staging Area.
5. Completing documentation for the requesting jurisdiction is critical for any possible reimbursements.
6. Responding personnel should bring clothing and personal hygiene items to support up to a 72 hour mission.
7. Arrangements shall be made to secure necessary department credit cards for fuel/miscellaneous expenses.

<b>SUBJECT:</b> DISCOVERING FIRES WHILE ENROUTE TO OR RETURNING FROM OTHER FIRES OR ALARMS	<b>SECTION:</b> 300.04
<b>REVISED:</b> JUNE 12, 2003	<b>PAGE(S):</b> 1

## PURPOSE

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To provide an understanding of personnel's authority and responsibilities when discovering fires while enroute to or returning from other fires or alarms.

## PROCEDURE

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- A. Where lives are imperiled, the company officer shall stop, notify the dispatcher of existing conditions, and order another company to be dispatched to the first alarm, and then request additional help if necessary. The company officer with his/her company should immediately attempt the rescue of people whose lives are imperiled, and the extinguishment of the fire.
- B. When no lives are imperiled, the company officer shall notify the dispatcher of existing conditions, order a fire fighter to remain at the scene, and ask for help if necessary. This fire fighter should remain at the scene with a portable radio while the remaining personnel continue on to the original alarm. The company officer shall notify his/her actions to the incident commander upon arrival the designated location.
- C. When returning from a fire or alarm, and a fire is discovered, stop and go to work on the fire.
- D. When responding to an alarm and the fire is discovered to be out of the city, instruct the dispatcher to notify the proper jurisdiction and go to work on the fire.

**SUBJECT:** STAGING LEVELS I AND II**SECTION:** 300.05**REVISED:** OCTOBER 15, 2003**PAGE(S):** 4

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## PURPOSE

Provide a standard system of initial placement for responding apparatus, personnel, and equipment prior to assignment at tactical incidents.

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## POLICY

- A. Effective utilization of these procedures will:
1. Prevent excessive apparatus congestion at the scene.
  2. Allow time for Command to evaluate conditions prior to assigning companies.
  3. Place apparatus in an uncommitted location close to the immediate scene to facilitate more effective assignment by Command.
  4. Reduces radio traffic during the critical initial stages of the incident.
  5. Allow Command to formulate and implement a plan without undue confusion and pressure.
  6. Provides a resource pool from which Command may assign units and resources at his/her leisure.

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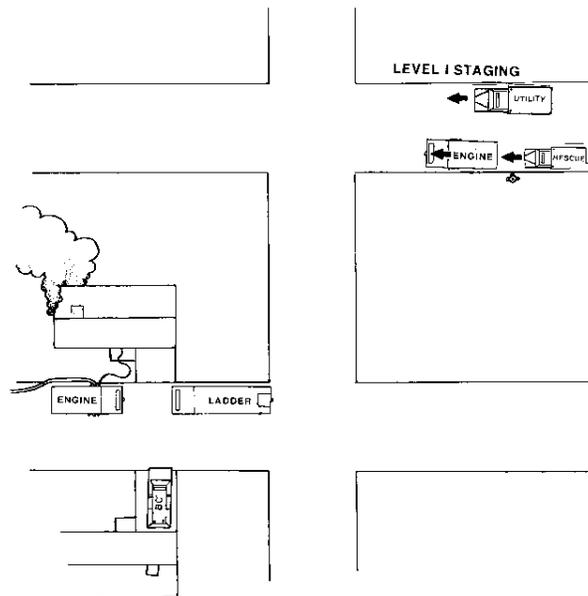
## LEVEL I STAGING

- A. Level I Staging is automatically in effect for all incidents involving three or more companies responding.
- B. During any multi-company response, companies should continue responding to the scene until a company reports on the scene. In situations where the simultaneous arrival of first due companies is possible, the affected officers should utilize radio communications to coordinate activities and eliminate confusion. It will be the ongoing responsibility of Dispatch to confirm the arrival of the first on-scene unit.
- C. Once a company announces arrival on the scene, Level I Staging will be implemented in the following manner:

### **For Fires, Hazardous Materials Incidents, and Special Operations**

1. The first arriving engine company will respond directly to the scene and initiate appropriate operations.

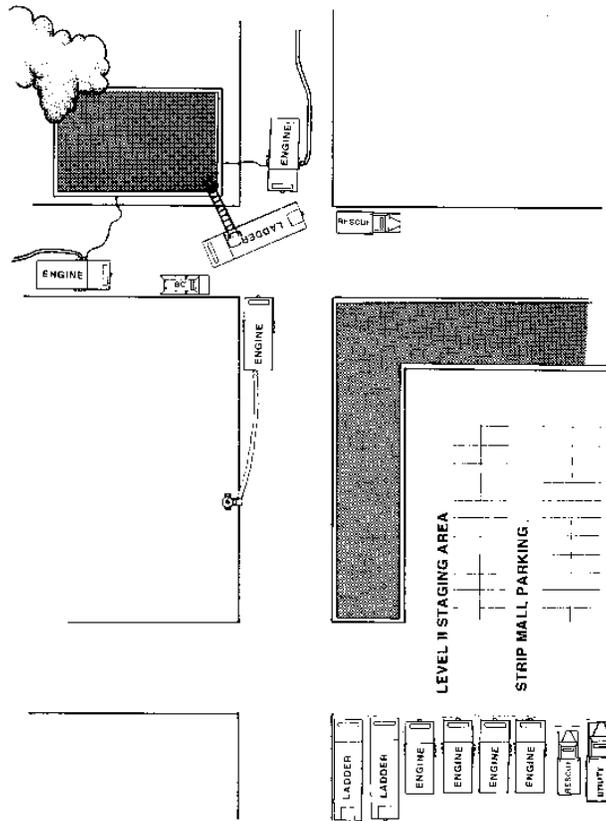
2. The first arriving ladder company will respond directly to the scene. They shall announce their approach to the scene so that Command may commit them to an assignment.
3. The first Chief Officer will go directly to the scene and assume Command, all other chief officers should report to Command.
4. All other units, will stage in their direction of travel, uncommitted, approximately one block from the scene until assigned by Command. A position providing a maximum of possible tactical options regarding access, direction of travel, water supply, etc., should be selected. At no time should units self-assign.



## LEVEL II STAGING

- A. Level II Staging is utilized when Command desires to maintain a reserve of resources on-scene, and when the need to centralize resources is required. Level II Staging places all reserve resources in a central location and automatically requires the implementation of a Staging Sector Officer.
- B. Level II Staging will be implemented for all greater alarm incidents. Level II Staging should be considered for first alarm medical or hazardous materials incidents, or other incidents in which Command desires to centralize resources, or simply to park apparatus in a central, unobstructed location.
- C. Companies which are already staged (Level I) or en-route to Level I Staging, will stay in Level I Staging unless otherwise directed by Command. All other responding units will proceed to the Level II Staging Area. When activating Level II Staging, Command will give an approximate location for the Staging Area and request a separate radio channel for the Staging Sector.

- D. The Staging Area should be some distance away from the Command Post and the emergency scene to reduce site congestion, but close enough for prompt response to the incident site.



- E. Command should consider Level II Staging when calling for additional resources and request a separate radio channel. This is more functional than calling for Level II Staging while units are en-route. The additional units will be dispatched to the Staging Area. Responding units should monitor both the tactical and staging channels.
- F. Command may designate a Staging Area and Staging Officer who will be responsible for the activities outlined in this procedure. In the absence of such an assignment, the first Fire Department officer to arrive at the Staging Area will automatically become the Staging Officer and will notify Command on arrival. The arrival notification will be made to Command on the assigned tactical channel.
- G. Due to the limited number of ladder companies, a ladder officer will transfer responsibility for Staging to the first arriving engine company officer. Staging Officers will assign their company members as needed to assist with Staging operations, or assign them to another company.
- H. All responding companies will stay off the air, respond directly to the designated Staging Area, and the Company Officer will report in person to the Staging Officer. The crew will standby their unit with crew intact and warning lights turned off until assigned incident site duties, or released from the scene.

- I. When assigned to on-site duties, companies leaving staging will communicate directly with Command or their assigned sector officer for instructions.
- J. Once Level II staging is implemented, all communications involving staging will be between Staging and Command or Logistics.

**SUBJECT:** STANDARD COMPANY RESPONSIBILITIES**SECTION:** 301.01**REVISED:** FEBRUARY 10, 2004**PAGE(S):** 2

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## PURPOSE

To inform fire department personnel of the functions of the various tactical units.

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## POLICY

- A. The Incident Commander and Company Officers operating at multiple companies and/or multiple agency emergencies shall coordinate and integrate their efforts, task and functions so as to produce harmonious, effective and efficient operations.
- B. Incident commanders should endeavor to utilize the various fire companies to their best advantage within the scope of their various standard functions, but may, if the need arises, utilize companies for any function which may be required.
- C. Fire companies must maintain a level of flexibility which will insure their ability to perform the functions of other types of companies (limited to available equipment and apparatus) as the situation demands.
- D. Company Commanders should insure that the fire companies which they are assigned are able to perform the various functions designated for that company as well as maintain the level of flexibility necessary to perform other functions as required.

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## PROCEDURE

### A. ENGINE COMPANY FUNCTIONS

- 1. Search and rescue of victims of an emergency incident.
- 2. Protection of exposures, property and lives from threat of an emergency incident.
- 3. Confine the emergency incident to the smallest area as safety, resources, conditions, and time will allow.
- 4. Extinguish or mitigate all emergency incidents.
- 5. Conduct overhaul operations to insure that the emergency incident does not reoccur.
- 6. Provide adequate and efficient water supply to hose lines and other apparatus utilizing water to control the emergency incident.

6. Provide advance emergency medical service, EMT-P, to personnel and victims of emergency incidents.
7. Perform truck company operations if the need arises.

#### B. TRUCK COMPANY FUNCTIONS

1. Search and rescue.
2. Provide forcible entry.
3. Raise aerial, platform, and ground ladders.
4. Provide coordinated ventilation with fire attack.
5. Check for fire extension.
6. Provide on scene lighting.
7. Provide control of utilities.
8. Operate ladder pipe(s).
9. Establish temporary standpipe system with aerial ladder when needed.
10. Perform salvage and overhaul duties.
11. Perform extrication.
12. Perform engine company operations as the need arises.

#### C. SERVICE COMPANY FUNCTIONS

1. Provide assistance and manpower to perform truck company operations if need arises.
2. Provide assistance and manpower to perform engine company operations if need arises.

#### D. MEDICAL COMPANY FUNCTIONS

1. Transportation of sick and injured to hospitals.
2. General fire fighting duties as assigned by Command.

**SUBJECT:** FIREGROUND FACTORS**SECTION:** 301.02**REVISED:** FEBRUARY 12, 2008**PAGE(S):** 3

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## PURPOSE

- A. Fireground factors offer a standard list of basic items Command must consider in the evaluation of tactical situations. This list should provide Command with a "checklist" of the basic items that are involved in size-up, decision making, initiating action, review and revision on the fireground.
- B. The effective Command Officer can only deal with a limited number of factors of any kind on the fireground. Within the framework of that limitation, the identification of critical factors is extremely important. All the factors are not critical in any one tactical situation. Command must identify the critical fireground factors that are significant in each tactical situation -- the list of factors offers a framework for that process.
- C. Fireground factors represent an array of items that are dynamic during the entire fireground process. The relative importance of each factor necessarily changes throughout that time frame. Command must continually deal with these changes and base decisions on factor information that is timely and current. Beware of developing an initial plan of attack and sticking to that same initial plan throughout the fire, even though conditions continue to change. Effective fire operations require attack plan revisions that continually reconsider fireground factors based upon information feedback.

The following are fireground factors which should be evaluated by Command as they pertain to each tactical situation. They can be obtained by using the above information management factors.

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## BUILDING

- A. Size
- B. Roof type (Bow string, bar joist, etc.), and condition
- C. Interior arrangement/access (stairs, halls, elevators)
- D. Construction type
- E. Age
- F. Condition--faults/weaknesses
- G. Value
- H. Compartmentation/separation
- I. Vertical-horizontal openings, shafts, channels
- J. Outside openings--doors and windows/degree of security

- K. Utility characteristics (hazards/controls)
- L. Concealed spaces/attic characteristics
- M. Exterior access
- N. Effect the fire has had on the structure (at this point)
- O. Time projection on continuing fire effect on building

## **FIRE**

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- A. Size
- B. Extent (% of structure involved)
- C. Location
- D. Stage (inception--flashover)
- E. Direction of travel (most dangerous)
- F. Time of involvement
- G. Type and amount of material involved - structure/interior finish/contents/everything
- H. Type and amount of material left to burn
- I. Product of combustion liberation

## **OCCUPANCY**

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- A. Specific occupancy
- B. Type--group (business, mercantile, public assembly, institutional, residential, hazardous, industrial, storage, school)
- C. Value characteristics associated with occupancy
- D. Fire load (size, nature)
- E. Status (open, closed, occupied, vacant, abandoned, under construction)
- F. Occupancy associated characteristics/hazards
- G. Type of contents (based on occupancy)
- H. Time--as it affects occupancy use
- I. Loss Control profile/susceptibility of contents to damage/specific loss control needs (computers, business records)

## **LIFE HAZARD**

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- A. Number of occupants
- B. Location of occupants (in relation to the fire)
- C. Condition of occupants (by virtue of fire exposure)
- D. Incapacities of occupants
- E. Commitment required for search and rescue (personnel, equipment, and Command)
- F. Fire control required for search and rescue
- G. Needs for EMS
- H. Time estimate of fire effect on victims
- I. Exposure of spectators/control of spectators

- J. Hazards to fire personnel
- K. Access rescue forces have to victims
- L. Characteristics of escape routes/avenues of escape (type, safety, fire conditions, etc.)

## **ARRANGEMENT**

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- A. Access, arrangement, and distance of external exposure
- B. Combustibility of exposures
- C. Access, arrangement, and nature of internal exposures
- D. Severity and urgency of exposures (fire effect)
- E. Value of exposures
- F. Most dangerous direction--avenue of spread
- G. Time estimate of fire effect on exposures (internal and external)
- H. Obstructions to operations
- I. Capability/limitations on apparatus movement and use

## **RESOURCES**

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- A. Personnel and equipment on-scene
- B. Personnel and equipment responding
- C. Personnel and equipment available in reserve or in Staging
- D. Estimate of response time additional resources
- E. Condition of personnel
- F. Capability and willingness of personnel
- G. Capability of Command personnel
- H. Availability of hydrants
- I. Supplemental water sources
- J. Adequacy of water supply
- K. Built-in private fire protection (sprinkler, standpipe, alarms)
- L. Outside agency resource and response time

## **OTHER FACTORS/CONDITIONS**

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- A. Time of day/night
- B. Day of week
- C. Season
- D. Special hazards by virtue of holidays and special events
- E. Weather (wind, rain, heat, cold, humid, visibility)
- F. Traffic conditions
- G. Social conditions (strike, riot, mob, rock festival)

**SUBJECT:** TACTICAL PRIORITIES  
**REVISED:** DECEMBER 12, 2003

**SECTION:** 301.03  
**PAGE(S):** 1

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## PURPOSE

- A. Tactical priorities identify the three separate tactical objectives that must be completed in order to stabilize any fire situation--these priorities also establish the order in which these basic fireground objectives must be performed.
- B. These objectives should be regarded as separate, yet interrelated, activities which must be dealt with in order. Command cannot proceed to the next priority until the current function objective has been completed or sufficient resources have been assigned.

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## POLICY

- A. While Command must satisfy the objective of each function in its priority order, Command must, in many cases, overlap and "mix" the activities of each to achieve the current bench mark. Notable examples are the frequent need to achieve interior tenability with active/extensive fire control efforts before proceeding with primary search, or the need to initiate property conservation activities while active fire control efforts are being extended.
- B. The tactical priorities, (Rescue, Fire Control, and Property Conservation) are clear, measurable, and obtainable objectives. These objectives are considered **complete** when the benchmarks are declared.

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## PROCEDURE

- A. Basic tactical priorities are as follows:
  - 1. Rescue= the activities required to protect occupants, remove those who are threatened and to treat the injured.
  - 2. Fire Control= the activities required to stop the forward progress of the fire and to bring the fire under control.
  - 3. Property Conservation= the activities required to stop or reduce primary or secondary damage to property.
- B. The objectives of each priority are reflected in the following bench marks of completion:
  - 1. Rescue - primary search (all clear)
  - 2. Fire Control - under control
  - 3. Property Conservation - loss stopped

All three tactical priorities require somewhat different tactical approaches from a Command and an operational standpoint.

<b>SUBJECT:</b> FIREGROUND STRATEGY	<b>SECTION:</b> 301.04
<b>REVISED:</b> DECEMBER 13, 2010	<b>PAGE(S):</b> 9

## **PURPOSE**

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The following procedure outlines the fireground strategy to be employed at structure fires. Fireground operations will fall in one of two strategies, OFFENSIVE OR DEFENSIVE. The two strategies are based on a standard Risk Management Plan that is to be employed at ALL structure fires. This is the basis for this procedure.

## **WITHIN A STRUCTURED RISK MANAGEMENT PLAN**

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WE MAY RISK OUR LIVES TO SAVE A LIFE.  
WE MAY PUT OURSELVES AT MODERATE RISK TO SAVE PROPERTY.  
WE WILL RISK NOTHING TO SAVE LIFE OR PROPERTY THAT IS ALREADY LOST OR DESTROYED.

Considering the level of risk, the Incident Commander will choose the proper strategy to be used at the fire scene. The strategy can change with conditions or because certain benchmarks (i.e., ALL CLEAR) are obtained. The strategic mode will be based on:

- The building (type of construction, condition, age, etc.)
- Structural integrity of the building (contents vs. structural involvement)
- The fire load (what type of fuel is burning and what's left to burn)
- The fire and/or smoke conditions (extent, location, etc.)
- The rescue profile (savable occupants/survivability profile)

The Incident Commander is responsible for determining the appropriate fireground strategy. Once the appropriate strategy is initiated, it becomes the Incident Commander's job to ensure that all personnel are operating within the strategy. By controlling the fireground strategy, the Incident Commander is providing overall incident scene safety. The proper strategy will be based on the following:

- Avoiding simultaneous OFFENSIVE and DEFENSIVE strategies in the same fire area. This typically happens by first committing personnel to interior positions, then operating master streams from exterior positions. This places interior crews in danger of injury or death.
- Matching the appropriate strategy to the fire conditions of the structure, and minimizing risk to firefighters.

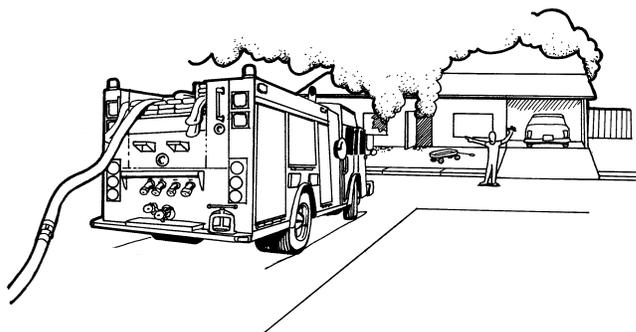
Managing fireground strategy must start with the arrival of the first unit and be constantly monitored and evaluated throughout the entire incident. The initial Incident Commander will include the fireground strategy in the on-scene report. As Command

is transferred to later arriving officers, these officers assuming Command must evaluate the fireground strategy based on the Risk Management Plan.

Fireground strategy provides a starting point to begin fireground operations. Once the strategy is announced, all firefighters know whether to operate on the interior or exterior of the building. The fireground strategy cannot be a mystery to anyone; everyone operating on the fireground must be operating in the same strategy mode: Offensive or Defensive.

## OFFENSIVE STRATEGY

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Within the framework of the Risk Management Plan, the structure must first be determined to be safe to enter. Once determined safe, an Offensive Fire Attack is centered around RESCUE. *When safe to do so*, the Reading Fire Department will initiate offensive operations at the scene of structure fires. The following are guidelines for offensive fire attacks:

- Assign RAT team.
- Initial attack efforts must be directed toward supporting a primary search--the first attack line must go between the victims and the fire to protect avenues of rescue and escape.
- Determine fire conditions and extent before starting fire operations (as far as possible).
- Offensive fires should be fought from the INTERIOR-UNBURNED SIDE (interior capability is the principal offensive strategy factor).
- Avoid exterior application of water during offensive operation. Do NOT combine offensive/defensive operations in the same fire area.
- In some cases, the most effective tactical analysis involves an evaluation of what is not burning rather than what is actually on fire. The unburned



portion represents where the fire is going and should establish the framework for fire control activities and requirements.

Command must consider the most critical direction and avenues of fire extension, plus its speed, particularly as they affect:

- Rescue activities
- Level of risk to firefighters
- Confinement efforts
- Exposure protection
- Command must allocate personnel and resources based upon this fire spread evaluation.

Command must not lose sight of the very simple and basic fireground reality that at some point firefighters must engage and fight the fire. Command must structure whatever operations are required to PUT WATER ON THE FIRE. The rescue/fire control-extension/exposure problem is solved in the majority of cases by a fast, strong, well-placed attack. Command must establish an attack plan that overpowers the fire with ACTUAL water application, either from offensive or defensive positions.

Command must consider the seven sides (or sectors) of the fire: front, rear, sides, top, bottom, and interior. Fires cannot be considered under control until all seven sides are addressed. Failure to do so frequently results in fire extension.

Where the fire involves concealed spaces (attics, ceiling areas, construction voids, etc.), it becomes paramount that companies open up and operate fire streams into such areas. Early identification and response to concealed space fires will save the building. Officers who hesitate to open up because they don't want to beat up the building may lose the structure.

Early ventilation (natural or positive pressure) is a major support item that must be addressed during concealed space attacks. This must be initiated early and be well coordinated. Ventilation openings should be made in the fire area. Positive pressure should be injected from the unburned side and exit out of the fire area.

Command must get ahead of the fire. Command must make critical decisions that relate to cutoff points and develop a pessimistic fire control strategy. It takes a certain amount of time to get water to a location, and the fire continues to burn while the attack is being set up. Command must consider where the fire will be when attack efforts are ready to actually go into operation; if misjudged, the fire may burn past the attack/cutoff position before resources and personnel are in position. Don't play "catch up" with a fire that is burning through a building. Project your set-up time, write off property, and get ahead of the fire. Set up adequately ahead of the fire, then overpower it.

**WRITE-OFF PROPERTY THAT IS ALREADY LOST** and go on to protect exposed property based on the most dangerous direction of fire spread. Do not continue to operate in positions that are essentially lost.

The basic variables relating to attack operations involve:

- Location/position of attack
- Size of attack
- Support functions

Command develops an effective attack through the management of these factors. Command must balance and integrate attack size and position with fire conditions, risk, and resources.

The effect of the interior attack must be constantly evaluated, and the attack abandoned if necessary. Strategy changes can develop almost instantly or can take considerable time. Command must match the strategy with the conditions. The Incident Commander controls overall incident scene safety by determining the proper strategy to be used.

If the Incident Commander doesn't change strategies from offensive to defensive until the building is disassembling itself due to structural damage, Command is late in strategy determination and on the receiving end of the building's decision governing the new strategy to be employed. Often times when the building gets to make those decisions, firefighters become traumatized (physically and/or emotionally). **THE INCIDENT COMMANDER DETERMINES THE STRATEGY, THE BUILDING SHOULDN'T.**

It is imperative that Command assign a Roof Sector as early as possible for rapid evaluation of roof conditions. In certain situations Command should strongly consider not committing crews to the interior of a structure unless he/she receives a report from Roof Sector that the roof of the structure is safe to operate on and under. It is better to go from an offensive to a defensive strategy too soon rather than too late.

## **DEFENSIVE STRATEGY**

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The decision to operate in a defensive strategy indicates that the offensive attack strategy, or the potential for one, has been abandoned for reasons of personnel safety, and the involved structure has been conceded as lost (the Incident Commander made a conscious decision to write the structure off).

The announcement of a change to a defensive strategy will be made as Emergency Traffic and all personnel will withdraw from the structure **AND MAINTAIN A SAFE DISTANCE FROM THE BUILDING**. Officers will account for their crews and advise their Sector Officer on the status of their crew. Sector Officers will notify Command of the status of the crews assigned to their sector. A PAR (Personnel

Accountability Report) shall be obtained after any switch from offensive to defensive strategy.

Interior lines will be withdrawn and repositioned when changing to a defensive strategy. Crews should retreat with their hose lines if safe to do so. If retreat is being delayed because of hose lines, and it's unsafe to stay in the building, hose lines should be abandoned.

All exposures, both immediate and anticipated, must be identified and protected. The first priority in defensive operations is personnel safety; the second is exposure protection.

The next priority may be to knock down the main body of fire. This may assist in protection of exposures but does not replace it as a higher priority.

Master streams are generally the most effective tactic to be employed in defensive operations. For tactical purposes, a standard master stream flow of 750 GPM should be the guideline. Adjustments may be made upward or downward from this figure but it is very significant in the initial deployment of master streams.

When the exposure is severe and water is limited, the most effective tactic is to put water on the exposure and, if need be, from the interior of the exposure.

Once exposure protection is established, attention may be directed to knocking down the main body of fire and thermal-column cooling. The same principles of large volume procedures should be employed.

Fire under control means the forward progress of the fire has been stopped and the remaining fire can be extinguished with the on-scene resources; it does not mean the fire is completely out. When the fire is brought under control, Command will notify Dispatch utilizing the standard radio report of "FIRE UNDER CONTROL." Dispatch will record the time of this report. Command must initiate a PAR report from all on-scene sectors and crews.

If defensive operations are conducted from the onset of the incident, Command will notify Dispatch that there will not be a primary search completed for the affected structure(s).

## **BASEMENT FIRES**

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Size up at a basement fire is critical to the success of the operation. The location and extent of the fire, building construction, as well as points of access to the basement must be determined early. If the fire is known to be in the basement, the officer must quickly determine if an exterior access to the basement is present. This exterior door most often will be in the rear.

The objective, when attacking a basement fire, is to keep the fire from extending vertically by containment and extinguishment. This will require two lines. The need for both lines to be coordinated and rapidly get into position is of utmost importance in these types of fires.

The first line should be stretched to the first floor to contain the fire and protect the occupants and searching firefighters by closing the basement door or using a fog pattern aimed at the ceiling over the stairway. It is imperative that this fog stream NOT be directed downward into the stairwell. The interior basement stairs are normally located under the stairs to the second floor and face the rear of the structure. The officer of this line must carefully size-up the structural integrity when determining if the line should be positioned at the top of the stairs or in a position closer to the entrance door.

The second line shall be stretched to the exterior doorway for attack. This stream should be a straight or solid stream to avoid forcing fire, heat, products of combustion, and steam up into the first floor. The exterior attack line shall not begin the attack until it has been confirmed that the first line is in position and ready. The preferred point of attack is the exterior door that leads directly into the basement.

Basement fires sometimes need to be attacked with the first line going down the interior stairs. This may be necessary because an exterior entrance into the basement is not accessible, or there may be no entrance at all. Under these circumstances, the officer will need to determine if it is safe to attempt going down the basement stairs for a direct attack on the fire. The officer must carefully evaluate the structural stability, life hazard, and the fire and heat conditions at the top of the stairs. Good judgment must be exercised in deciding if it is safe to proceed down the stairs. In this case, the second line shall back up the first line.

If **only one line is available**, or fire or structural conditions do not permit the first line to go to the first floor, then the first line should be stretched to the exterior doorway for attack. After the fire has been knocked down from the exterior entrance to the basement and the first floor is deemed safe for entry, the second line shall be brought to the first floor to extinguish any vertical extension on the floors above. The officer of this line must carefully size-up the structural integrity in determining where or if the line should be positioned on the floor above the fire. This line has two objectives, extinguish any fire that has extended upward and to protect searching firefighters.

Occasionally, heavy fire conditions are encountered that prevent an attack from the first floor and there is no exterior entrance to the basement. An option that officers can exercise is that of knocking the fire down from outside the basement. This can be accomplished by applying a fire stream into the basement through a window opening. In most cases, this stream should be a straight or solid stream to avoid forcing fire, heat, products of combustion, and steam up into the first floor. Another option would be to cut a hole in the floor above and operate a fog or distributor nozzle. In either

case, officers must ensure that no firefighters have entered the basement and that the application of the stream is simply to knock the fire down so that entry can be made.

Should a basement fire occur in a balloon-frame structure, early attention should be given to checking for extension through the stud spaces in the exterior walls. Fire should be expected to extend to all floors and the attic.

The advancement of lines for an interior attack of a basement fire must be coordinated with aggressive ventilation of the basement and floors above.

## **ATTIC FIRES**

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Fires in the attic of a single-family dwelling are a result of fire originating in one of several areas. These areas or situations include:

- The living area or basement that has extended into the structural components and enters the attic via void spaces.
- Interior fire that has vented through a window and exposes the vented soffit area.
- Fire that has originated on the exterior of the dwelling and has involved the siding and exposes the soffit area.
- Fire that has originated in the attic itself by natural occurrences such as lightning strikes, electrical, or mechanical malfunction.

Tactics involving fire in the attic will vary to some extent based on the location of the seat of the fire. In the case where fire has originated in the living space or basement, the fire will have to be controlled based on an aggressive interior attack on the seat of the fire followed by hooking voids and ceiling to expose hidden fire in voids and the fire in the attic. These fires may be controlled by one line in the area of fire origin, or normally will require extensive hooking and multiple lines to extinguish depending on the amount of extension and spread.

In some situations, fire exposes the soffit area under the eaves which is vented into the attic. This can be caused from fire blowing out windows, a doorway below, or from a fire that originated on the exterior of the structure. In these cases, the first task is to conduct a quick sweep of the soffit and eave line with a hose stream. This quick sweep is intended to knock down fire extending into the attic through the soffit vents. The steam conversion drawn into the attic area can help deter fire advancement to this area before an attack on the seat of the fire is commenced.

When encountering fire in the attic only, with no involvement of the living space, unit officers must consider the following as operations commence.

At this time the occupant's personal belongings in the living space are not involved in the fire.

Conditions may be very tenable in the living area, even when there is extensive fire above.

At this point there is high heat and fire in an unoccupied, relatively confined area. A hose stream utilizing a fog pattern is indicated in this instance. Crews will want to use an attic scuttle if readily available, or poke a small hole for placement of the nozzle. Flow the fog pattern for several seconds. The fire should darken down due to the steam conversion and expansion. Avoid flowing the nozzle too long, or the ceiling may become saturated and collapse into the living area.

The intent of this approach to attic fires is to rapidly knock down the bulk of fire in the attic area until primary search, vertical ventilation, and salvage operations are completed. Extensive ceiling removal may still be required to check for extension, expose pockets of fire, or for the removal of blown in insulation. However, this tactic can “buy” crews the time to search the occupancy and deploy salvage covers without pulling the fire down into the living space

**If the attic area has a floor, the nozzle stream will normally not be able to penetrate the attic. In these instances, the officer should look for a pulldown or constructed stairway. If no stairway is found, consider opening the ceiling within approximately 2 feet of the exterior wall where the pitched roof eaves terminate. This area is often not floored due to its inaccessibility and lack of storage space.**

Pull-down attic stairs shall not be used where fire has been present. These stairs are typically rated to only 250 pounds. Their integrity due to exposure to fire is questionable. A FD attic ladder may be needed, however in most situations the nozzle can be advanced through the opening in the 8-foot ceiling without ladders.

Attacking the fire through an exterior gable vent should be considered when access to the attic area from the interior would be too time consuming due to the presence of flooring in the attic. Breaching the siding for nozzle access is also an option when interior access is not possible. A piercing nozzle, which typically flows over 100 gpm, is also an option, but the reach of its stream is very limited.

Aggressive salvage operations and primary search should be ordered as the hose line is being deployed.

The interior officer should request a report from the command officer on the exterior to convey their observations as the fog stream is being deployed. For example, a report of heavy steam production would indicate that the stream is effective.

A roof collapse hazard is present in the single-family dwelling. However, it is not as significant as in a commercial structure where large expanses of ceiling and roof support members are present.

Members should be aware of the presence of furnaces and hot water heaters in the unfinished attic areas. This is prevalent in larger homes with multi zone HVAC systems.

**SUBJECT:** RESCUE**SECTION:** 301.05**REVISED:** JANUARY 11, 2004**PAGE(S):** 3

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## PURPOSE

It is standard operating procedure to extend a primary search in all involved and exposed occupancies which can be entered. Command must structure initial operations around the completion of the primary search.

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## PROCEDURE

- A. Primary search means companies have quickly gone through all affected areas and verified the removal and/or safety of all occupants.
- B. Time is the critical factor in the primary search process. Successful primary search operations must necessarily be extended quickly and during initial fire stages.
- C. The rescue functions that follow lengthy fire control activities will be regarded tactically as presenting a secondary search. Secondary search means that companies thoroughly search the interior of the fire area after initial fire control and ventilation activities have been completed. Secondary search should preferably be completed by different companies than those involved in primary search activities. Thoroughness, rather than time, is the critical factor in secondary search.
- D. The completion of the primary search is reported utilizing the standard radio reporting term "ALL CLEAR". It is the responsibility of Command to coordinate primary search assignments, secure completion reports from interior companies and to transmit the "ALL CLEAR" report to Alarm. Alarm will record the time of this report from Command.
- E. The stage of the fire becomes a critical factor that affects the rescue approach developed by Command. The following items outline the basic Command approach to fire stages:
  - In nothing showing situations, or in very minor fire cases that clearly pose no life hazard, Command must structure a rapid interior search and report "ALL CLEAR". (The interior search for victims will also verify no fire.)
  - In smoke showing and working fire situations, fire control efforts must be extended simultaneously with rescue operations in order to gain entry and control interior access to complete primary search. In such cases,

Command and operating companies must be aware the operation is in a rescue mode until primary search is complete, regardless of the fire control required. In working fire situations, primary search must be followed by a secondary search.

- In cases of fully involved buildings or sections of buildings, immediate entry and primary search activities become impossible and survival of occupants is improbable. Command must initially report fully involved conditions and that he will *not* report an all clear. As quickly as fire control is achieved, Command must structure what is, in effect, a secondary search for victims.
- F. Command and operating companies cannot depend upon reports from spectators to determine status of victims. Control forces should utilize reports as to the location, number, and condition of victims as supporting primary search efforts and must extend and complete a primary search wherever entry is possible.
- G. Command must consider the following factors in developing a basic rescue size-up:
1. Number, location and condition of victims
  2. Affect the fire has on the victims
  3. Capability of the control forces to enter the building, remove/protect victims and control fire.
- H. Command must make the basic rescue decision:
- Do we remove victims from fire? OR
  - Do we remove the fire from the victims?
- I. In some cases, occupants are safer in their rooms than moving through contaminated hallways and interior areas. Such movement may also impede interior firefighting.
- J. Command must realistically evaluate the manpower required to actually remove victims and then treat their fire-affected bodies. In cases involving such multiple victims, Command must call for the timely response of adequate resource and quickly develop an organization that will both stabilize the fire and provide for the removal and treatment of the occupants.
- K. Rescue efforts should be extended in the following order:
1. Most severely threatened
  2. The largest number (groups)
  3. The remainder of the fire area
  4. The exposed areas

- L. Command must make specific primary search assignments to companies to cover specific areas of large, complex occupancies and maintain on-going control of such companies until the entire area is searched. When primary search companies encounter and remove victims, Command must assign other companies to continue to cover the interior positions vacated by those companies.
- M. All initial attack efforts must be directed toward supporting rescue efforts and hose lines must be placed in a manner to control interior access, confine the fire, and protect avenues of escape.
- N. Hoseline placement becomes a critical factor in these cases and Command and all operating companies must realize that the operation is in a rescue mode. It may be necessary to operate in a manner that writes off the structure in order to buy rescue time.
- O. Normal means of interior access (stairs, halls, interior public areas, etc.) should be utilized to remove victims whenever possible. Secondary means of rescue (platforms, ladders, fire escapes, helicopters, gravity/nets, etc.) must be utilized in their order of effectiveness.
- P. Command must structure treatment of victims after removal. Multiple victims should be removed to one location for more effective triage and treatment. Command should coordinate and utilize paramedic capability wherever available and assign treatment companies as required to an exterior Medical Sector.
- Q. Once the primary search has been completed and an "ALL CLEAR" transmitted, Command must maintain control of access to the fire area; beware of occupants (and others) re-entering the building.
- R. The most urgent reason for calling additional alarms is for the purpose of covering life safety. Command must develop a realistic (and pessimistic) rescue size-up as early as possible.
- S. The term "SEARCH & RESCUE" should be used when structuring a primary search over the radio; "ALL CLEAR" should be used only as a completion report.

**SUBJECT:** FIRE CONTROL**SECTION:** 301.06**REVISED:** NOVEMBER 5, 2007**PAGE(S):** 2

## PURPOSE

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It is standard operating procedure to attempt to stabilize fire conditions by extending WHEREVER POSSIBLE an aggressive well-placed and adequate offensive interior fire attack effort according to the risk policy and to support that aggressive attack with whatever resource and action is required to reduce fire extension and to bring the fire under control.

## PROCEDURE

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- A. A critical Command decision (both initial and on-going) relates to the offensive/defensive strategy of the situation:
  1. Offensive Strategy--Interior attack and related support directed toward quickly conducting a search for victims and bringing the fire under control.
  2. Defensive Strategy--Exterior attack directed to first reduce fire extension and then bring the fire under control.
- B. Command must declare which strategy is being used as part of the on-scene report and at each notification of elapsed time.
- C. Command must define offensive/defensive strategy based upon a standard risk management profile evaluating:
  1. Fire extent
  2. Structural conditions
  3. Entry capability
  4. Ventilation profile
  5. Rescue profile of occupants
  6. Resources profile
- D. BASIC OFFENSIVE PLAN
  1. Take Command
  2. Identify critical fireground factors
  3. Establish Rapid Intervention Team (RAT)
  4. First line--fast, aggressive interior attack
  5. Coordinate support activities (i.e., ventilation, forcible entry)
  6. Do primary search
  7. Second line--backup first/cover opposite side
  8. Pumped water
  9. Quickly evaluate success and react
- E. BASIC DEFENSIVE PLAN
  1. Take Command

2. Evaluate fire spread/write-off lost property
3. Identify critical fireground factors
4. Prioritize fire streams
5. Provide big, well placed streams
6. Pumped water
7. Quick determination on additional resource
8. Surround and drown

**SUBJECT:** LOSS CONTROL**SECTION:** 301.07**REVISED:** JANUARY 13, 2012**PAGE(S):** 5

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## PURPOSE

The purpose of this procedure is to describe the process to reduce, and in many cases eliminate, certain losses experienced during and following fires and other types of incidents.

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## POLICY

There is "value added" to the quality of service when firefighting includes loss control functions. Loss control involves methods of minimizing loss in each of the tactical priorities through all phases of firefighting. Throughout each of the three (3) tactical priorities, the safety and survival of firefighters, customer service, and loss control functions are continuously addressed. This procedure will discuss the elements of loss control and how they are integrated at emergency incidents.

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## LOSS CONTROL

- A. Loss experienced by the owners/occupants of a structure as a result of a fire is devastating.
- B. Primary and secondary loss can be minimized through active loss control efforts. There are many opportunities for effective loss control during property conservation, but the other two tactical priorities (rescue and fire control) present significant loss control opportunities.
- C. In addition to the psychological and emotional injuries our customers may suffer, the building suffers the effects of fire including charring, water, smoke, structural, and content damage.
  - 1. The structure becomes weakened by the fire.
  - 2. The building is unsecured and open to the elements of nature, as well as open to looting.
  - 3. The ceiling and walls throughout the house are damaged by smoke.
  - 4. Furniture receives water and smoke damage.
  - 5. Appliances (refrigerator) and swimming pools are without the electricity they need to preserve food and clean the pool.
  - 6. Through effective loss control efforts we can intervene in all aspects of the incident and take specific measures to minimize loss.
- D. An important element of loss control is to extinguish the fire.
  - 1. Fighting the fire from the unburned portion will effect loss control. This needs to be regularly reinforced with members. Fire attacks from the burning portion will usually push heat and smoke through the building and increase loss.

- E. Performing skills like forcible entry and ventilation should be done with loss control in mind.
- F. Loss control may operate as a sector or a branch. When assigned as a branch, loss control may include several sectors.

## **WATER DAMAGE**

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- A. The most significant thing we can do to reduce damage is to put the fire out.
- B. As the fire travels so does the damage. An aggressive interior attack may be the best step towards enhancing loss control efforts. Yet knowing that water will do significant damage to dry wall, furniture, and carpeting, means we have to control how much water is used. If possible, adjust the nozzle to allow for appropriate gallonage as required in attack lines. Do not wet down the attic unnecessarily -- put the water directly on the fire and burning embers.
- C. The use of class A foam in firefighting is another method of reducing water damage.
- D. Water acts as a corrosive to pressed gypsum board (dry wall).
  - 1. It breaks the bond used in making the board.
  - 2. Most of the houses and commercial structures we encounter will have gypsum board on the walls and ceilings.
  - 3. When water is left to sit on gypsum board it will seep in and ruin the board.
  - 4. Company officers and firefighters should be aware of the damage to drywall by direct water spray and over spray.
- E. Reduce and eliminate over spray and it will minimize loss and water build up on the furniture.
- F. Standing water on wooden counter tops is also very damaging because it can cause delamination, staining, and cracking.
  - 1. For loss control purposes, wipe off counter tops and table tops with a dry towel not allowing water to sit and penetrate the surface.
  - 2. Furniture sitting in puddles of water will be damaged. Water will migrate up the wooden legs of furniture or over stuffed material and cause it to soak, crack, and stain.
  - 3. Place blocks under legs of the furniture to raise it up and out of the water. If no blocks are available, canned goods from the home serve the same purpose and are an option.
  - 4. Cover exposed furniture and other materials with salvage covers or plastic.
- G. When water has filled the attic space and is pooling on the gypsum use a drill or a screwdriver as a hole punch to allow the water to escape.
- H. Water sitting on the gypsum board will eventually seep through; by drilling a small hole we can possibly save the ceiling and the hole is easily patched.

## CARPET/FLOOR COVERINGS

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- A. Water on carpeting in itself is damaging.
- B. It is made worse by soot and broken glass being ground in when stepping on the carpet. Hall runners should be used to avoid staining and grinding in soot.
- C. When a window is broken to make entry the glass on the carpet may cause the need for replacement, especially if the glass is ground in.
- D. When possible throw a carry-all over the glass under the window to prevent the grinding by foot steps. If debris is covering a relatively good carpet or flooring, it should be shoveled out and swept off.

## SMOKE DAMAGE

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- A. Unless interrupted, the hot smoke produced by fire will move throughout the structure.
- B. Positive pressure ventilation (PPV) to clear the smoke is performed during active fire stages.
- C. After fire control, closing or opening doors in the structure will help reduce smoke damage during ongoing ventilation efforts.
- D. Cutting a hole in the roof is also favorable.
  - 1. Rapid removal of smoke improves firefighters ability to conduct search and rescue operations as well as effective fire control and salvage operations.
- E. Once the fire is extinguished and the embers cooled it is necessary to exhaust smoke.
- F. Avoid blowing it throughout the structure and continue to ventilate during overhaul.
- G. Take smoldering materials such as a couch outside for overhaul.
- H. When appropriate, turn off the ventilation system in the building.
  - 1. The AC system will expose the remainder of the structure and might contaminate the air handling system (which could require its replacement).

## DRYWALL

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- A. Work to protect the structure.
- B. If possible, when checking for extension by pulling ceiling, do not pull drywall from corners -- it may require that both walls and ceiling be replaced and cause additional loss.
- C. Cut small inspection holes, preferably 6" x 6," to check attics. Remember that to relieve excess water in the attic space and to reduce loss, drill drainage holes into the ceiling.

## BUILDING PACKAGING

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- A. Just as we package a patient for transport in EMS we should also package a house or structure when we're finished.
- B. Each room should be completely ventilated. This will reduce smoke damage.
- C. The furniture should be covered with plastic.
- D. Water on counter tops and wooden furniture should be wiped off.
- E. The furniture should be raised up (blocked) to prevent water damage.
- F. Excess debris should be cleared off the floor. It will make the rooms look much cleaner and help alleviate the traumatic impact of the fire for our customers.
- G. Debris should be brought outside, kept away from the entrance, be covered with plastic, and anchored.
- H. Customer valuables such as photo albums, video and audio tapes, clothing and other keepsakes found in closets need to be carefully wrapped and placed in boxes. Contents of the box should be marked on the outside for easier retrieval. Do not bag or box wet items. They will need time to dry before packaging.
- I. Access holes where ceilings were pulled, roofs, or walls that were opened should be "squared up" on structural members except where special hazards are present (i.e., asbestos, etc.).
- J. "Securing" the fire scene is also a function of loss control.
  - 1. Securing refers to actions required to protect the structures and contents from damage or looting after fire companies have departed from the scene.
  - 2. Roof ventilation holes and broken windows should be covered with plastic or other materials to reduce weather damage and deter vandalism. The rolled plastic is ideal for this use.
  - 3. For safety reasons, remaining glass shreds should be removed from the frames of broken windows prior to installing covers and always prior to leaving the scene.

## ADDITIONAL CUSTOMER SERVICE ELEMENTS

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- A. Performing loss control is a mark toward excellence in service delivery.
- B. It is a "signature" of professionalism in our craft.
- C. We should continually try to add quality and value to our work.
  - 1. In some cases, where safe to do so, escorting the customer through the fire area can help him/her see and visualize what we did and the need for overhaul operations.
  - 2. Proper loss control measures should be completed prior to any walk through.
  - 3. Act like the place is yours and the people who own and occupy it are your loved ones...This usually will lead us in the right direction.
- D. In many cases, wearing dirty turnouts into a home on EMS or service calls can soil the furnishings.
  - 1. By keeping our turnouts clean, we could avoid unnecessary damage to flooring, walls or furniture.

2. Simply hose off boots and pants after each fire call to eliminate or minimize loss created by dirty turnouts. This will also help to keep them decontaminated.
- E. Loss control measures may have to be suspended due to fire investigation needs.
  1. In this case, fire companies may have to return after the fire investigation to complete loss control activities.
- F. Companies should select an appropriate location for outside piles of debris.
  1. Debris in high travel areas should be avoided.
  2. Minimize trauma to the customer by helping to make the scene appear less devastating.
- G. Part of the customer service effort is managing our conduct and behavior appropriately. We should be on our best behavior when working on the emergency scene.
- H. The pets we encounter are, often times, considered by the owners a part of the family.
  1. While our primary mission is for the protection and care of people, we should attempt to provide an appropriate level of care and respect to animals in distress.
  2. Whenever feasible and safe to do so and as part of our commitment to customer service, we should display an open, caring concern for pets and animals when dealing with a full range of situations.
- I. On larger incidents loss control will be a significant part of the operation and additional resources/alarms may be necessary to insure the effectiveness of loss control efforts.
- J. Loss control efforts will increase the value our customers place on our work. There is no question that we should strive to improve our services. Loss control is an area where we can always improve.

**SUBJECT:** SALVAGE**SECTION:** 301.08**REVISED:** FEBRUARY 12, 2008**PAGE(S):** 2

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## PURPOSE

This procedure describes guidelines for conducting salvage operations. Virtually every fire, small or large, produces a need for some form of salvage operations.

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## PROCEDURE

- A. Salvage includes activities required to stop direct and indirect fire damage in addition to those required to minimize the effects of firefighting operations. This includes losses from water, smoke and firefighting efforts.
- B. Salvage operations must be aimed at aggressively controlling loss by the most expedient means. Salvage objectives are:
  1. Stop or reduce the source of damage
  2. Protect or remove contents
- C. Command will provide for salvage at all fires or other incidents posing potential damage to property.
- D. Salvage operations most often involve early smoke removal and covering building contents with salvage covers or plastic.
  1. In some cases, the contents of all threatened areas, where appropriate, can be removed to a safe location.
  2. When removal is not practical, contents should be grouped in the center of rooms, raised off of the floor and covered to provide maximum practical protection.
- E. The following items should be considered when addressing salvage.
  1. Type, value and location of contents
  2. The extent and location of the fire
  3. Recognition of existing and potential damage sources
  4. Estimate of required resource

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## EXTENT AND LOCATION OF FIRE

- A. Salvage efforts should begin in areas most severely threatened by damage.
- B. In most cases that will be areas directly adjacent to or below the fire area.
- C. Additional salvage activities should expand outward until all areas of potential loss are secured.

## RECOGNITION OF EXISTING AND POTENTIAL DAMAGE SOURCES

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- A. All firefighting activities have the potential to damage property and contents.
- B. The key to successful salvage is to distinguish between excessive damage, and damage that is required to reduce potential fire damage.
- C. Aggressive loss control activities reduces the damage incurred during firefighting operations.

## TYPE, VALUE AND LOCATION OF CONTENTS

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- A. Replacement price and value should be primary considerations when performing salvage operations.
- B. It is often difficult to separate value from price, however, salvage crews should weigh the worth (value) of items in addition to their dollar cost.
  - 1. Business records, for example, have extremely high value to business owners while their price represents only the paper they are printed on.
  - 2. Pictures, wall paintings, family mementos, etc., may have very high personal value to the property owner.

## ESTIMATE OF REQUIRED RESOURCE

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- A. An early request for manpower and salvage equipment can significantly reduce loss.
- B. The first company assigned to salvage should consider the size-up factors and request sufficient resources to stabilize the situation.

## SALVAGE EQUIPMENT

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- A. Common salvage equipment includes salvage covers and boxes, rolled plastic, hall runners, brooms and squeegees.
- B. Where salvage covers must be left on scene, arrangements should be made for pickup later.
- C. Command or the loss control officer should schedule a return walk through by the Fire Department to insure post-incident damage is not occurring.

## CUSTOMER SERVICE

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- A. Command and/or the loss control officer should meet with the property owner or responsible party, to determine/identify the salvage priorities.
- B. The earlier this can be done, the greater the opportunity to identify high value/priority items or areas.
- C. In some cases, when safe to do so, allowing the property owner/occupant to be escorted through the building by fire department personnel can be of great assistance to the loss control operation.

**SUBJECT:** OVERHAUL**SECTION:** 301.09**REVISED:** JANUARY 11, 2004**PAGE(S):** 3

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## PURPOSE

This procedure describes guidelines for conducting overhaul operations.

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## POLICY

- A. The main objective of overhaul operations is to seek out and extinguish all remaining fire and control loss, stabilize the incident scene by providing for firefighter safety and to secure the structure.
- B. Rekindles must always be eliminated.
- C. Additional objectives should include:
  - 1. Preserve evidence
  - 2. Secure the fire scene

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## PROCEDURE

- A. When addressing overhaul operations, Command should:
  - 1. Insure overhaul is conducted safely.
  - 2. Insure all fire is extinguished.
  - 3. During rest breaks of fire crews, insure at least two firefighters remain in the fire area to detect any possible hidden fire and re-ignition.
  - 4. Use early and continuing positive pressure ventilation to maintain an acceptable working environment and reduce loss.
  - 5. Meet with the property owner or occupant concerning overhaul operations.
  - 6. Schedule post-incident drive-by/walk-through of fire building by fire companies to check for potential re-ignition sources.
  - 7. Closely coordinate overhaul with fire investigators.
- B. Customer Relations
  - 1. In the absence of an occupant services sector, command or the company officer should meet with the property owner or occupant to explain the reasons for overhaul operations.
  - 2. In some cases, when safe to do so, allowing the property owner or occupant to be escorted through the fire area can help them understand the need for overhaul operations.
  - 3. Proper loss control operations should, of course, be completed prior to any walk-through.

4. Allowing the property owner or occupant the opportunity to remove personal possessions/valuables, or boxing and removing these items for them is excellent customer service and loss control opportunity.
5. Every effort should also be made to assist the property owner or occupant in notifying insurance agents, etc., and answering any questions.
6. In all cases the property owner/occupant should be provided the publication "After the Fire" to assist them in the recovery process.

### C. Hidden Fires

1. Fire suppression operations often overlook small pockets of fire concealed in construction voids or hidden under debris.
2. Overhaul activities must thoroughly search the fire scene to detect and extinguish these hidden fires or "hot spots" before they rekindle.
3. Floor, wall or ceiling areas showing evidence of extensive decomposition due to fire should be thoroughly examined during overhaul.
4. Additional areas to check include wooden door jambs, air conditioning vents and registers, base-boards, door and window casings, and around light fixtures and electrical outlets.
5. Axes, pike poles, and halogen tools are most commonly used for this purpose.
6. Attic fires pose a special hazard for rekindle where insulation has been exposed to fire.
  - a. Large areas can receive fire damage and can be located in difficult to reach areas.
  - b. In some cases, all insulation must be removed to extinguish all remnants of fire.
7. Plenum spaces, soffits and pipe chases should receive careful inspection as they provide possible routes for fire to spread throughout a structure.
8. Failing to overhaul these areas invites fire extension to uninvolved building areas.
9. Command will be responsible for insuring that the fire area has been thoroughly overhauled and no hidden fire remains.
10. The company officer last leaving the scene will be responsible for insuring total fire extinguishment.
11. Command will be further responsible for scheduling post-incident drive-by/walk-through inspections of the fire building to eliminate any rekindles.
12. At least one post-incident inspection will be scheduled, and Command will determine the need for additional inspection.
13. Post-incident inspections include a walk through of the building or areas that are safe to enter.
  - a. Crews should search for any evidence of smoke or remaining hot spots.
  - b. An examination of contents below salvage covers should be conducted.

- c. In some cases, additional openings in the structure may be required.
- D. Evidence Preservation
1. Companies performing overhaul should continuously weigh the importance of preserving evidence with the desire to immediately remove debris and completely extinguish all traces of fire.
  2. In some cases, it may be necessary to monitor spot fires until investigators arrive on the scene.
  3. Where possible, evidence should remain untouched, undisturbed and in its original location.
  4. Where circumstances prohibit this, evidence should be removed under the direction of a fire investigator
- E. Securing the Fire Scene
1. Securing the fire scene is also a function of overhaul.
  2. Securing refers to actions required to protect the structure and contents from any further loss after fire suppression companies have departed from the scene.
    - a. Roof ventilation holes and broken windows should be covered to reduce weather damage and deter vandalism. The rolled plastic is ideal for this use.
    - b. For safety reasons, remaining glass shards should be removed from the frames of broken windows prior to installing covers and always prior to leaving the scene.
    - c. If necessary doors and windows may need to be boarded up to prevent unauthorized entry or vandalism.
- F. Securing the scene also includes the actions required to insure the safety of all persons likely to visit the incident scene.
1. Once a hazard zone is established during firefighting operations, it must not be abandoned prior to removing or stabilizing the hazard.
  2. Overhaul companies must provide a means of identifying and guarding hazards that cannot be removed or stabilized.
  3. Barricades, hazard tape, and the posting of guards are all suitable methods depending upon the severity of hazard.

**SUBJECT:** RIDING ASSIGNMENTS**SECTION:** 301.10**REVISED:** FEBRUARY 12, 2008**PAGE(S):** 3

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## PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to standardize the roles and responsibilities of the members who ride on the apparatus.

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## PROCEDURE

### A. ENGINE 83

#### 1. **Officer**

- a. Command;
- b. Personnel accountability;
- c. Radio communications;
- d. Tools: SCBA, radio, hand light, Thermal Imaging Camera, small hand tools and monitoring equipment (CO/LEL meter) as needed.

#### 2. **Driver/Engineer**

- a. Pump operations and all hookups to vehicle pump;
- b. Scene lighting;
- c. Logistics (equipment/inventories);
- d. Assist in advancing hose lines if necessary

#### 3. **Hydrant-Nozzle (officer's side, rear-facing seat or forward facing seat)**

- a. Attack-line nozzle operator;
- b. Lay supply line (if appropriate)
- c. Tools: SCBA, radio, hand light.

#### 4. **Hydrant-Nozzle (driver's side, rear-facing seat)**

- a. Lay supply line (if appropriate);
- b. Attack line back-up person;
- c. Tools: SCBA, Irons/hand tool, radio.

### B. ENGINE 283

#### 1. **Officer**

- a. Reports to command;
- b. Personnel Accountability;
- c. Gives orders for evolution;
- d. Assists with attack lines where necessary;
- e. Tools: SCBA, radio, hand light, small hand tools

#### 2. **Driver/Engineer**

- a. Pump operations and all hookups to vehicle pump;

- b. Scene lighting;
- c. Logistics (equipment/inventories);
- d. Assist in advancing hose lines if necessary
- 3. Nozzle (*officer's side, rear-facing seat*)**
  - a. Attack-line nozzle operator;
  - b. Tools: SCBA, radio, hand light
- 4. Nozzle (*driver's side, rear-facing seat*)**
  - a. Attack-line nozzle operator;
  - b. Lay supply line (if appropriate);
  - c. Tools: SCBA, hand light
- 5. Hydrant (*officer's side, side-facing seat*)**
  - a. Lay supply line (if appropriate);
  - b. Lay additional lines if necessary;
  - c. Tools: SCBA, Irons/hand tool and hand light
- 6. Hydrant (*driver's side, side-facing seat*)**
  - a. Lay supply line (if appropriate);
  - b. Lay additional lines if necessary;
  - c. Tools: SCBA, pike pole and hand light

### C. TOWER 84

- 1. Officer**
  - a. Reports to command;
  - b. Personnel Accountability;
  - c. Gives orders for evolution;
  - d. Responsible for safe set up of aerial
  - e. Tools: SCBA, portable radio, hand light, small hand tools
- 2. Driver/Engineer**
  - a. Pump operations and all hookups to vehicle pump;
  - b. Scene lighting;
  - c. Logistics (equipment/inventories); and
  - d. Aerial ops, including electrical and master stream operations and safety for personnel operating on the aerial.
- 3. Nozzle (*officer's side, rear-facing seat*)**
  - Interior Operations
    - a. Vent/enter/search (team leader);
    - b. Tools: SCBA, K-tool, flat head axe, halligan, hand light, radio.
  - Exterior Operations
    - a. Responsible for checking jacks, setting pads and safety pins.
    - b. Raising ground ladders
    - c. Roof ventilation
    - d. Tools: SCBA and whatever is necessary to carry out evolution
- 4. Nozzle (*driver's side, rear-facing seat*)**
  - Interior Operations
    - a. Join vent/enter/search effort;
    - b. Tools: SCBA, pike pole, hand light, Radio.

Exterior Operations

- a. Responsible for checking jacks, setting pads and safety pins.
- b. Raising ground ladders
- c. Roof ventilation
- d. Tools: SCBA and whatever is necessary to carry out evolution

## D. ENGINE 84

**1. Officer**

- a. Command;
- b. Personnel accountability;
- c. Radio communications;
- d. Tools: SCBA, radio, hand light, small hand tools

**2. Driver/Engineer**

- a. Pump operations and all hookups to vehicle pump;
- b. Scene lighting;
- c. Logistics (equipment/inventories);
- d. Assist in advancing hose lines if necessary

**3. Hydrant-Nozzle (officer's side, rear-facing seat or forward facing seat)**

- a. Attack-line nozzle operator;
- b. Lay supply line (if appropriate)
- c. Tools: SCBA, radio, hand light.

**4. Hydrant-Nozzle (driver's side, rear-facing seat)**

- a. Lay supply line (if appropriate);
- b. Attack line back-up person;
- c. Tools: SCBA, Irons/hand tool, radio.

**RESPONSIBILITY**

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- A. All firefighters confer with the officer for any additional information and/or specific assignments. The portable radio shall go to a senior firefighter. The portable radio may go to the layout man if the officer goes in with the crew. Tasks and tools may be altered due to manning limitations. A request to command for additional manpower might be warranted.
  - B. The driver/operator can be utilized on exterior assignments provided he/she has the proper turnout gear. (helmet, coat, gloves and adequate foot wear) Examples are: ladders and the placement of same, horizontal ventilation of windows, tool staging and scene lighting).
  - C. The officer will oversee crew progress, assist as required and report the same to command. The officer should be the officer in charge of firefighting/rescue operations.
  - D. Firefighters shall report to their officer the completion and/or progress of assigned task.
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**SUBJECT:** THERMAL IMAGE CAMERA(S)**SECTION:** 301.11**REVISED:** FEBRUARY 6, 2008**PAGE(S):** 5

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## PURPOSE

- A. To establish a procedure to facilitate the most effective method for deploying thermal image camera(s) in a way that provides the most protection for our personnel.
- B. To provide a reference document to be used for training of personnel in the uses, deployment, limitations, operation, and care and maintenance of the Thermal Image Camera(s).

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## POLICY

It shall be the policy of this department to utilize thermal image cameras (TIC) in every structure fire and any other situations as identified where it will enhance the safety and capability of fire department personnel.

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## PROCEDURE

- A. A TIC is carried on Engine 83, Engine 283, and Tower 84. Personnel should become familiar with the location of the TIC on each apparatus. Ultimately, the company officer should determine who will operate the TIC.
- B. It is the officer's responsibility (or person riding in this position) to carry the TIC into a structure whenever the initial response involved a full assignment regardless of initial size-up reports.
- C. When the Company arrives on the scene of a fire or any other incident where smoke will or could hamper visibility, the person riding in the officer's position of apparatus should remove the camera from its holder and take it to the entry point of the structure. The rider of this apparatus will continue to be responsible for deploying the handline.
- D. When operating in the "Rescue Mode", company personnel should use available thermal image cameras to aid in the search for victims. If operating ahead of or separate from the first hand line, the tag line stored next to the TIC, will be used (once placed in service). The operator of the camera should utilize any strapping or hardware to secure the camera to his/her person to avoid the possibility of being separated from the camera.
- E. The third arriving thermal image camera should be reserved for use by the established Rapid Assistance Team (RAT). Subsequent cameras will be used by additional entry crews.
- F. If conditions warrant the use of the camera, the nozzle person should be the operator of the camera. Through field exercises it has been determined that the safest and most efficient operation of the camera occurs when its operator's

- view is not obstructed by other firefighters. Camera operators must be aware that they have a tendency to move faster than the rest of the team who are operating in zero visibility. Truck Company personnel operating with the initial hand line crew should coordinate their efforts in order to maintain compliance with the "Two In and Two Out" S.O.G. Search and suppression activities should occur in compliance with their respective S.O.G.'s and standard firefighting practices should be observed with the Thermal Imaging Camera acting as an "extension of the tool in the hand." Two person teams are the policy.
- G. In moderate to heavy smoke conditions the Camera allows a crew to quickly check a smoke filled area to determine whether or not there is fire present. The camera operator must remember not to move too quickly, so that the rest of the team is not lost in the zero visibility environment.
  - H. The Camera has the potential to inspire overconfidence because it allows firefighters to "see" in an environment that in reality has zero visibility. Firefighters should remember that they must stay low even if the camera allows them to see that the majority of the heat is at the ceiling. The possibility of a flashover in the dynamic atmosphere of a structure fire is higher than ever before because of new materials, construction methods and rapid responses. Personnel must understand that the camera could fail and an escape route must be easily located, either by following a hose line or rope tag line to safety.
  - I. The camera can also serve as a tool for detecting heat during the overhaul phase of an incident. It must be remembered, however, that the TIC cannot penetrate most construction materials including drywall, plaster and lathe, concrete, glass or plastic. Also, the TIC cannot penetrate water. Because the camera has a black and white display it is sometimes difficult to differentiate between what is heat or fire trapped in a wall and what is radiant heat. A Heat Detector (Thermal Spy) is still the primary tool for locating areas or objects that have a higher temperature than their surroundings because it allows the differential between that area or object and its surroundings to be determined in actual degrees. Not all TICs are equipped with heat detection capabilities.
  - J. Thermal Imaging Camera equipped companies operating in the County of Hamilton should be the operators of their cameras when deployed unless there are other trained personnel on the scene and approved by the officer.

## **THERMAL IMAGE CAMERA USES**

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- A. Provides safer navigation in a space where there is zero visibility due to smoke.
- B. Allows personnel to "see" in a zero visibility environment which is a very useful addition to traditional search and rescue techniques. The time necessary for completing a primary search can be cut by almost half by utilizing a Thermal Imaging Camera.
- C. Enables suppression crews to execute a faster, more effective interior attack. The shortest route to the fire, holes in the floor and obstacles in the structure can be determined and located efficiently.
- D. Reduces fatigue of interior crews because efficiency in performing searches and suppression is increased.

- E. Allows Rapid Assistance Teams (RAT) to quickly and efficiently locate downed firefighters.
- F. May be used to determine fluid level within a container which may be useful during an incident involving a hazardous material.
- G. May be used as a search tool to locate lost persons in open wilderness areas.

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

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- A. Lack of visibility on the fireground is caused by products of combustion, primarily smoke. Smoke is composed of two elements; fire gases produced by the fuel's chemical breakdown and soot. Heavy smoke causes all the light to be scattered or blocked since the light waves cannot penetrate the particles. This zero visibility condition is what limits the effectiveness of lighting for interior firefighting operations. This lack of visibility heightens the potential for firefighters to become disoriented and lost within the fire building and in turn could hamper their ability to exit the structure in an emergency situation.
- B. Thermal energy is not visible to the human eye, but the firefighter can feel the heat present. The Thermal Imaging Camera, TIC, allows a thermal heat view of one's surroundings.
- C. A Thermal Imaging Camera is a device that translates a thermal picture into an electrical picture and then a visual image for the human eye. This is accomplished because it relies on the thermal energy emitted by all objects and not on reflected visible light. Thermal Imagers provide vision capability with zero light present. Thermal energy is characterized by its long wavelength, and fortunately for firefighters, the nature of this long wave thermal energy allows it to travel through smoke and mist. In essence the TIC "sees" through smoke and mist.
- D. Everything viewed through the TIC's lens retains its shape, people look like people and rooms look like rooms. The TIC provides the firefighter with a black and white television view through the smoke and darkness.
- E. When viewing a room using the TIC, hot things appear white, hotter objects appear brighter white, and colder items appear black to gray. The whiter the representation displayed, the more heat present in the object.

## LIMITATIONS

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- A. The Thermal Imaging Camera allows a two dimensional view of a smoke filled environment. Depth perception is limited. Firefighters operating the camera should remain low to the ground, scanning the entire area before them. When scanning an area with the TIC begin at the ceiling and conclude at the floor area immediately in front of them. Walking with the TIC is discouraged as trip hazards may be overlooked.
- B. Thermal energy does not travel directly through walls. A TIC does not allow an area to be viewed which is behind a wall. If fire is present inside a wall, the camera will only be able to "see" it if the fire has increased the temperature of the wall itself. Fire inside wooden clad walls will be picked up much faster than

- fire on the other side of a more significant barrier such as concrete. Normal overhaul procedures must be utilized in order to locate fire extension.
- C. A human being will not provide sufficient thermal energy to penetrate most standard construction materials or solid items such as furniture. Therefore, it is reinforced that while conducting a search, rescuers must look under/ around beds, sofas and other objects where victims may have hidden to escape fire.
  - D. Water, plastic and glass are all effective barriers for the TIC and may cause a reflective image. The team operating the camera must remember that the image present on the TIC's screen could be a "mirror image" of themselves or fire behind them being reflected off of glass, plastic or water. To test suspicious images, the crew should wave their arms and determine whether they are seeing their own image.
  - E. Also, firefighters and occupants, who are wet from hose line operations, could be masked from the camera's view during a search because there is a momentary balance of thermal signatures.
  - F. The Thermal Imaging Camera must be used with the understanding that it is only a mechanical device and it can fail. Firefighters must plan for this possibility by carrying flashlights, maintaining contact with the wall, a hose line, employing a tag line or other routine methods for remaining oriented to location and the position of exits in a zero visibility environment. Crews should continue to employ standard fire fighting practices.
  - G. Count on no more than twenty minutes of operation per battery, less in cold temperatures. Change the battery each time the operator leaves the structure to exchange SCBA bottles unless the TIC is being handed off to another crew that is completing the primary search.
  - H. Be aware that if the controls on the TIC are bumped the unit could become deactivated.
  - I. The image displayed by the TIC may decrease in quality as soot builds up on the lens and screen while operating on the fire ground. A soft cotton cloth should be used to clean the lens and screen periodically while operating the camera.
  - J. If the picture displayed on the screen suddenly becomes distorted, check to insure the carrying strap is not in front of the lens.
  - K. "White Out" is a condition caused by aiming the unit at a very hot object or flame which causes the TIC's sensor to become overloaded and the display to show all white, rendering the TIC useless. To correct the problem, aim the camera away from the extreme heat source and the display should return to normal in under one minute, often within just a few seconds.
  - L. The Thermal Imaging Camera has not been determined to be intrinsically safe as an ignition source. This device is not to be used in a potentially explosive atmosphere.

## DAILY INSPECTION

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- A. The camera should be checked as part of the daily equipment check.
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- B. The camera should be inspected for cleanliness. If any part of the camera is dirty a clean rag dampened with face piece cleaner should be used to clean the camera.
- C. The camera and its carrying strap must be thoroughly dry before being returned to the airtight case.
- D. The camera should be turned on and checked for proper operation and then turned off.
- E. If the battery charge indicator displays low capacity the spare battery should be placed in the unit and the discharged battery charged with the provided charging unit.
- F. The camera should be returned to its location.
- G. Problems with the unit should be reported to the OIC and a defective equipment form filled out.

## **MAINTENANCE**

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- A. Batteries should be rotated weekly and charge as necessary on Sundays.
- B. Screws on the camera should be checked periodically for tightness.
- C. After the camera is used on an incident it should be thoroughly cleaned and dried before it is returned to its airtight case and the camera's battery, along with the spare, should be fully charged.

## **SAFETY**

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No operation as outlined in this SOP shall preclude any person from using good judgment with due regard for the safety of all personnel.

**SUBJECT:** KNOX BOX SYSTEMS**SECTION:** 301.12**REVISED:** NOVEMBER 5, 2007**PAGE(S):** 1

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## PURPOSE

To establish guidelines for the use of key box systems (Knox Box) installed at various buildings in the City of Reading.

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## POLICY

Insofar as possible, Fire Department personnel operating at an occupancy which is equipped with a Knox Box should use the keys contained within said box in lieu of forcible methods to gain entry.

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## PROCEDURE

- A. Knox Boxes will be installed on various industrial, commercial, institutional, and residential buildings.
- B. Knox Boxes at the identified location carry marked master keys for the building.
- C. The keys for the Knox Boxes will be secured on E83, E283, T84, ALS83, 8301, and 8302 and in the alarm room.
- D. When a Knox Box is opened by the Fire Department during a non-emergency, a representative from the occupancy shall be present or consent obtained otherwise.
- E. When operating at an incident where the involved occupancy is equipped with a Knox Box, fire personnel should utilize the key within the key box to gain entry.
- F. In the judgment of the officer in charge, where conditions warrant immediate action, the initial company may use regular forcible entry methods. Secondary companies shall utilize any keys in the Knox Box to prevent any additional fire control damage from forcible entry.
- G. When a Knox Box is opened during an incident, the listed emergency contacts for that location shall be contacted.
- H. When a Knox Box is opened for a law enforcement incident, it shall be under emergency conditions and the listed emergency contacts for that location shall be contacted.
- I. The Knox Box should be inspected and all keys verified as current with tenant upon each opportunity/use.

**SUBJECT:** ON-SITE AUXILIARY FIRE EQUIPMENT**SECTION:** 301.13**REVISED:** JANUARY 11, 2004**PAGE(S):** 6

## PURPOSE

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To establish a procedure for identifying the type, condition and possible use of on-site auxiliary fire equipment in a given situation.

## POLICY

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In the event a fire is reported in, or in the event a building or property is threatened by fire the following guidelines have been established pertaining to the use of on-site fire equipment.

## PROCEDURE

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- A. Determine if the involved occupancy has on-site auxiliary fire equipment; if so, identify the type or types of auxiliary equipment provided.
- B. If the occupancy is so equipped, determine if the auxiliary fire equipment is in operation.
- C. If currently in operation, determine the effectiveness of such equipment.
- D. If auxiliary equipment is non-operational, determine how to activate such equipment and place it into service if it will aid in control of the fire.
- E. Provide support to on-site auxiliary fire equipment in accordance with the type of equipment involved and the nature of the fire situation.

## SCOPE

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For the purposes of this policy, on-site auxiliary fire equipment shall include the following:

- A. Sprinkler systems.
- B. Standpipe systems.
- C. Wall lines.
- D. Dry chemical systems.
- E. Halon systems.
- F. Carbon dioxide systems.
- G. Foam systems.

## SPRINKLER SYSTEMS

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The following guidelines apply to all types of sprinkler systems including: wet pipe and dry pipe systems, deluge systems, pre-action systems, combined dry pipe and pre-action systems and outside sprinklers for exposure protection.

- A. Be guided by fire department policy concerning fires in sprinklered buildings.
- B. At fires where sprinkler systems are operating, support the system by pumping to the Fire Department Connection (FDC) at a pressure of 150 p.s.i. through a minimum of two (2) 2 1/2" hose lines.
- C. Check the effectiveness of the sprinkler system and take appropriate action to insure proper control and extinguishment.
- D. Insure that the water supply valve to the system is open. Detail a fire fighter with a hand radio to stand by at the valve.
- E. Sprinkler systems in buildings which are severely exposed to a fire from another building or outside source such as a storage area should be supplied at the FDC to insure proper exposure protection.
- F. The pumper supplying the FDC should be utilized solely for that purpose, and additional hose lines should not be taken from that engine unless absolutely necessary.

## STANDPIPE SYSTEMS

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Where an occupancy is equipped with a standpipe system, Fire Department personnel should utilize the system to best advantage to eliminate the need for excessively long hose lays.

- A. Where the standpipe system is independent and is also equipped with a Fire Department Connection (FDC), support the system by pumping to the FDC, providing a pressure of 25 p.s.i. at the connection and 5 p.s.i. per story for each floor above the ground level. In addition, hydraulic calculations must also be included for the hose line(s) being utilized off the standpipe outlet. Support of the system through the Fire Department Connection (FDC) shall be with a minimum of two (2) 2 1/2" hose lines.
- B. Where the standpipe system is combined with the sprinkler system by pumping to the FDC, providing the appropriate FDC with the standard pressure of 100 p.s.i. at the connection.
- C. Those members who are assigned to the interior attack utilizing the standpipe outlet must be able to communicate with the pump operator supplying the system.
- D. When a line is connected to a standpipe outlet in a stairwell on the fire floor, the excess hose should be flaked up the stairs toward the floor above the fire.
- E. It is obvious that the stairwell at the fire area is important for advancing lines to the fire floor. It is just as important to occupants of the building who may be using it for evacuation. Fire fighters must be careful not to impede their

- progress and not to allow great volumes of smoke to get into the stairway. If another stairway, farther from the fire is available, evacuees should be directed to it.
- F. If the outlets are in the corridors, the attack should begin from an outlet on the floor below the fire floor. The first line (or lines) should be advanced up a stairway to the fire floor. Most of the line should be taken up the stairs, so that it can more easily be advanced through the corridor of the fire floor. If required, additional lines may be taken up the stairs from still lower floors. This may also be necessary if the floor below the fire is untenable.
  - G. If the fire is located some distance down the corridor from the stairway, the initial hook-up may be made on the fire floor. However, this should not be attempted unless Fire Fighters are certain that the fire is confined to a unit off the corridor or at least is some distance from their point of entry to the fire floor.

## WALL LINES

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When the decision has been made to utilize wall lines or house lines (as they are sometimes called), members should keep in mind the limitations of such installations and be guided by the following:

- A. When utilizing a wall line installation:
  - 1. Disconnect the existing hose line.
  - 2. Remove any pressure reducing device which may be present.
  - 3. Connect fire department hose.
- B. Remember that the volume of water and the pressure available from these installations may be limited.
- C. House line installations may be utilized for initial attack while back-up lines are being stretched into position.

## DRY CHEMICAL SYSTEMS

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Dry chemical systems may be found in a variety of occupancies and installations. Some of these include restaurants, spray booths and dip tanks.

- A. Upon arrival at an out-of-doors fire being attacked by a dry chemical extinguishing system, such as a tank loading rack, lay lines to back up the system in case of re-ignition by hot metal after the chemical has dispersed. If you have portable extinguishers on your apparatus suitable for the kind of fire involved, they can be used to supplement the system.
- B. In the case of local application systems inside a building, such as for a dip tank, do not turn hose streams on the fire, since this is likely to splash the burning liquid out of the tank and cause it to spread on the water to the rest of the building.
- C. If a total flooding system is operating, do not open up the enclosure until the powder has fully extinguished the fire and any hot objects which can act as

- sources of re-ignition have cooled off. The chemical must be permitted to build up sufficient concentration inside the enclosure to do the job - any premature "opening up" would nullify its operation.
- D. If it is necessary to enter an enclosure in a heavy concentration of dry chemical to close up openings or effect a rescue, wear self-contained breathing apparatus and go in pairs.
  - E. Where hand hose systems are available, these can often be used to help to automatic system.
  - F. Before leaving the scene of an incident where a system has operated and after you have completed your overhaul and salvage work, be sure that steps are taken by the plant's management to restore the system to a condition of readiness.
  - G. Before leaving the scene the Health Department should be notified of the problem so that they may investigate for contamination of food products.
  - H. Always check out the possibility of fire on upper floors or in the attic whenever a grease duct fire occurs.

## HALON SYSTEMS

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It is vitally important for all members to have an understanding of Halon extinguishing systems.

- A. When responding to a fire where a total flooding system has operated in a room or vault, do not open the door until you are satisfied that the fire is out; do not open the door until sufficient time has elapsed to allow the gas to "soak" in and the material to cool so that re-ignition will not occur when the inert atmosphere is dissipated.
- B. When you decide to "open up", wear self-contained breathing apparatus and overhaul the fire right away to make certain that extinguishment is complete and to ensure against a rekindle.
- C. It is always well to "back up" any system, whether local application or total flooding and regardless of the agent, with suitable extinguishing capability, just in case the system fails to function as intended.
- D. During overhaul work, be sure to wear your self-contained breathing apparatus while placing fans to assist in the prompt ventilation of such areas; but do not merely move the combustion products to another location - be sure they are directed to the outside where they will not enter a basement or lie in some hole. Remember that Halon 1301 is about five times heavier than air, and is apt to settle in low places.
- E. Be sure that steps are taken by the plant's management to restore the system.

## CARBON DIOXIDE SYSTEMS

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- A. Be prepared to operate the system manually just in case automatic activation has not occurred.
- B. If, upon arrival, the warning alarm has already sounded, the occupants of the room have withdrawn, the doors have closed, and the CO<sub>2</sub> has already discharged into the area, do not open the door to "see for yourself."
- C. Where response is to a fire being attacked by a local application system, you may be able to assist in the extinguishment by using a carbon dioxide hand hose line system if one is available.
- D. Be prepared to handle flashback that may occur after the gas has dispersed, by having your supplementary extinguishing equipment ready for immediate use. But, be sure it is suitable for the type of fire, or you can make things worse.
- E. If it becomes necessary to enter a flooded room to effect a rescue or manually close some opening to seal up the enclosure; in such circumstances, not less than two men, equipped with breathing apparatus and life line should carry out the task.
- F. When ventilating a room which has been flooded with CO<sub>2</sub>, portable fans can sometimes be used to assist in removing the gas, especially where the vault or room has no exhaust system of its own. In this initial opening up, be sure to wear self-contained breathing apparatus.
- G. Be sure that steps are taken by the occupancy's management to restore the system.

## FOAM SYSTEMS

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- A. If the fire has not yet been extinguished, make sure that the system has not had any valves closed which would prevent the water from flowing, or electricity cut off, which would prevent the foam concentrate or water pumps from functioning.
- B. If the fire is still so small that the detectors have not yet operated, it may be possible to stop it with portable extinguishers before the system is activated.
- C. However, if there is a serious fire progressing beyond the capabilities of hand extinguishers, the system should be quickly tripped by hand (if not already operating) and backed up with additional protection in the form of hand hose foam steams, or carbon dioxide wheeled units or hand hose, if available; high expansion foam generators and dry chemical extinguishers can also be used, providing these agents are compatible with the foam being applied by the system.
- D. If a large spill has occurred, but not yet ignited, any system designed to protect this area could be manually operated to provide a protective foam blanket as an interim precaution while the leak is being stopped and the spill removed.

- E. Do not nullify the effectiveness of the foam by turning water streams into a tank or diked area, for not only will this break up the continuity of the surface blanket, but can cause the foam to overflow the container and may even wash flammable liquid over the sides and spread the fire.
- F. Remember that some systems are designed to provide insulation and exposure protection, as well as extinguishment of spill fires; such is the case where foam spray nozzles are located over the vessel to be protected, so be careful not to wash away this foam protection with your hose lines. The use of high velocity fog nozzles may be helpful, however, in shielding other tanks, reactor towers, stills, or processing equipment in the vicinity.
- G. On very extensive fires, the setting up of wagon batteries, portable monitor nozzles, ladder pipes and elevating platform nozzles, in locations where they can provide good exposure protection with minimum risk to fire fighters, may be a good course of action.
- H. After the fire is extinguished, and before returning to your quarters, see that the plant management restores the foam system to service.

**SUBJECT:** OPERATIONS IN SPRINKLERED BUILDINGS**SECTION:** 301.14**REVISED:** FEBRUARY 10, 2004**PAGE(S):** 4

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## PURPOSE

To establish a standard procedure for operations in sprinklered and standpipe buildings.

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## POLICY

In the event that a structure equipped with a sprinkler or standpipe system is reported to be on fire (either by verbal or alarm system notification) the following operations have been established.

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## UPON ARRIVAL

- A. Give a conditions report.
- B. Continue size-up.
- C. Determine exact location of the fire.
  1. Check with occupants.
  2. Check annunciator panel (if available).
  3. Check for alarm bells ringing, which may indicate the involved zone.
  4. Check for water flowing from exterior drains, which may indicate the general area.
- D. Second engine to arrive at the scene of a building equipped with a sprinkler and/or standpipe system should position the apparatus at the Fire Department Connection (F.D.C.) and await orders to connect to the system and provide water supply.
  1. The pump operator should automatically connect to the F.D.C. upon hearing that there is smoke or fire existing in the building as reported from the interior fire crews.

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## SAFETY

- A. Utilize full protective clothing.
- B. Maintain tight control over personnel during interior operations.
- C. Utilize hose lines and/or life lines during interior search operations.

## PROCEDURES

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- A. The second arriving engine should be responsible for connection supply lines to the F.D.C.; however, if the first arriving engine has the F.D.C. at their location that engine should supply the system.
- B. The minimum fire department hook up to the F.D.C. should not be less than two 2 1/2" hose lines.
- C. If a fire is in progress and sprinkler heads have opened, one hundred fifty (150) pounds of pressure should be provided to the F.D.C. If long lines are required (over 100 feet) between the pumper and F.D.C., the friction loss in the hose must be considered in hydraulic calculations.
- D. Unless it is known for sure that private mains provide an adequate supply, pumpers should be connected to city hydrants, if available. A general rule is not to take suction from hydrants on a private system unless it is known that the system is adequate for the purpose.
- E. Send a fire fighter, equipped with a hand radio, to inspect the shut-off valve to:
  1. Determine if the sprinklers are operating properly.
  2. Open the valve if it is closed.
  3. Shut off the valve promptly when the Incident Commander decides that sprinkler operations may be discontinued.
  4. Reopen the valve in the event that the fire rekindles and cannot be controlled by those hand lines which are already in place.
- F. Normally, 1 1/2" or 1 3/4" hand lines may be used for fire streams in sprinklered buildings. However, when fires involve unusual hazards, high piled stock or large areas, 2 1/2" hand lines should be considered.
- G. Observe the affect of the sprinklered system on the fire to determine:
  1. If the system is operating properly.
  2. The size and number of hose lines which may be needed to effect complete control and extinguishment.
- H. Insure that evacuation, search and other life safety measures are promptly completed at fires in sprinklered buildings.
  1. Effective control of fires in sprinklered buildings requires proper ventilation. Whether such ventilation is accomplished by conventional means or by utilizing on site built-in automatic systems, the following steps must be accomplished: A fire fighter equipped with a hand radio must be sent to the shut-off valve to stand by.
  2. Hose lines must be ready, charged and in position for confinement and control before the sprinklers are shut off.
  3. Truck Company personnel must be in position and should have affected the necessary conventional opening(s) or be prepared to initiate available on site automatic systems before the sprinklers are shut off.
  4. The Incident Commander or the Operations Officer must insure proper communications and coordination.

5. When all of the above have been accomplished, the sprinkler system should be shut down (slowly) to allow proper ventilation to occur and those members manning hand lines to move in and fully extinguish the fire.
6. In the event that the hand lines are unable to affect control, the system should be turned on again until additional streams can be brought into position.
  - I. Initiate prompt salvage and water removal operations to protect records, machinery, storage, stock and furnishings from water damage.
  - J. After fire operations are complete:
    1. Contact owner, occupant, or agent about the sprinkler system being out of order and that they should contact the service representative to put the system back in operation.
    2. Explain to the owner, occupant, or agent that the property will not be protected or if connected to a central signaling station an alarm will not be transmitted.

## THE "BUTTON-UP" APPROACH

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Although not considered a standard method of handling fires in sprinklered buildings, the "button-up" approach offers an alternative operational procedure where unusual hazardous conditions may exist. In those situations where the involved sprinklered occupancy presents an extreme life safety hazard for fire personnel (such as high piled stocks of plastics or flammable liquids, etc.) The Incident Commander may, at his discretion, utilize the option of the "button-up" approach.

- A. Evacuate the building of all personnel.
- B. Close up the building as tightly as possible to limit the air supply available to the fire.
- C. Connect a pumper engine to the fire department sprinkler connection and pump into the system.
- D. Keep sprinkler control valves wide open and sprinklers operating at all times, for an hour or more as necessary, until the fire has essentially been extinguished and can be manually attacked.
- E. During the final stages of sprinkler operation, but before manual attack is begun, attempt to mechanically exhaust smoke from the building if the equipment is available. This will not only facilitate manual extinguishment, but will also help to prevent the chance that combustible gases, built up inside the building from fire in an oxygen-starved atmosphere, could flash or explode when the building is opened.
- F. Before shutting off sprinklers, attempt to evaluate fire severity. This can be done either by a reconnaissance using life lines and air packs, or by breaking through the roof or a wall if the location of the seat of the fire can be fixed from questioning employees.

- G. Then, shut off sprinklers, open up the building to vent smoke, and attack with hose streams. But, keep a person posted at the sprinkler control valve at all times (with two-way radio, if available), ready to turn sprinklers back on if the fire threatens to flare up.

**SUBJECT:** VEHICLE FIRES**SECTION:** 301.15**REVISED:** FEBRUARY 12, 2008**PAGE(S):** 3

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## PURPOSE

- A. To identify operational tactics for safe handling of motor vehicle fires.

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## FIRE CONTROL OPERATIONS

- A. Minimum level of protection for fire fighters is full protective clothing and SCBA.
- B. Minimum size hoseline is the 1-3/4" handline.

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## APPARATUS PLACEMENT

- A. Apparatus should be placed upwind and uphill if possible.
- B. Consider using the apparatus as a barrier, to shield the incident scene from traffic hazards.
- C. Warning lights should be left operating.
- D. Additional consideration should be given to positioning the apparatus at an angle to better allow the removal of preconnect cross-lays.

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## WATER SUPPLY

- A. Consider additional water supplies when water carried will not be sufficient.
- B. Additional companies may be required.
- C. Ladder companies may be used as an improvised standpipe at incidents on elevated freeways.

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## FIRE ATTACK

- A. A working fire involving the interior of a vehicle passenger compartment will damage the vehicle beyond repair.
  - 1. Attack plan should consider the vehicle as a "write off" and a safe and appropriate approach and fire attack must be implemented.
- B. Where patients are trapped in the vehicle, first water should be applied to protect the patients and permit rescue.
- C. When rescue is not a factor, first water should be applied for several seconds to extinguish fire or cool down the area around any fuel tanks or fuel systems.
- D. At least one member of the attack team must have forcible entry tools in his/her possession to provide prompt and safe entry into a vehicle.

## HAZARDS AND SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS

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- A. Liquid Petroleum Gas (LPG) and Liquid Natural Gas (LNG)
  - 1. Pressure release devices can create a lengthy “blow torch” effect.
  - 2. A BLEVE may occur if the pressure relief device fails.
  - 3. Vehicles may not be marked to identify this hazard.
  - 4. Control the fire and cool the tank if there is flame impingement on a visible LPG/LNG storage tank.
  - 5. If vapors escaping from the storage tank relief valve has ignited, allow the LPG/LNG to burn while protecting exposures and cooling the tank.
  - 6. Flow of gas through the piping can be controlled by shutting off the valve at the storage tank.
- B. Energy Absorbing Bumpers
  - 1. Consist of gas and fluid cylinders
  - 2. Will develop high pressures when heated during a fire resulting in sudden release of the bumper assembly.
- C. Batteries
  - 1. Explosion hazard due to the presence of hydrogen vapors.
  - 2. Avoid contact
  - 3. Disconnect battery cables (ground cable first) when the situation is stable.
- D. Combustible Metals
  - 1. Some vehicles have various parts made of combustible metals, such as engine blocks, heads, wheels, etc.
  - 2. Water will intensify the fire when these metals are burning.
  - 3. Large quantities of water will cool the metal below its ignition temperature. After some initial intensification, the fire should go out.
  - 4. Dry chemical extinguishers can also be effective.
- E. Trunk/Rear Hatch/Engine Hoods
  - 1. Hold open devices may employ, along or in any combination with any of the following: springs, gas cylinders, extending arms, etc.
  - 2. Failure of these devices should be expected when exposed to heat.
  - 3. Allow sufficient clearance when releasing latches.
- F. Trunk/Cargo Area Fires
  - 1. Approached with extreme caution. Expect the worst!
  - 2. Contents may include toxic, flammable or other hazardous materials.
- G. Fuel Tanks
  - 1. May be constructed of sheet metal or plastic.
  - 2. A rapid flash fire of fuel may occur with a rupture or burn through.
  - 3. Do NOT remove the gas cap – tank may have become pressurized.
  - 4. Do NOT direct hose stream into tank.
- H. Interior
  - 1. Well sealed interiors of modern vehicles present the potential for backdraft.
  - 2. Use caution when opening doors or breaking windows.
  - 3. Have a charged handline ready before making entry.

## I. Vehicle Stability

1. Tires or rims exposed to fire may explode causing the vehicle to drop suddenly.
2. Expect exploding rims parts or tire debris to be expelled outward from the sides.
3. Approach from the front or rear of vehicle for maximum protection.
4. Some larger vehicles, such as buses, employ air suspension system. When these systems are exposed to heat or flame, they may fail, causing the vehicle to SUDDENLY drop several inches.
5. Vehicles on a grade may roll – chock the wheels.

**SUBJECT:** ELECTRICAL EMERGENCIES**SECTION:** 301.16**REVISED:** AUGUST 17, 2003**PAGE(S):** 3

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## PURPOSE

To provide safe guidelines for the handling of electrical emergency operations.

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## POLICY

When it has been determined that an electrical emergency exists these guidelines have been established.

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## PROCEDURE

- A. Determine the type of electrical problem and request the appropriate power company to respond, if needed.
- B. Give dispatcher proper location of incident (pole number, etc).
- C. Set up operational perimeter. Request Police Department assistance when necessary. (The rule of thumb for establishing electrical incident operational perimeter is to maintain distance of one complete span of wires on either side of fallen wires.)
- D. Park apparatus outside of operational perimeter.

---

## SAFETY

- A. Do not fight electrical fires unless de-energized or life is in danger. Protect exposures.
- B. Be careful when spotting equipment and hose lines. Electrical lines may fall on apparatus, personnel or hose lines.
- C. Do not walk under transformers as they may contain P.C.B.s or burning oil. (Remember transformers can and do explode.)
- D. Wear protective clothing.
- E. Do not open shutters on vaults. This may cause an explosion due to accumulation of flammable gases.
- F. Keep bystanders clear of hazardous area.
- G. Stay clear of manhole covers over electrical vaults – they have been known to blow off and fly as far as one hundred fifty feet.
- H. No personnel should enter underground electrical vaults except to effect rescue and then only when advised by power company personnel on the scene that the vault has been de-energized.

- I. When entering underground electrical vault (de-energized) to effect rescue, personnel must be in full protective clothing, including a manned life line.
- J. Toxic gas may be formed from electrical fires in vaults take necessary precautions (SCBA).
- K. Do not open pole mounted switches - they are for power company personnel only.
- L. Do not assume that telephone/TV cable wires are not hot - they may be in contact with hot wires.
- M. Do not use water to control pole top fires unless de-energized by the power company. Protect exposures.
- N. Avoid standing in puddles of run-off water during fire fighting operations when energized electrical equipment may be involved or nearby.
- O. Assume that all wires down are HOT and act accordingly.
- P. Do not use non-rated equipment such as pike poles, non-rated cutters and non-rated ropes to handle downed wires.

## **WIRES DOWN**

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- A. Be careful when spotting hose lines and apparatus additional lines may fall.
- B. Establish a secure area (operational perimeter); include fences, vehicles, guard rails, railroad tracks and puddles of water which may be electrically energized.
- C. Standby and keep the public away from the scene until wires are de-energized by power company personnel.

## **ELECTRICAL FIRE CONTROL**

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- A. Power pole fire - do not extinguish with water unless life is threatened or major structural component of power pole is threatened or directed to by power company personnel.
- B. Electrical fires are best handled by shutting down power source.
- C. CO2 and dry chemical are the best extinguishing agent for electrical fires.
- D. If structure fire involves electrical service or wiring, the power to the building should be shut off.
- E. Electrical vault fires should be extinguished only after they have been de-energized.
- F. Power Company personnel shall be notified anytime electrical service is shut off by fire department personnel.

## **VEHICLE RESCUE**

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- A. Uninjured or mildly injured victims should stay in vehicle until power to downed lines can be secured by power company personnel.
  - 1. Victim should be encouraged to stay in the car.
  - 2. If the victim must leave the vehicle, advised them to jump clear of the vehicle as far as possible before coming in contact with the ground.

3. Once clear of the vehicle, inform them not to touch the vehicle again - Don't turn around and close the door.
  4. Inform them not to help someone else still in the vehicle. This will put both of them in the path to ground.
- B. If it is necessary to care for injured patient or remove patient from vehicle prior to power company arrival, proceed with the proper safety clothing (full turnout gear and face shield or goggles) and electrical equipment (dielectrically rated clamp sticks, cutters, etc.), the wire can be pulled free of the vehicle.
- C. Do not use pike poles, non-rated ropes and/or non-rated equipment to handle downed lines during vehicle rescues.

**SUBJECT:** FIRES IN U.S. MAILBOXES**SECTION:** 301.17**REVISED:** FEBRUARY 10, 2004**PAGE(S):** 1

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**PURPOSE**

To provide an effective method of handling fires in United States mailboxes and postal installations.

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**POLICY**

It shall be the policy of this department to follow this procedure as outlined in the event of fires in United States mailboxes and postal installations.

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**PROCEDURE**

Have the dispatcher contact the postal authority and request that a representative respond to the scene.

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**CONTROL**

Control mailbox fires, if possible, without breaking open the boxes.

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**EXTINGUISHMENT**

Use CO<sub>2</sub> or dry chemical to extinguish fires in mailboxes. Avoid the use of water if possible.

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**EXPOSED CONTENTS**

If the contents of a mailbox are exposed, a member should remain at the scene until the arrival of a postal authority representative.

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**CONTENTS NOT EXPOSED**

Unless the contents are exposed, standby will normally not be required. Companies leaving the scene prior to arrival of postal authorities should secure the box against continued use.

**SUBJECT:** RAILROAD EMERGENCIES**SECTION:** 301.18**REVISED:** MAY 22, 2004**PAGE(S):** 2

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## PURPOSE

- A. To establish guidelines for the notification and safety of personnel while handling emergency railroad incidents.

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## POLICY

- A. The fire department should follow these guidelines in the handling of emergency incidents on the railroad to insure the proper handling of the incident and the safety of personnel and citizens.

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## PROCEDURE

### A. UPON ARRIVAL

1. Have the dispatcher notify the Norfolk Southern, 260-493-5433, and/or Indiana/Ohio Railroad dispatcher, 860-3636 or 860-5655, of the exact location of the incident and request a railroad representative respond.
  - a. Railroad tracks are located between the 14.1 (Galbraith Rd) and the 15.4 (Reading Rd) mile markers.
2. Request assistance as may be necessary to handle the emergency.
3. Have a lighted red fuses placed on the tracks (in the center, between the rails) one-half (1/2) mile in each direction of the incident. This will notify on-coming trains to stop. Someone should stand by as a flagman with the fuses until you are notified that on-coming trains have been stopped or diverted.
4. Request Police assistance, if necessary.
5. Coordinate with the train conductor, engineer and/or any available railroad personnel at the scene.
6. If cars other than the engine are involved, obtain a copy of the shipping papers to determine the nature of the cargo.

### B. SAFETY

1. Responding personnel should wear protective clothing in accordance with the emergency situation and Fire Department guidelines.
2. Personnel should be aware that diesel electric train engines carry from 100 to 250 gallons of P.C.B. in their electric generators.

3. Some situations involving cargo fires (when the cargo is of a hazardous nature) may dictate evacuation of the immediate and/or surrounding area.

#### C. ENGINE FIRES

1. Coordinate with the conductor and engineer.
2. Use CO2 on electrical fires.
3. Diesel engines utilize considerable quantities of diesel fuel on board. Handle these fires as you would a combustible liquid fire.
4. Full protective clothing and SCBA's shall be worn.

#### D. TANK CAR FIRES AND LEAKS

1. Identify the product, if possible.
2. Be guided by the nature of the product. If hazardous materials are involved, seek technical assistance from ChemTrec, Hazardous Materials Guidebooks, etc. USE EXTREME CAUTION
3. Wear full protective gear and SCBA's.
4. When hazardous materials are involved, proceed according to the nature of the hazard. A DEFENSIVE MODE MAY BE CALLED FOR RATHER THAN AN OFFENSIVE MODE.
5. Evacuation may be necessary.

#### E. BOX CAR FIRES

1. Identify the product; if a hazardous material is involved, proceed according to the nature of the involved product.
2. When normal materials are involved, protect exposures, disconnect the car and separate it from the rest of the train, if possible.
3. Cool the exterior of the car and try to determine where the hottest area of the car might be.
4. Cool the underside of the car.
5. Normally an indirect attack is best. This is accomplished by the following:
  - a. Determine, if possible, the hottest area of the car.
  - b. Ladder the car and punch a small hole in the roof of the car over the hottest area.
  - c. Use a fog or cellar nozzle through the hole to affect an indirect attack.
6. Full protective clothing and SCBA's shall be worn.

**SUBJECT:** AIRCRAFT EMERGENCIES**SECTION:** 301.19**REVISED:** FEBRUARY 10, 2004**PAGE(S):** 1

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**UPON ARRIVAL**

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- A. Report on conditions.
- B. Size-up conditions.
- C. Request additional assistance if needed.
- D. Establish an operational perimeter.
- E. Establish a command post.

---

**SAFETY**

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- A. Do not approach military aircraft from the front. They may be loaded with forward firing ordnance.
- B. If using foam for fire extinguishment, continue application even after the fire is knocked down to protect against flash back.
- C. Wear full protective clothing or modified full protective clothing in accordance with on-scene conditions.
- D. Be prepared for possible explosions.
- E. Stay away from the front and rear openings of jet engines.

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**OPERATIONS**

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- A. Have the dispatcher notify the FAA of the situation.
- B. Request police assistance for traffic control, crowd control and scene preservation.
- C. If there is no fire:
  - 1. Use foam on spilled fuel and aircraft to minimize ignition potential.
  - 2. If foam is not available, flush spilled fuel away from cabin or cockpit and keep fog streams in operation while effecting rescue of occupants.
  - 3. Take precautions against possible fuel ignition.
- D. If there is fire:
  - 1. Approach from windward side if possible.
  - 2. Use foam if available.
  - 3. If foam is not available, use fog streams to drive away fire from occupants and to cover fire fighters on nozzles and those attempting rescue.
  - 4. Protect exposures.

**SUBJECT:** HIGH RISE FIRES  
**REVISED:** FEBRUARY 12, 2008

**SECTION:** 301.20  
**PAGE(S):** 2

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## PURPOSE

- A. To provide a means of combating fires in high rise buildings.
- B. To gain control of the building early in the fire.
- C. To insure the safety of all the building occupants.

---

## POLICY

- A. High rise fire guidelines should be followed on any structures that are three stories and above.

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## REFERENCE

- A. *Model Procedures Guide for High Rise Firefighting, Second Edition, National Fire Service Incident Management System Consortium, 2003, ISBN 0-87939-217-7.*

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## PROCEDURE

- A. First-In Company should enter the lobby and obtain whatever information is available and give a conditions report.
- B. Locate the fire and relay information concerning the following:
  - 1. Reported location of fire (if known).
  - 2. Safety of elevators. (Are they useable?)
- C. Attempt to determine if rescue problem exists.
- D. Call for additional help, if necessary.

---

## SAFETY

- A. Establish lobby control early in the fire to control elevators, utilities and running list of personnel in and out of the building.
- B. Area below fire (exterior) should be kept clear for two hundred (200) feet in all directions due to the possibility of broken glass falling from above.
- C. Command Post should be a minimum of two hundred (200) feet from the fire building.
- D. If elevators are judged safe to use, precede two floors below fire floor and use stairwells the rest of the distance.
- E. For rescue purposes, there are approximately one hundred (100) occupants per floor in a high rise building.

- F. Initial fire attack crew will need relief in twenty minutes (this includes the time it takes to ascend to the fire floor.).

## COMMUNICATIONS

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- A. Communications are usually poor in a "steel skeleton" building utilizing portable hand radios. Sometimes, moving to open window or roof will improve communications.
- B. It may be possible to utilize building's intercom or phone system.
- C. To minimize radio traffic over the emergency scene channel interior sector officers may make use of the building telephone system to contact the Fire Ground Command Post through the cellular telephone system.

## OPERATIONS

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- A. Locate fire - leaving one member in lobby to establish lobby control.
- B. Prepare for standpipe operation. Pump to both standpipe and sprinkler system.
- C. If evacuation is necessary, you may be able to move the occupants to a safe area two or three floors above or below fire, rather than evacuating everyone out by way of the lobby.
- D. A command post shall be established and other high rise operational positions shall be implemented as needed to insure an efficient operation.
- E. Ventilation is most effectively carried out by removing (if possible) or breaking out the windows on the fire floor (horizontal ventilation).
- F. If you must ventilate vertically using stairwells, make sure that escape is not cut off for anyone; also that only a smoke tower stairwell be used.

**SUBJECT:** EXPLOSIVES AND BOMBS**SECTION:** 301.21**REVISED:** FEBRUARY 10, 2004**PAGE(S):** 3

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## **PURPOSE**

To establish guidelines for the fire department for incidents involving bombs or explosives.

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## **POLICY**

This policy should be followed when the department receives a bomb threat for another location, explosives brought to the station, and for explosives encountered during routine operations.

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## **PROCEDURE**

### **A. BOMB THREATS**

1. The fire department will not respond on bomb threats when notified by the police department or by an anonymous caller. The dispatcher will send the Police OIC and one additional police unit to the scene.
2. If requested to respond to the area by the Police, respond to the area on a non-emergency basis.
3. Spot the apparatus well clear of the exact location; minimum of 200 feet away.
4. Make contact with the law enforcement officer in charge and coordinate with the same – may not be able to do so via radio or cell phone.
5. Do not become involved in the police functions of search and evacuation unless there has already been an actual explosion.
6. Do not become involved in bomb disposal operations.
7. Coordinate with law enforcement personnel concerning the establishment of an operational perimeter. (Remember unauthorized persons shall not be allowed inside the operational perimeter).
8. Standby and await instructions.
9. If an explosion and/or fire occur, be aware that secondary explosions will likely occur. Utilize any available protective cover during firefighting operations.
10. In bomb threat situations, normally the decision to search for the bomb or to evacuate the building rests with the management of the occupancy and the law enforcement agency involved.
11. Remember that the radio transmitter/cell phone may initiate detonation of some types of explosive devices.

12. During emergency operations and during overhaul, be alert for additional explosive devices (this could be anything that may seem out of place). If an object is suspected of being an explosive device, do not touch it or allow anyone else to touch it. Notify (not by radio) the bomb squad and the Incident Commander immediately.

#### B. EXPLOSIVES BROUGHT TO THE FIRE STATION

In the event that any person brings a suspected bomb, explosive device, or any amount of explosives into a Fire Station, Fire Department members shall be guided by the following:

1. Gently place the suspected device in the most secure area possible (away from personnel, buildings, and apparatus). Place blankets or salvage covers in a position to deflect the debris in a direction to cause the least amount of damage to personnel and property.
2. Notify the Police Department by telephone, not by radio, and request the following:
  - a. Notification and request for response of the bomb squad.
  - b. Notification of the Fire Chief.
3. Evacuate personnel and apparatus from the station.
4. Obtain identification and all pertinent information from the person(s) delivering the suspected device and retain said person at the scene until the Police Department arrives.
5. Do not use radios/cell phones in the immediate area as they could possibly initiate detonation of the suspected device.

#### C. EXPLOSIVES ENCOUNTERED DURING ROUTINE ACTIVITIES

Whenever explosives, suspected bombs or explosive devices are encountered during the course of routine operations, Fire Department personnel shall be guided by the following:

1. Refrain from touching or moving the suspected device.
2. Evacuate the immediate area and establish an operational perimeter. Contact officer in charge.
3. Allow no unauthorized personnel within an operational perimeter.
4. Contact the dispatcher (utilize radios/cell phones only from a distance of at least two hundred (200) feet away to avoid possible detonation) and request the following:
  - a. Response of the Police Department.
  - b. Response one of the following bomb squads:
    1. Hamilton County Sheriff Bomb Unit if you suspect a criminal act has occurred.
    2. Cincinnati Fire Division Bomb Unit for non-criminal incidents.
    3. Cincinnati Fire Division Bomb Unit or consider 71<sup>st</sup> Ordinance Detachment out of Wright Patterson Air Force Base for military ordinances.
5. Proceed as per normal bomb threat operations (see section A).

#### D. BOMB THREAT TO MUNICIPAL BUILDING

1. All non-essential personnel, with the exception of the police dispatcher will be evacuated from the building.
2. All radio/cell phones communication will cease.
3. A firefighter will be assigned to check the front of the apparatus doors for obstructions prior to the removal of equipment.
4. Fire Department personnel will remove all fire apparatus from the fire bays.
5. No radio/cell phone transmissions within 300 yards of the city building.
6. If the building lights are on – leave them on, if the building lights are off - leave them off.
7. Building will remain in vacant until building can be thoroughly searched.
8. Doors shall not be opened with automatic door openers but shall be manually operated.

**SUBJECT:** FIRE AND EXPLOSION SCENE INVESTIGATIONS**SECTION:** 301.22**REVISED:** JANUARY 12, 2012**PAGE(S):** 3

## PURPOSE

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- A. To ensure the investigation of all fires and explosions occurring within the jurisdictional area of the City of Reading.
- B. To initiate a system of fire investigation which begins at company level and progresses to upper organizational levels, as necessary, based on the situation involving an emergency incident.
- C. To establish guidelines for assistance to determine the origin and cause, resulting in who or what was responsible and reasons for the occurrence.
- D. To provide policy, guidelines, and procedures relative to the fire investigation process at the company level.

## POLICY

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- A. It shall be the policy of the department to investigate the cause, origin, and circumstances of each major fire, as determined by the rules of the fire marshal as per; O.R.C. §3737.24 *Investigation of Cause of Fires*, O.R.C. §737.27 *Investigation of Fires*. O.A.C §1301:7-7-01§104.10.2 defines a major fire as, a fire or explosion that caused or had a substantial risk of causing death or serious physical harm to any persons or damage to or the destruction of any occupancy, property or vehicle. O.R.C. §3737.24 requires the investigating officer to notify the Fire Marshall forthwith. Forthwith means, immediately.
- B. Company officers should initiate the investigation of those fires that they respond to within the city limits.
- C. Company officers/Incident Commanders should request a fire investigator whenever any of the following circumstances exist:
  - 1. Arson, incendiary, or suspicious fires.
    - a. The presence of incendiary plants, trailers, or devices (electrical, chemical, mechanical).
    - b. Multiple origins or un-communicated fires.
    - c. Prior or habitual fires.
    - d. Fires at unusual and suspicious hours.
    - e. Fires preceded by apparent preparation, such as the removal of contents or the absence of contents that are usually found in that type of occupancy.
    - f. Fires which burn or injure the occupants.
    - g. Unusual conditions and locations of burnings.
    - h. Suspicious comments and actions of the occupant.
    - i. Condemned property or proceedings for removal of a structure.
    - j. Fires prior to/ or during redecoration or renovation.

- k. Fires where damaged or pre-burned contents are found.
  - l. Fires of property listed for sale.
  - m. Fires discovered by habitual persons.
  - n. Fires possibly connected to riots, racial, or civil disturbance.
  - o. Fires that may have been used to conceal other crimes.
  - p. Fires recently preceded by acts of vandalism.
  - q. Vehicle fires involving any combination of two compartments (engine, passenger, trunk/payload area) which does not appear to have commuted under normal circumstances.
  - r. Fires that occur on or involve City, State or Federal property, with notification being made to same.
- 2. Evidence or suspicions of any crime having occurred in connection with the emergency incident.
  - 3. Fires resulting in fatalities of any persons.
  - 4. Fires in connection with or resulting from an explosion or the manufacturing of explosive devices.
  - 5. Fires or responses to clandestine lab operations.
  - 6. Major fires with significant property or monetary losses.
  - 7. When a building is in danger of fire or the setting of a fire has been threatened or plotted, whether or not a fire has occurred.
  - 8. Incidents which, in the opinion of the Company Officer, may result in a lawsuit or have legal ramifications.
  - 9. Any situation not specifically mentioned, but in the opinion of the Company Officer, a fire investigation is needed or when a clear origin and cause can not be determined.
- D. Fire Department Investigators should be requested via the Reading Dispatch Center following the call-out procedure listed in the Dispatcher's FD Resource Manual.
  - E. Whenever a fire investigator has been requested by the Company Officer and the dispatcher is unable to contact an investigator, the Company Officer may request a consult with the Central Team Captain of the Hamilton County Arson Taskforce (HCAT), or a response of the Central investigative team of HCAT. HCAT can be activated by contacting the Hamilton County Communications Center.
  - F. If needed additional specialized resources may be requested from the Reading Police and Service Departments, Ohio Fire Marshal's Office, Ohio Bureau of Criminal Investigation and Identification (BCI&I), the Bureau of Alcohol-Tobacco & Firearms (ATF) and Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI).
  - G. Evidence should be collected and secured following the procedures set forth by the Hamilton County Coroner's Lab.
  - H. All inquiries made by private and/or insurance investigators shall be referred to the Fire Chief or the reporting Fire Investigator of said incident.
  - I. Outside resources may be considered for incidents which involve the property/implication of City of Reading employees or elected officials.
  - J. Fire investigation reports shall be maintained by the Fire Prevention Bureau.

- K. All fires and explosions that cause (a) death or serious injury or (b) large property loss fires and explosions (large for the community in which they occur) must now be immediately reported to the Division of State Fire Marshal via phone by calling 800-589-2728

## PROCEDURE

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- A. During fire fighting operations, be alert for conditions which may indicate incendiarism.
- B. Initiate fire investigation procedures as soon as possible after knock-down and before overhaul.
- C. Secure the incident scene and perimeter, entry of un-authorized persons shall be prohibited.
- D. If it is determined that a crime has occurred, an entry point will be established. All entry into the crime scene will be made through this single point and all personnel entering or exiting shall be logged. Only essential personnel will be granted access into the area. Care should be taken by all personnel to maintain the original integrity of the crime scene.
- E. Endeavor, first, to determine the point/area of origin.
- F. Endeavor to determine the cause of the fire.
- G. Conduct overhaul operations with care as directed by the officer in charge/fire investigator during the investigation activities.
- H. Preserve all evidence in the location and position found until an investigator arrives.
- I. Limit discussion of the incident and particulars associated with the investigation to fire and police investigative personnel only.
- J. Request a fire investigator, as per this policy.
- K. Limit overhaul operations as far as may be practical until the arrival of the investigator.

## RESPONSIBILITY

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- A. It is the overall responsibility of the Incident Commander to make certain that the on-scene fire investigation is being conducted.
- B. The Officer in Charge (O.I.C.) or Company Officers, that are conducting a fire investigation, are responsible for requesting a fire investigator whenever such circumstances may exist, as described in this policy
- C. It is the responsibility of all Officers and Fire Fighters to be alert for any evidence which may aid in the investigation and to preserve such evidence until it can be properly collected and secured.

**SUBJECT:** FIRE WATCH DETAIL**SECTION:** 301.23**REVISED:** FEBRUARY 12, 2008**PAGE(S):** 1

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## PURPOSE

- A. To provide a means of releasing fire companies from the scene of a fire which is under control but may still require observation and additional attention to prevent rekindle.
- B. To provide means of protecting the scene of a fire investigation.

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## POLICY

- A. The incident commander may, at his discretion, require the posting of a fire watch for the purposes of preventing rekindle and/or protecting the scene of an investigation.
- B. Whenever a fire watch is posted, those members who may be assigned to the detail should be properly equipped so that they will be able to obtain help immediately and take necessary actions to prevent an extensive rekindle.
- C. Whenever possible, those members assigned to fire watch detail should be rotated in such a manner which will insure that those actually on watch will have received sufficient rest so as to be fully alert.

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## RESPONSIBILITY

- A. The Incident Commander is responsible for establishing a fire watch detail whenever the need becomes apparent to protect the scene for investigation or prevent a rekindle of the fire.
- B. The Incident Commander is responsible for insuring that the fire watch detail is sufficiently well equipped and provided with timely relief so as to be effective at the scene.
- C. Members who are assigned to fire watch detail should be responsible for protecting the scene against the entry of unauthorized persons.
- D. Members who are assigned to fire watch detail should remain alert and shall guard against the rekindle of the fire.
- E. Members who are assigned to fire watch detail are responsible for recalling help back to the scene in the event that problems arise beyond their control.

**SUBJECT:** RETURNING COMPANIES TO SERVICE**SECTION:** 301.24**REVISED:** NOVEMBER 5, 2007**PAGE(S):** 1

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## PURPOSE

To insure that fire companies and units are returned to available status as quickly as is possible after emergency operations have concluded.

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## POLICY

- A. After emergency operations are completed, fire companies and/or units should endeavor to return to service quickly, becoming available as soon as is effectively and safely possible.
- B. Returning to available status after the conclusion of an emergency shall be considered a priority operation.

---

## PROCEDURE

- A. All companies and/or units which have been released from an emergency scene should insure that they are sufficiently re-equipped and ready for response.
- B. As soon as companies and/or units become available for response, they should notify the incident commander that they are “available.”
- C. Upon returning to quarters, fire companies and/or units should endeavor to quickly and completely refuel, refill, re-equip, and re-supply their apparatus so as to be fully ready for the next alarm (Note: this shall be a priority operation.)
- D. Whenever fire companies and/or units are operating at an emergency scene, but are being held in an available status, they should endeavor to remain in a condition of readiness, sufficiently equipped, and able to respond.

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## RESPONSIBILITY

- A. Incident Commanders are responsible for releasing fire companies and/or units as soon as is safely possible from the scene of emergencies which have been brought under control.
- B. Company Commanders are responsible for making their companies available and/or returning them to service as quickly as possible.

**SUBJECT:** EMS PROGRAM POLICY**SECTION:** 302.01**REVISED:** FEBRUARY 11, 2010**PAGE(S):** 1

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**PURPOSE**

To provide policy, procedure and guidelines relative to the operations of the Emergency Medical Services Division of the Reading Fire Department.

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**AUTHORITY AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

- A. The Fire Chief shall be responsible for the overall operations of the Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Division.
- B. The EMS Officer shall be responsible for:
  - 1. Administration and coordination of all EMS functions and activities including EMS training, supervision, and scheduling.
  - 2. Establishing and maintaining a comprehensive record system for the EMS division including training records, run reports, quality assurance, equipment records, billing records, and general statistics.
  - 3. Serving as a source of information pertaining to the EMS division to the Fire Chief.
- C. Members shall be responsible for:
  - 1. Meeting or exceeding training requirements of the State of Ohio, the Reading Fire Department, and the Academy of Medicine of Cincinnati.

<b>SUBJECT:</b> STANDARD OF CARE	<b>SECTION:</b> 302.02
<b>REVISED:</b> DECEMBER 12, 2003	<b>PAGE(S):</b> 1

## **PURPOSE**

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To inform all personnel of the Reading Fire Department of the care that will be provided on emergency medical incidents.

## **STANDARD OF CARE**

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It is the philosophy of the Reading Fire Department that the well being of the patient is our primary concern. This is accomplished by practicing the highest standard of care as defined by current medical science, Standard Operating Guidelines, federal, state, and local laws. The Standard of Care is dynamic, changing and improving regularly. It is not possible to produce a written document that addresses every clinical situation or that is perpetually up to date. It is therefore necessary for Reading Fire Department personnel to continuously update their knowledge and at times rely upon clinical judgment not discussed in written policy. Compassion for the patient, tempered by intellectual honesty should direct Reading Fire Department personnel when applying these Standard Operating Guidelines to patient care.

**SUBJECT:** EMS OPERATIONS**SECTION:** 302.03**REVISED:** FEBRUARY 11, 2008**PAGE(S):** 2

## **PURPOSE**

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To define staffing for the Reading Fire Department EMS division.

## **RESPONSE AND OPERATIONS**

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- A. The Fire Department shall endeavor to respond a paramedic unit to all trauma/medical aid emergencies.
- B. Requests for EMS should be met by two on duty firefighter/paramedics, responding in the medic unit, one part-time member and one paid-on-call personnel responding from home in the squad.
- C. Requests for “paramedics only” will be made by two on duty firefighter/paramedics.
- D. In the event the paramedic unit is unavailable, response should be made by the remaining personnel in the engine.
- E. Responses should be made emergently unless other information is received and the responding personnel feel non-emergent response is warranted.
- F. Personnel responding in the squad should respond emergently until such time that notification is made by on scene paramedics that a non-emergent response is warranted.
- G. The company officer or the senior firefighter/paramedic should retain control of the scene and provide coordination between all responding units and law enforcement personnel.
- H. Fire department personnel shall provide emergency medical care as indicated by the requirements of the medical emergency situation, in accordance with the Academy of Medicine of Cincinnati Paramedic Protocols and Standing Orders.
- I. Paramedics, upon arrival, shall assume control and charge of patient care.
- J. Hospital contact, if required, will be established by the transporting crew, who will coordinate patient care as directed by Medical Control, or the receiving hospital if contacted in lieu of Medical Control.
- K. The medical control physician shall retain ultimate authority and responsibility for patient treatment and disposition, as provided for in accordance with the Academy of Medicine of Cincinnati Paramedic Protocols and Standing Orders.
- L. Patient transport will normally be provided by the Reading Fire Department.
- M. A patient request for a specific receiving hospital should be honored if patient condition allows and if approved by the paramedics. Patients should be transported to hospitals in the State of Ohio.

- N. If determined at the scene by the paramedics that an ambulance is not required, the responding squad should be cancelled or, if on scene, placed on available status immediately.

## **ASSISTANCE**

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- A. Additional assistance may be requested whenever in the opinion of EMS personnel, it is necessary to facilitate patient care and transport, patient removal or extrication, scene safety for patients and department personnel, or other exigent circumstances.
- B. Requests for assistance should be made through HCCC. Requests should be specific for assistance required, and the agency to provide assistance as appropriate.
- C. Reading dispatch may be used as an alternate dispatch center for notifications if needed.
- D. An engine company should respond on all reported auto accidents, unless specifically disregarded by dispatch or a law enforcement officer on the scene, provided sufficient paramedics are responding in the paramedic unit.
- E. An engine company should respond on all reports of multiple patients.
- F. An engine company responds whenever the shift supervisor feels doing so may facilitate support of the EMS operation, based on dispatch information, i.e.: person not breathing, person unresponsive, industrial facilities, etc.

**SUBJECT:** EMS STAFFING**SECTION:** 302.04**REVISED:** FEBRUARY 12, 2008**PAGE(S):** 1

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## PURPOSE

To define staffing for the Reading Fire Department EMS division.

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## PROCEDURE

- A. The Reading Fire Department career personnel work a three platoon system, 24 hours on duty, 48 hours off.
- B. Units are staffed by State of Ohio Firefighter/Paramedics. There are 3 firefighter/paramedics, one lieutenant/paramedic, and one part-time firefighter/EMT on each shift. The lieutenant is responsible for the companies day to day operations and acts as Incident Commander on incidents until passed to a chief officer.
- C. Units are assigned 5 personnel, but to accommodate vacations, sick days, and details out of the station, staffing may be reduced to a minimum of three career personnel and one part-time person.
- D. The Reading Fire Department shall endeavor to respond two paramedics to all requests for EMS, in accordance with state law and Academy of Medicine of Cincinnati Protocols and Standing Orders.
- E. Requests for EMS will normally be responded to by career firefighter/paramedics and supported by part-time and off duty and paid-on-call personnel as needed.
- F. Ambulance transport units are staffed by part-time and off duty or paid-on-call personnel, or any combination thereof, assigned by schedule.
- G. The EMS Officer shall be charged with scheduling department members for EMS duty on an assigned schedule.
  1. The weekday schedule shall be broken down into two 12 hour shifts of 0600 to 1759 hours and 1800 to 0559 hours.
  2. The weekend shift shall consist of two 24 hour shifts as follows:
    - a. 0600 Saturday to 0559 Sunday
    - b. 0600 Sunday to 0559 Monday

**SUBJECT:** EMS INCIDENT MANAGEMENT SYSTEM**SECTION:** 302.05**REVISED:** OCTOBER 16, 2003**PAGE(S):** 2

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## PURPOSE

The Reading Fire Department recognizes the key role that a well developed and functioning Incident Management System (IMS) *plays in mass casualty incidents. The purpose of this document is to provide a framework for determining when and how the Reading Fire Department Incident Management System will be implemented and used.*

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## REFERENCES

1. *Model Procedures Guide for Emergency Medical Incidents, Second Edition, National Fire Service Incident Management System Consortium, 2003, ISBN 0-87939-137-5.*

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## POLICY

- A. It shall be the policy of the Reading Fire Department to implement and use the Incident Management System in the following situations:
  1. Emergency responses consisting of two or more engine or truck companies,
  2. Emergency responses to hazardous material spills,
  3. Mass casualty incidents,
  4. Any other response or situation in which the on-scene commander feels that the IMS is required for safe and effective emergency operations.
- B. It is recommended that IMS principles be implemented and used for all emergency responses; however, the IMS does not need to be formally implemented.
- C. The procedures used for the IMS are those procedures detailed in the document *Model Procedures Guide for Emergency Medical Incidents, Second Edition, National Fire Service Incident Management System Consortium, 2003.*
- D. It shall be the responsibility of the first arriving company or chief officer to assess the situation and determine if the IMS is needed. If the IMS is needed, that officer shall assume command (Incident Commander or IC) and begin implementing the IMS.
- E. The IC shall adapt the IMS framework to the requirements of the specific emergency situation at hand. This includes assigning necessary staff and sector positions.
- F. The IC shall continuously monitor the current status of the IMS and the changing needs of the emergency situation. The IC shall adapt the IMS as required to accommodate those needs while maintaining an effective span of control.

- G. A higher ranking officer may request command be transferred to that officer but shall not assume command until command has been formally transferred.
- H. The IC shall transfer command to another officer only after that officer has been briefed on the current status of the situation. Transfer of command shall be announced on the command radio channel.
- I. The IC shall terminate command only after the emergency situation has been mitigated and the incident has de-escalated below the thresholds established for IMS implementation.

## **TRAINING**

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- A. All members of the Reading Fire Department will receive training in the IMS as part of their initial training requirements.
- B. All members should receive on-going annual training in the IMS.
- C. Whenever appropriate, the IMS should be used in training activities and drills

## **CONCLUSION**

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The IMS is an important part of safe and effective emergency operations. The Reading Fire Department is committed to its use both formally as defined above and informally on all other responses. Effective use of the IMS comes from the continuous application of its principles in all emergency operations and training activities.

**SUBJECT:** EMS EQUIPMENT CHECKS**SECTION:** 302.06**REVISED:** OCTOBER 16, 2003**PAGE(S):** 1

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**PURPOSE**

To establish a standard guideline of checking EMS equipment on all first response apparatus.

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**POLICY**

It shall be the policy of the Reading Fire Department to perform daily checks according to manufacturer's recommendation as outlined in the EMS check sheets log book. This daily check shall be performed as close to the beginning of each shift as possible.

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**PROCEDURE**

- A. The driver assigned to ALS83 should perform the daily equipment checks for all EMS equipment on all vehicles located at the Valley Station.
- B. An equipment log book (Medic Check Sheets) is kept in the alarm room and contains the guidelines suggested by the manufacturers for performing daily equipment checks. These checks should be performed completely and marked appropriately on the check sheets.
- C. If any equipment is found to be in need of repair, the appropriate repair should be made and the equipment should remain in service. The repair shall be recorded and the shift officer should be notified.
- D. Any piece of equipment that cannot be repaired immediately shall be taken out of service, equipment repair form completed and the shift officer notified.
- E. If a spare unit is available, that unit should be placed in service until the repair is made.

**SUBJECT:** EMS RESTOCKING  
**REVISED:** FEBRUARY 12, 2008

**SECTION:** 302.07  
**PAGE(S):** 1

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## PURPOSE

To establish guidelines for restocking EMS supplies from the restock cabinets.

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## POLICY

It shall be the policy of the Reading Fire Department that all EMS personnel making emergency medical runs restock any and all equipment/supplies used during the course of an EMS incident so as to maintain the proper minimum levels of supplies on all vehicles.

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## PROCEDURE

- A. On duty personnel
  1. Restock supplies used during each incident upon returning to the station for ALS83 and E83.
  2. Notify the shift supervisor and other unit personnel if no restock equipment/supplies are available from restock cabinets.
  3. A referral shall be forward to the EMS supervisor regarding the lack of supplies available.
- B. Squad personnel
  1. Restock supplies used out of the squad from the restock cabinets.
  2. Prepare the squad for the next emergency run by cleaning and replacing equipment to its proper storage location.
  3. Notify the shift supervisor and other unit personnel if no restock equipment/supplies are available from restock cabinets.
  4. A referral shall be forward to the EMS officer regarding the lack of supplies available.
- C. Equipment left at hospital
  1. At times, equipment needs to be left at the hospital to facilitate patient care.
  2. If equipment is left at the hospital, squad personnel shall list it on the patient care report in the appropriate location.
  3. It shall also be marked on the dry erase board located on the side of the EMS restocking cabinets. This should include the item left, date, and hospital.

**SUBJECT:** EMS DRUG BAG EXCHANGE**SECTION:** 302.07A**REVISED:** DECEMBER 10, 2005**PAGE(S):** 1

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**PURPOSE**

This policy provides a means of exchanging an opened drug bag between Reading Fire Department units.

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**PROCEDURE**

The following procedure is to be used when a drug bag is exchanged between non-transporting and transporting units.

- A. The opened drug bag will be kept with the patient that is being transported to a medical facility.
- B. The unopened drug bag will be removed from the squad and will be checked for intact seals.
- C. The unopened drug bag will be placed on the medic unit or engine.
- D. The opened drug bag will be restocked and inventoried by a paramedic upon return from the medical facility.
- E. The opened drug bag will be sealed by a paramedic with a numbered tampered-proof tag. The bag number and seal number will be recorded in the medic check sheet book.

<b>SUBJECT:</b> EMS PROTOCOL	<b>SECTION:</b> 302.08
<b>REVISED:</b> APRIL 24, 2011	<b>PAGE(S):</b> 1

## PURPOSE

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The purpose of this document is to provide a framework for the protocols to be used during emergency medical incidents.

## REFERENCES

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1. *Academy of Medicine of Cincinnati Protocols and Standing Orders for Paramedic Services*

## POLICY

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- A. Reading Fire Department personnel shall use the Academy of Medicine of Cincinnati Protocols and Standing Orders for Paramedic Services, as approved by the Physician Medical Director for patient care. These protocols are attached as an Appendix at the end of this Standard Operating Guideline Manual. Protocols can also be found on the following website:  
[http://web.me.com/hlempert/SouthWest\\_Ohio\\_Protocol\\_Committee/Welcome.html](http://web.me.com/hlempert/SouthWest_Ohio_Protocol_Committee/Welcome.html)

**SUBJECT:** EMS QUALITY ASSURANCE**SECTION:** 302.08A**REVISED:** APRIL 24, 2011**PAGE(S):** 4

## PURPOSE

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To establish a program of quality assurance and continuous quality improvement for the Reading Fire Department Emergency Medical Service. This program is designed to meet, or exceed the standards defined by the Academy of Medicine of Cincinnati.

## REFERENCES

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*Academy of Medicine of Cincinnati Protocols for Southwest Ohio Pre-Hospital Care*

## POLICY

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- A. The department shall operate under the authority of a designated medical director who:
  - a. Assures adequate training/continuing education of EMS personnel.
  - b. Assures compliance with protocol and standing orders.
  - c. Assists in the development of patient care standard operating guidelines.
  - d. Assists in the development and implementation of a quality assurance program.
- B. The department shall have a written agreement with the medical director; defining the role of the position and their relationship with the department.
- C. The department shall utilize the *Academy of Medicine of Cincinnati Protocols for Southwest Ohio Pre-Hospital Care*.
- D. Any alterations to the protocols made by the medical director become the sole responsibility of the medical director. Any such changes shall be reviewed by the EDS Committee of the Academy of Medicine of Cincinnati.

## PROCEDURE

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- A. The department will utilize three methods of report documentation for patient care/contact as appropriate:
  - a. Written four part (white, yellow, pink and goldenrod) carbonless transport run sheet.
    - i. White—original, hard copy.

- ii. Yellow—quality assurance.
    - iii. Pink—EMS billing.
    - iv. Goldenrod—to be left at receiving hospital.
  - b. Written three part (white, yellow and pink) carbonless non-transport form with follow-up.
    - i. White—original, hard copy.
    - ii. Yellow—quality assurance.
    - iii. Pink—patient, legal guardian copy with instructions.
  - c. Electronic report recorded in FIREHOUSE Software.
  - d. All written reports shall be filed in order by run number and separated by month.
  - e. All records, written and/or electronic, shall be accessible to medical director for review upon request.
  - f. All runs shall be completed as defined in departmental standard operating guidelines.
    - i. Patient Care Report, 302.11
    - ii. Non-Transport Guidelines/Follow-Up, 302.12
- B. On-Duty personnel are responsible for daily equipment and drug bag checks. All personnel are responsible for after incident checks of equipment and drugs.
  - a. The EMS Officer, or designee shall assure that medical equipment is serviced and tested to manufacturer's guidelines. All records of required service/testing shall be maintained.
  - b. Any problems found with equipment shall be forwarded to shift supervisor or EMS Officer.
  - c. All equipment and drugs shall be checked/logged as defined in departmental standard operating guidelines.
    - i. Equipment Checks, 302.06
    - ii. Restocking, 302.07
    - iii. Drug Bag Exchange, 302.07A
    - iv. Controlled Substances, 302.09
- C. The Assistant Fire Chief shall maintain all EMS training records. Training records shall be made available to medical director upon request for review as needed.

## RESPONSIBILITY

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- A. The department EMS Officer, or designee is responsible for the quality assurance process and shall review all runs in the following manner:
  - a. All yellow copies shall be separated and maintained for the purpose of run review
  - b. Each run shall be evaluated for content to include: demographics, patient medical information, response times and care provided.
  - c. Run reports not randomly selected for formal audit may be used to provide appropriate feedback to personnel as needed.

- i. All reports received by personnel, for quality assurance purposes, shall never leave the station and shall be shredded immediately after review.
    - ii. All yellow copies of reports not used for either personnel feedback or formal audit shall be destroyed.
  - d. Electronic database should be utilized to validate information as needed.
  - e. Formal audits will be conducted for the following:
    - i. At least 20% of all runs.
    - ii. All cardiac arrests.
    - iii. Runs applying *Do Not Resuscitate* or *Do Not Resuscitate—Comfort Care*.
    - iv. Runs involving complaints or inquiries.
    - v. Runs where death occurs while under Reading Fire Department care.
    - vi. Runs of misadventure.
    - vii. Runs involving repeated contacts within 24 hours.
    - viii. Runs where equipment or apparatus malfunctions or fails.
    - ix. Runs not meeting Academy of Medicine of Cincinnati guidelines.
  - f. Runs that are formally audited may be locked in the electronic database to avoid edits or other changes during the quality assurance process.
  - g. Runs that are formally audited shall include copies of all associated documentation:
    - i. Yellow quality assurance copy of respective transport run sheet or non-transport form with follow-up.
    - ii. All EKGs obtained.
    - iii. Copy of complaint or inquiry.
    - iv. Reading Fire Department EMS QA summary form.
- B. The medical director is responsible for formal review of the following
  - a. At least 10% of all runs.
  - b. All cardiac arrests.
  - c. Runs applying *Do Not Resuscitate* or *Do Not Resuscitate—Comfort Care*.
  - d. Runs involving complaints or inquiries.
  - e. Runs where death occurs while under Reading Fire Department care.
  - f. Runs of misadventure.
  - g. Runs involving repeated contacts within 24 hours.
  - h. Runs where equipment or apparatus malfunctions or fails.
  - i. Runs not meeting Academy of Medicine of Cincinnati guidelines.
  - j. An appropriate amount of patient contact, non-transport
- C. Formal audits shall be returned to the EMS Officer by the medical director in a timely manner.
- D. Runs that have been formally audited shall be reviewed by involved personnel.

- a. Personnel shall initial, by their name, the Reading Fire Department QA summary form verifying they have reviewed the report.
- b. Personnel shall not write or otherwise comment directly on the audited report or associated documentation.
  - i. All concerns, discrepancies or inquiries shall be forwarded to the EMS officer and may be discussed with the medical director as needed.
- c. Once reviewed, audited reports shall be filed separately by month with original reports.

<b>SUBJECT:</b> EMS MEDICATIONS	<b>SECTION:</b> 302.09
<b>REVISED:</b> JANUARY 10, 2010	<b>PAGE(S):</b> 2

## PURPOSE

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This policy is to assure the safe storage, administration and restocking of all medications utilized in the department protocol. This will also provide a tracking mechanism for any unused or wasted controlled substance not given to the patient during care.

## PROCEDURE

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- A. All medications will be kept inside each ambulance within the drug bag. The medication will be secured inside the drug bag sealed with a numbered tamper-proof tag.
- B. At the beginning of a shift, the on-coming paramedic will verify that the drug bag tag is secure. The drug bag number and the tamper-proof tag number shall be recorded on the medic check sheet.
- C. If the tag is not intact or the number is not verifiable, a complete inventory should be taken immediately and a supervisor shall be notified.
- D. All medications shall be available for inspection by the Ohio Department of Public Health, EMS System Coordinator, or any other authorized individual.
- E. Each usage of a controlled substance must be documented on the patient care report and drug locker log. All of the following information is to be completed:
  1. Date of administration
  2. Time of administration
  3. Patient name
  4. Drug and dose given
  5. Drug amount wasted
  6. Total amount of drug
  7. Paramedic signature
  8. Witness signature, RN at receiving hospital (waste)
- F. Any controlled substance that has not been administered must be properly disposed. The amount wasted must be noted on the patient care report and witnessed by a nurse or physician at the receiving hospital.
- G. Every Sunday, all drug bags and the drug restock locker shall be inspected and logged. The drug bag logs shall be completed and given to the EMS Officer for review and filing. The drug restock locker log book shall be completed and left in the locker for review and use. Any discrepancies (missing medication, broken seals, etc.) should be reported to the shift supervisor immediately.
- H. Any deviation in quantity shall be fully documented and reported to the shift supervisor.

- I. If controlled substances are missing, notification will be made to the on-duty supervisor, the EMS Supervisor, and the Fire Chief, and notification will also be sent to the medical director.
- J. In the event the bag containing the medications has been tampered with, it will be reported to the on-duty supervisor, the EMS Supervisor, Fire Chief, and medical director. If it is determined that there may have been criminal activity, the police will be notified for investigation.
- K. All restock medications are stored in a locked cabinet in the alarm room and should be restocked upon return. All practices shall be in accordance with law/policy as dictated by the Ohio Board of Pharmacy.

**SUBJECT:** PATIENT DESTINATION**SECTION:** 302.10**REVISED:** OCTOBER 16, 2003**PAGE(S):** 2

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## PURPOSE

- A. To assure patient hospital preference is respected unless such preference would jeopardize patient outcome.
- B. To assure trauma patients are transported to the appropriate Trauma Center.

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## POLICY

The patient (or the patient's Power-of-Attorney for Healthcare) has the right to make an informed decision as to hospital destination. The patient's decision to be transported to a hospital of choice should be respected unless the risk of transport to a more distant hospital of choice outweighs the medical benefits of transporting to the nearest hospital. A trauma patient may benefit from transport directly to the closest appropriate Level 1 Trauma Center rather than the closest geographically located hospital.

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## PROCEDURE

- A. An ambulance patient should be transported to the nearest appropriate hospital unless the patient (or parent of the patient less than 18 years of age) expresses a specific hospital preference. Patients should be transported to a hospital within the State of Ohio.
- B. Bypassing the nearest hospital to respect the patient's hospital choice is a medical decision based on medical benefits and associated risks and should be made in accordance with:
  - 1. Urgency of care and risk factors, based on:
    - a. Mechanism of Injury (Physiologic factors)
    - b. Perfusion Status and Assessment (Anatomic factors)
    - c. Transport distance and time (Environmental factors)
  - 2. On-line Medical Control
  - 3. Patient's hospital preference
  - 4. Patient's regular source of health care and hospitalization
  - 5. Capacity of nearest facility or facility of choice
  - 6. Available resources of the transporting agency
  - 7. Traffic and weather conditions
- C. The patient's hospital preference may be honored if there are no identifiable risk factors; the patient has a secure airway and is hemodynamically stable.

- D. All trauma patients will follow State of Ohio Trauma Triage Rules. Any trauma patient, who meets the State of Ohio Trauma Triage Rules, shall be transported to the Level I Trauma Center unless otherwise directed by Medical Control.
1. If a patient is unconscious and meets State of Ohio Trauma Triage Rules, the patient will be taken to the highest level Trauma Center available.
  2. If a patient has an altered/impaired level of consciousness and meets State of Ohio Trauma Triage Rules, the patient will be taken to the highest level Trauma Center available.
  3. If a patient is alert and oriented to person, place and time with stable vital signs, the patient will be taken to the hospital of his/her choice, except as defined above and only after consultation with Medical Control.
  4. If a family member (or another person) is at the scene of an emergency and can readily prove Durable Power of Attorney for Healthcare, he/she can request that the patient be taken to a specific hospital, except as defined above. Medical Control must be contacted for the final decision if the patient meets State of Ohio Trauma Triage Rules or there is obvious risk or potential need for stabilization at a nearer hospital.
  5. If a parent requests that a child less than 18 years of age, who meets State of Ohio Trauma Triage Rules, be taken to a specific hospital, Medical Control must be contacted for the final decision.

<b>SUBJECT:</b> PATIENT CARE REPORT(S)	<b>SECTION:</b> 302.11
<b>REVISED:</b> OCTOBER 16, 2003	<b>PAGE(S):</b> 3

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## PURPOSE

This procedure is designed to provide a standard for the completion of EMS Patient Care Reports in compliance with the State of Ohio Statutes and Federal HIPAA compliance laws. It is intended to give the information needed to produce a concise, complete and well-documented Patient Care Report.

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## POLICY

- A. This procedure is to be followed by all employees working under the Medical Director and Standing Orders with whom the Department is currently contracted. Authority to deviate from this Department guideline rests with the Fire Chief or their designee.
- B. A patient care report will be completed for every patient contact.

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## DEFINITION

Patient Care Report (PCR) – this includes both forms used by the Reading Fire Department, the standard patient care report and the non-transport form.

Patient – Any individual encountered by EMS personnel who, in the judgment of EMS personnel, demonstrates a known or suspected illness or injury.

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## REFERENCES

- 1. Reading Fire Department EMS Report Manual
- 2. Academy of Medicine of Cincinnati EMS Standing Orders

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## PROCEDURE

- A. All personnel shall know how to fully document an emergency medical incident using the patient care report.
- B. All full-time personnel shall know how to fully document an emergency medical incident using the provided software program available. The responsibility for the completion of the report shall be placed upon the individual in charge of primary patient care or their designee.
- C. Computer generated reports shall be completed for all incidents where Fire Department personnel arrive at the scene and perform a patient exam and/or provide care to a patient.

- D. A computer generated report shall be completed for cancelled calls, no patient found, and false alarms.
- E. Any time a person refuses evaluation, treatment and/or transport, a patient care report and EMS REFUSAL FORM (located on the back of the patient care report) must be completed.

## **PATIENT CARE REPORT COMPLETION**

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- A. An individual PCR must be completed for each patient assessed.
- B. When possible, a PCR will be started by first arriving personnel.
- C. The individual having control of medical care during transport shall complete the PCR.
- D. A completed copy of the PCR shall be left at the hospital.

## **EKG INFORMATION**

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- A. Any EKG generated as a result of patient assessment shall be glued on the back of the patient care report or attached to plain paper. All mounted EKG paper shall have all appropriate patient information completed on the form.
- B. Monitor lead EKG shall have 6 seconds of strip mounted.
- C. Code Summaries shall also be glued in the same manner.

## **NARRATIVE**

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Any information relevant to a call that is not available as a field should be included in the final narrative. Unusual scene observations, pertinent patient or witness comments should be recorded.

## **DISTRIBUTION OF COPIES**

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- A. PCR Transport Form
  1. Original – retained by the fire department
  2. Yellow copy – quality assurance copy
  3. Pink copy – billing agency copy
  4. Gold copy – hospital copy
- B. PCR Non Transport Form
  1. Original – retained by the fire department
  2. Yellow copy – quality assurance copy
  3. Pink copy – patient copy

## **REPORTING RESPONSIBILITY**

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- A. The Company Officer shall insure that all EMS reports are completed in a timely manner, ensure that all EKG strips are attached as described in this SOG.

- B. If a discrepancy is found by the Company Officer, the report will be returned to the writer of the report for any corrections.
- C. As a minimum, the EMS Officer or their designee will review all EMS reports for completeness and for quality assurance/continuous quality improvement.
- D. If a report is found to have errors in the alarm or biographical areas, note of the error will be kept by the EMS Supervisor. A consistent pattern of errors will result in remedial education for the employee involved.
- E. All reports with major errors or discrepancies will be forwarded to the current Medical Director with whom the city has a contract.

<b>SUBJECT:</b> NON-TRANSPORT GUIDELINES/FOLLOW-UP	<b>SECTION:</b> 302.12
<b>REVISED:</b> NOVEMBER 12, 2003	<b>PAGE(S):</b> 2

## PURPOSE

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- A. To allow a patient an alternative to transport by ambulance to a hospital that is medically appropriate and respects the rights of a competent adult to make prudent decisions.
- B. To insure appropriate care and/or advice has been rendered and to gauge customer satisfaction, when transport by ambulance to a hospital has been identified as not being necessary.

## POLICY

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- A. Patients who are released at the scene by EMS personnel must meet ALL of the following:
  - 1. The patient must have a clearly articulated plan for medical evaluation and/or follow-up.
  - 2. This plan must have a reasonable and prudent transportation plan to reach follow-up medical care.
  - 3. The lead paramedic must concur with the appropriateness of the scene release and the follow-up plan.
  - 4. Patients with minor traumatic injuries must **NOT** meet critical trauma criteria.
  - 5. The patient must sign a non-transport form stating that emergency evaluation has been rendered, transportation offered and that the patient will follow the instructions provided by fire department personnel.
  - 6. The EMS officer will audit 100% of scene releases under this policy.
  - 7. Patient is not impaired due to the influence of alcohol or drugs.
- B. It shall be the policy of the Reading Fire Department to attempt follow-up on all patients seen by EMS personnel, and transport was not deemed necessary by ambulance.

## NON-TRANSPORT FORM COMPLETION

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- A. If the patient meets the above criteria, a non-transport form shall be executed.
- B. The form shall include the basic demographic information and follow-up care recommendations for the patient.
- C. The patient shall sign the form indicating that he/she can seek additional advice or request an ambulance if conditions change.
- D. The pink copy shall be left with the patient.

## **FOLLOW-UP PROCEDURE**

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- A. Follow up calls should be conducted by one of the personnel on the initial call. Where the time of day makes it impractical, follow-up calls should be made as soon as possible.
- B. When EMS incidents occur during times that follow-up calls are not practical, or contact can not be made with the patient, the information should be forwarded to the next shift. Every attempt should be made to follow-up within 24 hours of the initial call.
- C. A follow-up form should be filled out and included with the EMS non-transport form.
- D. Every effort should be made to accommodate any additional needs the patient or family may have.

<b>SUBJECT:</b> RIGHT OF REFUSAL	<b>SECTION:</b> 302.13
<b>REVISED:</b> FEBRUARY 12, 2010	<b>PAGE(S):</b> 2

## PURPOSE

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To clarify the EMT/Paramedic's responsibility when a patient refuses treatment and/or transport.

## POLICY

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A patient may refuse medical help and/or transportation, or once he has received treatment, refuse to be transported if he/she does not appear to be a threat to his self or others. Any person refusing treatment must be informed of the risks of not receiving emergency medical care and/or transportation. NOTE: Family members cannot refuse transportation of a patient to a hospital, UNLESS they have Durable Power of Attorney for Healthcare.

## PROCEDURE

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- A. Assure an accurate patient assessment has been conducted to include; patient's complaint, history and objective findings, and patient's ability to make sound decisions.
- B. Explain to the patient the risk associated with their decision to refuse treatment and transportation.

High-risk refusals involve cases when the patient's condition may warrant delivery of care in accordance with implied consent of the Emergency Doctrine or other statutory provision. High risk refusals include, but are not limited to:

- High Risk - Head injury (signs, symptoms or mechanism)
  - Presence of alcohol or drugs
  - Significant mechanism of injury
  - Altered level of consciousness or impaired judgement
  - Minors (patient's 17 years-old or younger)
- C. Complete the Against Medical Advice/Refusal Form and have the patient sign the form located on the back of the patient care report. If a minor, this form must be signed by a legal guardian or Durable Power of Attorney for healthcare. (Parental refusals may be accepted by voice contact with the parent (i.e. telephone) if the EMS provider has made reasonable effort to confirm the identity of the parent.)

- D. A witness to the patient's release of services must also sign the AMA/Refusal form. If available, it is preferable to have a police officer at the scene act as the witness. If police are not present, any other bystander may act as witness.
- E. If the patient refuses medical help and/or transportation after having been informed of the risks of not receiving emergency medical care and also refuses to sign the release, clearly document the patient's refusal to sign the report, and have the entire crew witness the statement. Have an additional witness sign your statement, preferably a police officer. Include the officer's unit and badge number.

<b>SUBJECT:</b> HOSPITAL STATUS REPORTING GUIDELINES	<b>SECTION:</b> 302.14
<b>REVISED:</b> FEBRUARY 12, 2010	<b>PAGE(S):</b> 2

## PURPOSE

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The purpose of these Hospital Status Reporting Guidelines is to facilitate the timely communication about a hospital's emergency department status and the hospital's request that EMS inform patients that another medical facility may be better prepared to administer emergency care appropriate to the patients' needs.

## DEFINITIONS

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- A. **Normal:** the hospital's emergency department and supporting resources are operating normally.
- B. **At Capacity:** the hospital has determined that its emergency department and supporting resources are fully committed.
- C. **Over-Capacity:** the hospital has determined that its emergency department and the emergency department's supporting resources are over-committed
- D. **Closed:** the hospital has activated its disaster plan because of an internal emergency, bomb threat, or situation rendering it unable to accept patients.

## ROUTING DECISIONS

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EMS personnel will continue to transport patients to a hospital reporting itself to be At Capacity or Over-Capacity under the following circumstances:

1. The patient is unstable including, but not limited to: having an unmanageable airway, being given CPR, or having uncontrolled internal or external hemorrhaging; (no trauma center may be At Capacity or Over-Capacity for trauma patients);
2. The hospital At Capacity or Over-Capacity has the specific services the patient needs (e.g., the patient is an OB patient, has major burns, or needs hyperbaric oxygen);
3. The patient is an ALS level patient and bypassing the hospital reporting itself At Capacity or Over-Capacity would mean a transport time of greater than 15 additional minutes; or
4. EMS personnel have advised the patient that the patient's preferred hospital is At Capacity or Over-Capacity and the patient still wishes to be transported to the requested hospital.

In these situations, as soon as possible, after determining that the squad will be going to a hospital reporting itself At Capacity or Over-Capacity, the transporting unit will

make reasonable efforts to notify that hospital that it will be receiving a patient and to describe the patient's condition.

**No trauma center may report itself At Capacity or Over-Capacity for trauma patients.**

**During a mass-casualty incident, hospitals to which squads would be transporting victims from the incident may not report themselves At Capacity or Over-Capacity.**

## **PROCEDURE**

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Hospital status will be monitored by Hamilton County Dispatch.

Hospital status should also be monitored via the Health Council's Hospital Status web page by the on-duty unit.

Fire department personnel should check with the dispatcher on EMS calls to check the status of hospitals. If the hospital that is requested is At Capacity or Over Capacity, notify the patient of the hospital's status (exceptions are noted above). Document on the patient care report the patient's initial request of hospital destination and the reason for the change.

Dispatcher will remind the squad en-route to a hospital on the hospital's status.

**SUBJECT:** ANIMAL BITES**SECTION:** 302.15**REVISED:** OCTOBER 17, 2003**PAGE(S):** 1

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**PURPOSE**

To aid fire department personnel in the handling of animal bites and the proper procedures in control of the animal.

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**POLICY**

It shall be the policy of the fire department to provide medical care for animal bites and to gather information on the animal involved or secure control of the animal.

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**PROCEDURE**

- A. Upon Arrival
  1. Evaluate patient needs.
  2. Determine the nature and severity of the bite.
  3. Provide appropriate emergency medical care.
  4. Request response of police if not already responding.
- B. Operations
  1. Gain information about the animal involved.
  2. Secure control of the animal, if possible. Safety of fire department personnel shall be of the utmost concern.
    - a. If the animal is wild, have dispatch notify Hamilton County SPCA.
    - b. If the animal is domestic and running wild, have dispatch notify Hamilton County SPCA.
    - c. If the animal is domestic and confined, advise owner to keep animal confined. Also, contact dispatch and have them notify the Hamilton County General Health District.
  3. When human bites are encountered, remember that they are more apt to become infected than animal bites, and extra care should be exercised.

**SUBJECT:** D.O.A. (DEAD ON ARRIVAL)**SECTION:** 302.16**REVISED:** OCTOBER 17, 2003**PAGE(S):** 1

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## PURPOSE

To establish guidelines for the proper handling of a D.O.A. (Dead On Arrival) patient and the preservation of the scene until the police department arrives.

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## POLICY

It shall be the policy of the fire department once an irreversible death has occurred that preservation of the scene shall be maintained until the police department arrives.

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## PROCEDURE

- A. Upon Arrival
  1. Determine that an irreversible state of death exists according to the Academy of Medicine of Cincinnati Determination of Death Protocol.
  2. Request Police Department response if not already responding.
- B. Operations
  1. Secure the area.
    - a. Personnel shall treat the body of a deceased patient with care and dignity regardless of the patient's age, gender, race, or sexual orientation or the circumstances surrounding the death.
    - b. Do not disturb the scene.
    - c. Do not allow unauthorized persons in the area.
    - d. Limit the number of emergency personnel on the scene.
    - e. Wait for relief from Police Department or the Coroner.
  2. Family members and friends shall be treated with the utmost tact and sensitivity. Check with family to determine if further assistance is necessary.
  3. Personnel should endeavor to return their company or unit in service as soon as possible.
  4. It shall be the general policy of the fire department to decline transporting the body of a deceased individual unless special circumstances warrant.

<b>SUBJECT:</b> UNIVERSITY AIR CARE/HELICOPTER OPERATIONS	<b>SECTION:</b> 302.17
<b>REVISED:</b> SEPTEMBER 20, 2010; FEBRUARY 12, 2010	<b>PAGE(S):</b> 4

## PURPOSE

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- A. To identify those situations that dictates using University Air Care to transport patients.
- B. To establish guidelines for the safe landing, loading, and liftoff of a helicopter used for medical transport purposes.

## WHEN TO REQUEST A HELICOPTER

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- A. University Air Care should be called to transport a patient whenever:
  - 1. The time to extricate a critically injured patient is extended.
  - 2. A mass casualty incident occurs and there are multiple critical patients, or the magnitude of the incident exceeds local capabilities.
  - 3. Traffic congestion would significantly increase the transport time to a medical facility to the detriment of the patient.

## WHO MAY REQUEST A HELICOPTER

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- A. Requests to transport a patient by helicopter should be channeled through Hamilton County Dispatch.
- B. Reading dispatch may be used if Hamilton County Dispatch is overloaded.
- C. The following individuals are authorized to request a helicopter:
  - 1. An incident commander.
  - 2. The first arriving officer or paramedic prior to the establishment of command.
  - 3. A police officer.
- D. A helicopter can be placed on standby by the individuals listed above.

## PROCEDURE

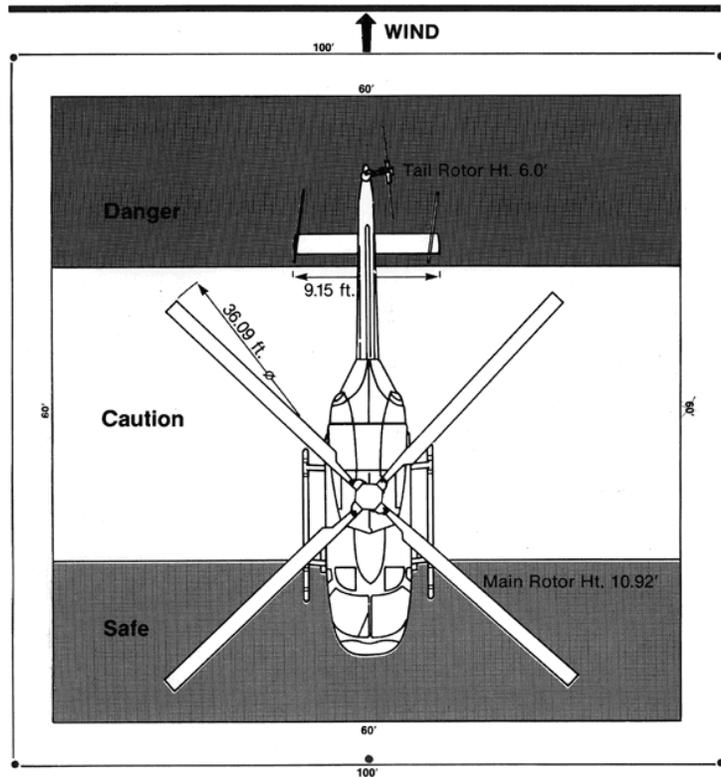
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- A. Whenever conditions exist to warrant requesting University Air Care, an authorized individual listed above should notify dispatch to make the request with the following information:
  - 1. Extent of patient's injuries or illness
  - 2. Advise them of the nearest landing site (pre-determined landing site if possible).
  - 3. Radio frequency the helicopter can use for air-to-ground communications at the scene and unit identifier.
  - 4. Weather conditions

- B. A Fire Department recall should also be requested. E283, E84, or a mutual aid company should be directed to establish the landing zone.
- C. Establish radio contact with the responding aircraft as soon as possible.
  - 1. The Incident Commander will also determine the frequency to be used for communication with the helicopter. This primary frequency will be "8 Tac 92". This frequency will be relayed to University Hospital by the dispatcher. All communications with the helicopter should occur on this frequency unless it is unavailable or in use by another department. At that time, an alternative "8 Tac" channel should be used.
  - 2. To communicate with the helicopter, the mobile or portable radio must be in the "DIRECT" or "SIMPLEX" mode. When the "8 Tac" channel is selected on the display, two vertical lines with an arrow in between the lines should be present on the display to indicate that the radio is in "DIRECT" mode. If this icon does not appear, press the second side button on the radio to make the icon display on the screen.
  - 3. On the mobile radios, "DIRECT" mode on the "8 Tac" channels is indicated by the listing "DIR" on the console display over the frequency listing. If the "DIR" is not displayed, simply pressing the "DIR" button on the control head will place the frequency in the "DIRECT" mode.
  - 4. The Landing Zone officer also has the option of utilizing the existing "High Band VHF" channels if the 800 Mhz. system is unavailable. Either channel 1 (158.760) or channel 2 (158.865) can be utilized as a back-up for the 800 Mhz. System.
  - 5. The company assigned to the landing zone will notify the Incident Commander and dispatcher when University Air Care has landed and taken off from the landing zone.
- D. Relay patient information to the aircraft as well as landing instructions.
- E. University Air Care may also be placed on standby if there is a potential need for transportation by air but insufficient information is available to warrant an immediate liftoff. The standby mode directs the flight crew to respond to the helipad and to remain in the aircraft for further instructions. The crew can be airborne within two minutes from a standby position.
  - 1. An authorized person should request that dispatch contact the helicopter's dispatcher and request that a helicopter be placed on standby.
  - 2. The helicopter dispatcher will confirm the availability and place it on standby. Dispatch should relay this information to the authorized person or incident commander making the request.
  - 3. If a helicopter is subsequently needed, the incident commander may request the helicopter to respond. If the helicopter is noted needed, the incident commander should notify dispatch to have the helicopter stand down. Give this notification as soon as possible due to limited availability of the helicopter.

## ESTABLISHING A LANDING ZONE

- A. The landing zone should be as level as possible, open and away from trees and overhead wires, and free of other debris that might endanger the aircraft.
- B. A clear zone of at least 100 feet in diameter should be established and maintained. If possible, mark the four corners with flares.
- C. An alternative for nighttime operations is to mark the perimeter with emergency vehicles with warning lights operating. Use headlights and telescoping lights to illuminate the area, but do not direct them upward or otherwise interfere with the pilot's vision. Personnel should stand by their vehicles to shut off the lights if so directed by the pilot.
- D. The final decision to land shall be the pilot's.
- E. A charged hose line should be available, if possible, whenever the aircraft lands or lifts off.



## SAFETY GUIDELINES

- A. Whenever the aircraft is landing or taking off, establish a clear zone that is at least 100 feet in diameter. This zone shall be off-limits to everyone.
- B. Personnel shall not approach a helicopter until signaled to do so by the pilot or a member of the flight crew.
- C. Always approach and leave the helicopter from the front.
- D. Avoid the tail rotor area.
- E. Do not smoke near the helicopter.
- F. Do not run near the helicopter.
- G. Do not carry IV's or other objects above your head. Carry long objects parallel to the ground.

## RESPONSIBILITY

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- A. The pilot is always in command of his aircraft and is the final authority as to the flight and which, if any, patients are to be transported. The pilot's decisions shall be strictly followed and not questioned.
- B. All personnel shall be responsible for complying with the provisions of this standard and shall commit no act that comprises the safety of the patient, aircraft and crew, or another member of the department.

**SUBJECT:** HANDLING OF THE MENTALLY ILL**SECTION:** 302.18**REVISED:** FEBRUARY 8, 2008**PAGE(S):** 1

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## PURPOSE

To facilitate the proper handling and care of mentally ill patients.

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## DEFINITION

“Mentally ill individual” means an individual having an illness which substantially impairs the capacity of the person to use self control, judgment and discretion in the conduct of his/her affairs and social relations and includes lunacy, unsoundness of mind, insanity, and also, cases in which such lessening of capacity for control is caused by such excessive addiction to narcotics, sedatives, alcohol, or stimulants as to make it necessary for such person to be under treatment, care, supervision, guidance, or control. (ORC 5122.01)

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## PROCEDURE

- A. If the person is a cooperative/non-violent mentally ill person and no need for immediate medical condition exists, he/she should be transported by the police department to University Hospital Emergency Department.
- B. If the person is a violent mentally ill person; a non-voluntary person; and/or requires medical attention, he/she should be transported by EMS, and should be accompanied by law enforcement officer, to University Hospital.
- C. If the patient is under arrest and handcuffs are applied by law enforcement officers:

The patient will not be cuffed to the stretcher and a law enforcement officer shall accompany the patient in the ambulance, if the handcuffs are to remain applied.

- D. It will be up to the lead paramedic and police supervisor to determine the best mode of transportation for the officer if the patient is non-violent, and not restrained with handcuffs (should the officer ride in the ambulance or follow in his/her vehicle).
- E. The law enforcement officer shall conduct a pat down search of the patient in the presence of EMS personnel prior to transport.
- F. Review Board: a panel is hereby established to review transportation and mental health issues involving the Reading Police and Fire Departments. This panel shall consist of two (2) Reading Police Officers and two (2) Reading Fire Department personnel. The panel shall meet on a periodic basis to recommend any needed changes/updates to this policy.

<b>SUBJECT:</b> INFECTION CONTROL	<b>SECTION:</b> 302.19
<b>REVISED:</b> JANUARY 6, 2004	<b>PAGE(S):</b> 11

## POLICY

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Recognizing the potential exposure of its members to communicable diseases in the routine performance of their duties, the Reading Fire Department seeks to reduce the risks by implementing an infection control program.

It is the policy of the Reading Fire Department:

- A. To provide fire, rescue, and emergency medical services to the public without regard to known or suspected diagnoses of communicable disease in any patient.
- B. To regard all patient contacts as potentially infectious. *Universal Precautions\** will be observed at all times and will be expanded to include all body fluids and other potentially infectious material.
- C. To provide all members with necessary training, immunizations, and personal protective equipment (PPE) needed for the protection from communicable diseases.
- D. To recognize the need for work restrictions based on infection control concerns.
- E. To encourage participation in member assistance and CISM programs.
- F. To prohibit discrimination of any member for health reasons, including infection and/or seroconversion with HIV or HBV virus.
- G. To regard all medical information as strictly confidential. No member health information will be released without the signed written consent of the member. Personal health records will be maintained during the duration of the employment plus thirty (30) years.
- H. Exposure to communicable disease shall be considered an occupational hazard, and any communicable disease contracted as a result of a documented workplace exposure shall be considered occupationally related.
- I. To consider the following diseases of principal concern:
  1. Airborne Pathogens: chicken pox, rubella, measles, influenza, meningococcal meningitis, mononucleosis, mumps, tuberculosis, and whooping cough.
  2. Bloodborne Pathogens: human immunodeficiency virus (HIV), hepatitis B virus (HBV), hepatitis C virus (HCV), other non-A/non-B hepatitis viruses, and syphilis.
- J. To have this plan accessible to all employees who are at risk for exposure to the above diseases in the course of their employment with the Reading Fire Department, by maintaining an up-to-date copy of this

plan and applicable department SOG in the Alarm Room of the Valley Station (1000 Market Street).

- K. To review the Infection Control Plan annually.

*\*Universal Precautions: Body substance isolation; a form of infection control based on the presumption that all body fluids are infectious. Body substance isolation calls for always using appropriate barriers to infection at the emergency scene, such as gloves, masks, gowns and protective eyewear.*

## EXPOSURE DETERMINATION

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- A. All job classifications within the fire department present risk of exposure in the course of their employment. The following tasks are reasonably anticipated to involve exposure to blood, body fluids, or other potentially infectious materials:
1. Provisions of emergency medical care to injured or ill patients.
    - a. Airway management procedures such as artificial ventilation, endotracheal intubation, airway suctioning, etc.
    - b. Trauma patient care, including bleeding control, relief of tension pneumothorax, needle cricothyrotomy, etc.
    - c. Obstetric patient care including delivery and miscarriage management, etc.
    - d. Venous access procedures including establishment of I.V. lifelines, phlebotomy, and blood specimen transfer, etc.
  2. Rescue of victims from hostile environments, including burning structures or vehicles, water-contaminated atmospheres, or oxygen deficient atmospheres.
  3. Extrication of persons from vehicles, machinery, or collapsed excavations or structures.
  4. Recovery and/or removal of bodies from any situation cited above.
  5. Response to hazardous materials emergencies, both transportation and fixed-site, involving potentially infectious substances.
- B. An exposure shall be any specific eye, mouth, other mucous membrane, non-intact skin or parenteral contact with blood or other potentially infectious body fluid or material.

## PROCEDURE

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### A. Prevention

#### 1. Hepatitis Prevention

- a. All members, within ten (10) days of their initial appointment, shall be offered the choice of receiving vaccination against infection by Hepatitis B by way of Recombivax or equivalent vaccine. Members declining to receive the vaccine shall execute a waiver that they may rescind at any time and the vaccine program entered. Members who have received the vaccine through another source shall furnish documentation of immunization to the department.
- b. The fire department will facilitate the new employee receiving the Hepatitis B vaccine from the Hamilton County General Health District.
- c. Booster programs that may become recommended by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) in the future will be provided to all immunized employees accordingly, at city expense.
- d. The consent/waiver form shall be maintained within the employee's exposure folder, located in the Fire Chief's office. In addition, dates regarding any immunization will also be maintained in exposure folder/database.

#### 2. General Preventative Measures

- a. Hand-washing with soap and water after each patient contact and as soon as possible after contact with body fluids is recommended to reduce the risk of exposure to infectious diseases encountered in the workplace. Mucous membrane contact with suspected contaminants should be flushed immediately or as soon as feasible.
- b. Gloves, eye shields, masks and gowns shall be provided in each EMS vehicle for use by members in preventing exposure to body fluids during the course of patient care.

- c. Employees with pre-existing cuts, scratches or other breaks in the skin are cautioned to exercise appropriate extra precautions.
  - d. Inadvertent soaking of uniforms with blood or other body fluids should be cause for showering/changing as soon as is practicable. Extra work uniforms should be maintained at the station. No contaminated work uniforms shall be taken home for washing—under any circumstances.
3. Equipment
- a. The fire department shall use a needle system for IV's that blunts on removal from the catheter.
  - b. It shall be the policy of this department to continuously evaluate systems that decrease the risk of needle sticks.
- B. Daily Procedures
1. Employees should appropriately use gloves, face masks, gowns and eye protection whenever splashes or sprays of blood or other potential infectious materials may be generated and contamination can be reasonably anticipated. The type and characteristic of protection will depend upon the task and degree of exposure anticipated.
  2. Sprays, splashes, spatters and drips or other means of contamination of equipment and vehicle interiors shall be cleaned using disinfecting/cleaning solutions provided at the station. Cleaning method (wiping/soaking) should be appropriate for the equipment. When the possibility of contact with blood, body fluids and infectious wastes or materials is encountered, proper protection should be used during cleaning operations.  
  
Cleaning Solutions:
    - a. *CAVICIDE*: located with general cleaning supplies and for the specific use of cleaning equipment. One ounce of Cavicide per liter of water. Instructions provided with each spray bottle.
    - b. Diluted household bleach using 1:100 solution.
  3. Medical wastes should be appropriately handled: contaminated sharps should be disposed of in marked containers provided for

this purpose. Non-sharp medical wastes should be transported to the hospital with the patient whenever possible and discarded in the appropriate medical waste container. When this is not possible, the materials should be disposed of in the specially marked waste container at the station.

Whenever any employee becomes aware of the fact that sharps disposal container is full or otherwise cannot be used as intended to provide protection from sharps injury, said employee should notify the on-duty supervisor who should then replace the sharps container with a new one and arrange for proper disposal of the full or unstable container.

Medical waste containers should be emptied as needed but not less than weekly. Collection containers should be decontaminated with each emptying.

4. Needles shall not be recapped, broken, or bent by hand, or removed from disposable syringes. The needle and syringe should be disposed of as one intact unit into an appropriate sharps container. Recapping a needle using a one-handed technique or a mechanical device is allowed only if the action is required for a specific procedure.
  5. Contaminated laundry should be left at the receiving hospital whenever possible, in special containers at the hospital for the reception of such contaminated linens.
  6. Contaminated clothing should be removed and washed as soon as possible or placed into a biohazard bag for future washing. Under no circumstances are contaminated uniforms to be taken home for laundering.
  7. Work surfaces contaminated with blood or other body fluids should be cleaned and decontaminated with decontamination/cleaning solutions provided as soon as practicable.
  8. Each of the department transport vehicles shall be cleaned on a monthly basis with decontamination/cleaning solution provided.
- C. Mitigation after suspected or known exposure.
1. Needle Stick Procedure:

- a. The Infection Control Officer, or designate, shall be contacted and the incident reported to the Charge Nurse at the receiving hospital and an exposure report form completed. Requirements of receiving hospital for examination, request for testing, etc. should be completed at that time. Employees are advised that hospital requirements will vary but should include: permission to test patient, signed by patient, permission to test the employee, exposure report form for hospital infection control follow-up and a “feedback” form.
  - b. Employee shall complete a City Incident Report and an Occupational Exposure Report upon returning to the station.
  - c. Employee immune status will be checked:
    1. If tetanus immunization status is not current, appropriate tetanus prophylaxis should be received.
    2. If hepatitis immunization status is questionable, a blood test for immunity should be conducted.
    3. Confidential HIV serologic testing shall be offered to the employee.
  - d. Patient status will be checked: Infectious disease procedure for involved institution will be used to determine patient’s infectious disease status.
  - e. If source individual is transported to the morgue, a verbal request for testing should be made with delivery of corpse if transported by Reading Fire Department or by phone if transported otherwise.
  - f. Employee’s physician will prescribe appropriate therapy based on analysis of information accumulated in a, c, and d above.
2. Non-Invasive Exposures
- a. The Infection Control Officer, or designate, shall be notified and the incident reported to the Charge Nurse at the receiving hospital and exposure report form completed. Requirements of receiving hospital for examination, request for testing, etc. should be completed at that time. Employees are advised that hospital requirements will vary.

- b. Incident shall be documented on City Incident Report form and an Occupational Exposure Report. Those members on the run shall be documented on the EMS run report.
  - c. Patient status shall be checked utilizing protocol established by the receiving hospital.
  - d. If source individual is transported to morgue, a verbal request for testing should be made with delivery of the corpse if transported by the Reading Fire Department or by phone if transported otherwise.
  - e. Employee's physician will prescribe appropriate therapy after reviewing information received in a and c above. [see attachments of mitigation algorithms]
3. Refer to MMWR Recommendations and Reports, Vol. 50, No. RR-11 - Updated U.S. Public Health Service Guidelines for the Management of Occupational Exposures to HBV, HCV, and HIV and Recommendations for Postexposure Prophylaxis and attached mitigation algorithms for additional information.

## RECORD KEEPING

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- A. A record shall be maintained on vaccination dates and immune status against Hepatitis B for each employee, according to applicable government regulations. These records shall be confidential, except as provided for by law.
- B. A record shall be maintained documenting any occupational exposure for each employee and maintained for a period applicable by government regulation (duration of employment plus thirty (30) years). These records shall be confidential except as provided for by law.
- C. A record shall be maintained of employee training with regard to infection control as required by law.

## COMPLIANCE MONITORING

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- A. All shift officers and acting officers should monitor the compliance of department personnel with daily and special infection control procedures, assuring that they are followed and promptly correct any deviations from department SOP or other accepted infection control practice.

## **PLAN REVIEW**

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- A. These Infection Control Procedures shall be reviewed annually to insure their timeliness and applicability to the pre-hospital care environment and the risk exposure it presents to members.

## **TRAINING**

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- A. All members, prior to assignment and annually thereafter, shall be instructed on protective measures to be taken to minimize the risk of occupational exposure to infectious disease. The topics should include but not limited to:
  - 1. Education on infectious diseases and modes of transmission.
  - 2. Symptoms of infectious diseases.
  - 3. Review of Department's Infections Control Plan.
  - 4. Recognition of fire service tasks that may create injury or potential for exposure.
  - 5. Explanation of types, location, use and limitation of personal protective equipment (PPE).
  - 6. Explanation of the Hepatitis B vaccine, including information on efficacy, safety, methods of administration and benefits of being vaccinated.
  - 7. Information on post exposure follow up if a sharp injury occurs.

## **PERSONNEL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT**

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- A. All EMS vehicles shall have closable sharp containers which are puncture resistant and leakproof. Sharp containers should be colored red, labeled as biohazard and shall be used as the situation dictates.
- B. All first aid kits and airway bags should be equipped with pocket masks with one-way valves to minimize the need for mouth-to-mouth resuscitation. Mouth-to-mouth resuscitation should be performed only as a last resort.

- C. Members shall select PPE appropriate to the potential exposure. No standard operating procedure or PPE ensemble can cover all situations. Common sense has to be used, but when in doubt, select maximal rather than minimal PPE.
- D. Facial protection shall be used in any situation where splash contact with the face is possible. Facial protection may be afforded by using both a facemask and eye protection, or a full-face shield. When treating a patient with a known airborne transmissible disease, facemask protection shall be used. Each unit is equipped with approved masks, with various sizes. The first choice is to mask the patient; if this is not feasible, mask yourself. Personnel masks sizes are recorded in the EMS reference manual in each unit. These sizes are logged from the annual fit testing. Face shields on helmets are not to be considered a protection for infectious disease control.
- E. Firefighting gloves shall be worn in situations where sharp or rough edges are likely to be encountered. If gloves are exposed to infectious disease they shall be cleaned the same as station uniforms.
- F. Disposable latex gloves should be worn during any patient contact. Proper latex-free gloves are also provided for any contacts where allergies to latex are a concern.
- G. Where possible, latex gloves should be changed between patients in multiple casualty situations. Disposable gloves shall not be reused or washed and disinfected for reuse.

## **IMMUNIZATIONS AND HISTORY**

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- A. Hepatitis B
  - 1. One series of three inoculations, the first within 10 days of beginning employment.
  - 2. Booster shots shall be provided in accordance with CDC recommendations.
- B. Tetanus-Diphtheria
  - 1. Inoculation required every ten years.

2. If puncture wound occurs, a booster is required if it has been seven years or more since last inoculation.
- C. Measles, Mumps and Rubella
1. Inoculation not recommended if you were born prior to 1957.
  2. Immunization not recommended if you are pregnant or anticipate becoming pregnant within three (3) months.
- D. Influenza
1. Influenza vaccine shall be available between October and February each year.
  2. The influenza vaccine changes from year to year, so the vaccine must be re-administered annually.
  3. Influenza inoculations are recommended annually and should be provided to members on a voluntary basis.
- E. Tuberculosis
1. Members shall be provided with TB screening.

## **RESPONSIBILITY**

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- A. The Fire Chief retains ultimate responsibility for the health and welfare of all members. The Fire Chief is responsible for assuring the availability of resources required for the program to function effectively, including funding for training, equipment and supplies, and health maintenance activities. He/she must also assure sufficient personnel to accomplish program requirements. Finally, after delineating the authority and responsibilities of each position in the program, the Fire Chief must hold each person accountable for assigned functions.
- B. The designated Safety Officer of the department must be actively involved in the Infection control program. Coordination between the Safety Officer and the Infection Control Officer is critical.

- C. The Infection Control Officer (designated officer) is to serve as a liaison between the department and the area hospitals for coordination of information with regard to exposures/suspected exposures and follow-up action. The Infection Control Officer shall be a member of the Safety Committee. In addition to coordinating exposure-related requirements, the designated officer has the primary responsibility for assuring availability of appropriate PPE, monitoring compliance and quality assurance throughout the department, and maintaining required infection control records.
- D. The Safety Committee is responsible for periodic review of the program. The committee must keep abreast of changing conditions and new information in order to keep the program up to date.
- E. The Training Officer is responsible for ensuring that all members possess the necessary knowledge and skills required to perform their tasks safely and to meet the standards of program.
- F. The department physician(s) serves as a resource to the designated officer, particularly in assessing potential exposure incidents. The physician(s) should be available for consultation and counseling following member exposures in order to provide objective information regarding risk of disease.
- G. Supervisors are responsible for supporting the infection control plan and for assuring compliance by each member.
- H. All department members bear responsibility for their own health and safety. Each is responsible for complying with all established guidelines and procedures, including safe work practices.

**SUBJECT:** HAZARDOUS MATERIALS**SECTION:** 303.01**REVISED:** DECEMBER 12, 2003**PAGE(S):** 7

## PURPOSE

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To establish guidelines for incident evaluation and safe handling of hazardous materials incidents.

## POLICY

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It shall be the policy of the fire department to follow these procedures in the handling of hazardous material incidents and to insure the safety of the personnel and citizens.

## REFERENCES

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1. *Hazardous Materials- Managing the Incident- Noll, Hildebrand and Yvorra*
2. *Hazardous Materials for First Responders- IFSTA*
3. *IMS Model Procedures Guide for Hazardous Materials Incidents, 1<sup>st</sup> edition, 2000*

## PROCEDURE

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### A. Upon Arrival

#### 1. Size up the situation:

- a. The first unit must consciously avoid committing itself to a dangerous situation. When approaching, slow down or stop to assess any visible activity taking place. Evaluate the effects of the wind, topography and location of the situation.
- b. The objective of size-up is to identify the nature and severity of the immediate problem and gather sufficient information to formulate a valid action plan. A hazardous materials incident requires a more cautious and deliberate size-up than most fire situations.
- c. Avoid premature commitment of companies and personnel to potentially hazardous locations. Proceed with caution in evaluating risks before formulating a plan and keep uncommitted companies at a safe distance.
- d. Make careful size-up before deciding on a commitment. It may be necessary to take immediate action to make a rescue or

evacuate an area, but this should be done with an awareness of the risk to Fire Department personnel, and taking advantage of available protective equipment.

- e. Don't assume anything! A wrong decision, while working with hazardous materials, can be worse than no decision.
2. Report on conditions.
  3. Establish an operational perimeter.
  4. Initiate material identification operations:
    - a. It is imperative that the first arriving Fire Department unit determine what hazardous material(s) is involved, and how much, prior to taking action to stabilize the incident.
    - b. Entering the scene to make positive identification may be a considerable risk. The danger of explosion, leaking gas and poisoning may be great.
    - c. Action taken prior to determining the product involved may be totally wrong and may severely compound the problem.
    - d. Transportation emergencies are often more difficult than those at fixed locations. The materials involved may be unknown, warning signs may not be visible, or obscured by smoke and debris, the driver may be killed or missing, D.O.T. hazardous materials marking systems are inadequate because some hazardous materials in quantities up to 1000 pounds do not require a placard and there may be combinations of products involved with only a "dangerous" label showing. Sometimes only the most evident hazard is identified, while additional hazards are not labeled.
  5. Attempt to identify the involved material(s) by way of the following:
    - a. Check placarding and/or labeling.
    - b. Check paperwork associated with the materials transportation or storage.
    - c. Check with persons directly related to the accident/incident, i.e. driver, owner, trainman, technician, plant manager, etc.
    - d. Contact shipper and/or manufacturer.
    - e. Obtain the exact spelling of the materials involved.

#### B. INITIAL OPERATIONS:

1. Establish command
2. Obtain technical information:
  - a. Utilize the D.O.T. Hazardous Materials Emergency Response Guidebook.
  - b. Contact ChemTrec (800) 424-9300.
  - c. Utilize other informational sources available.
  - d. Contact the shipper and/or the manufacturer. (ChemTrec can assist)
  - e. Greater Cincinnati Hazmat or Squad 52 may provide additional support or equipment.

3. Identify priorities based on the following:
  - a. The type and magnitude of life hazard involved.
  - b. The type and quantity of hazardous material(s) involved.
  - c. Reference the "D.E.C.I.D.E." Mnemonic for determining the steps in dealing with a hazardous materials event.
    - D** - Detect the presence of hazardous materials.
    - E** - Estimate potential harm without intervention.
    - C** - Choose response objectives.
    - I** - Identify action options.
    - D** - Do best option.
    - E** - Evaluate progress.
  - d. Declare a hazmat level:
    1. **Level I**- Potential Emergency Condition: An incident or threat which can be controlled by the first response agencies and does not require evacuation of other than involved structure or immediate outdoor area. The incident is confined to a small area and does not pose an immediate threat to life or property.
    2. **Level II**- Limited Emergency Condition: An incident involving a greater hazard or larger area which poses a potential threat to life and property and which may require a limited evacuation of surrounding area.
    3. **Level III**- Full Emergency Condition: An incident involving a severe hazard or a large area which poses an extreme threat to life and will probably require a large scale evacuation; or an incident requiring the expertise or resources of county, State, Federal or private agencies/organizations.
4. Identify the Objectives:
  - a. The objectives must be based upon those priorities which have already been identified. They must be flexible enough to account for the dynamics of the situation.
  - b. The objectives must focus on confinement and/or control of the involved materials in such a way so as to save lives and to prevent the unnecessary exposure of on-scene or nearby personnel (including firefighters, bystanders, law enforcement personnel, etc.) to the adverse effects of the involved material(s). Objectives must also provide for the protection of uninvolved property and the environment.
  - c. Objectives must be clearly understood and well communicated among all levels of the on-scene organization which is attempting to cope with the problem. Close cooperation and coordination is essential if disaster is to be averted.
5. Action Plan - The action plan must be based upon the identified objectives and must be based upon the identified objectives and

must be understood by all involved personnel at the scene. The action plan should be centered primarily around the following:

- a. Protection of life.
  - b. Confinement of the material and its by-products.
  - c. Control of the material and its effects on humans, animals, property and the environment.
6. Set hazard control zones; Hot zone, Warm Zone and Cold Zone
  7. Monitor progress of the action plan to insure that objectives are either accomplished or modified according to the dynamics of the situation.

### C. SAFETY

1. All operations up to and including the evacuation process must be accomplished with the idea of overall safety as the key component.
2. Members shall wear the appropriate protective clothing. A minimum of FULL PROTECTIVE CLOTHING must be worn inside the operational perimeter. Special protective clothing may be necessary depending upon the nature of the materials involved.
  - a. Prior to placing members in Level A or B clothing a decontamination system should be in place.
  - b. Compatibility of chemical protection should be checked with 2 sources.
  - c. Working in Level A suits should be a Technician level training.
3. Be alert for the symptoms of chemical poisoning and reactions that could threaten the lives of firefighters and other involved personnel.
4. Members who have been exposed to hazardous materials shall receive immediate medical treatment. NOTE: Many symptoms may be delayed up to twenty-four (24) hours after contact.
5. In general, the following safety guidelines should be observed:
  - a. Move and keep people away from incident scene.
  - b. Do not walk into or touch any spilled material.
  - c. Avoid inhalation of all gases, fumes and smoke even if no hazardous materials are involved.
  - d. Do not assume that gases or vapors are harmless because of lack of smell.
6. Keep in mind the basic safety priorities:
  - a. Personnel safety.
  - b. Safety of others.
  - c. Environmental impact.

### D. COMMUNICATION:

1. The best, most accurate method of communication is face-to-face, person-to-person, communication.
2. Radio directions must be clear and concise.
3. Communications during the incident must be, of necessity, two ways in nature. Information, reconnaissance data and suggestions must

flow up to Command level for evaluation. Clear directions and coordination must flow down from Command level.

4. Operations shall be conducted in accordance with ICS Guidelines for communications.

#### E. CLEANUP AND DISPOSAL

1. The Incident Commander's responsibility, beyond that of preserving life and property, is only to identify and, if possible, contain the spill material. Under most circumstances, no attempt should be made to "decontaminate" a spill unless directed and supervised by responsible parties from the industry and/or other technical advisors. Professional disposal companies and/or teams should be utilized for cleanup and disposal. Use of this resource is expected, but will normally occur after local expertise is on hand.

#### F. PROCEDURES (GENERAL):

It must be remembered that any and all procedures which may be carried out at a hazardous materials incident must be based upon and compatible with the physical properties of the involved material(s). The following list contains some basic guidelines which may apply to hazardous materials situations in a general sense. The nature of materials involved will dictate more specific procedures.

1. Take all feasible steps necessary to protect or save human life. Safeguard property insofar as practical.
2. Take actions to contain and/or prevent the spread of the material. Spread sand or other collection agents, build dikes, etc. Control run-off water at fires.
3. Keep the public as far from the scene of the incident as reasonably possible. Prevent souvenir hunting and handling of debris. In the case of a nuclear weapons incident, keep the public at least 2,000 feet away.
4. Isolate for further examination those persons who may have had contact with the material. Obtain names and addresses of those involved.
5. Remove injured persons from the area with a little direct personal contact as possible. Hold them at a transfer point for first aid. If serious injury has occurred, demanding more than first aid measures, the patient should be sent, at once, to the nearest emergency room for medical attention. Advise medical attendants and facilities of possible contamination and what material is involved.
  - a. Medical first aid is directed primarily at restoration of breathing, control of hemorrhage, splinting for fractures, prevention of shock and control of pain. These are carried out for exposed person in the same basic fashion as for a non-exposed individual.
  - b. First aid for contaminated persons consists of cleansing the skin of obvious dirt (possible contamination) and, if feasible, carefully remove the outer garments and shoes of the patient

and wrapping him mummy-fashion in a blanket, sheet, canvas, or large coat. By this measure, any remaining contamination is contained and if the wrapping is carefully done, the victim can be moved with little likelihood of spreading contamination.

6. If incidents involve fire or material subject to blowing in the wind, conduct operations from a upwind position. Keep out of smoke, fumes, or dust resulting from the incident. Segregate clothing and tools used at the scene until they can be checked for contamination. Do not handle suspected material until it has been inspected and released by qualified technical experts.
  7. In a vehicle accident involving hazardous material, detour all traffic around the accident scene. If this is not possible, move the vehicle or vehicles involved the shortest distance necessary to clear the right-of-way. If the material is spilled, prevent the passage of vehicles and people through the area until it has been surveyed. If right-of-way must be cleared before the assistance team arrives, wash spillage to the shoulders of the right-of-way with a minimum of dispersal of wash water. Try and construct a dike to contain the wash water or use absorbent material to control run off. Do not allow wash water to enter the drainage system.
  8. Do not eat, drink, or smoke in the accident area. Do not use food or drinking water that may have been in contact with material from the incident area.
  9. There are basically four different methods of handling hazardous materials spills or leaks. They are:
    - a. Absorption.
    - b. Containment.
    - c. Separation.
    - d. Neutralization.
  10. Sometimes, a non-attack posture is the best approach to a hazardous materials problem. A fire in any of the following materials should signal a non-attack posture and immediate evacuation of the surrounding area:
    - a. Explosives A.
    - b. Explosives B.
    - c. Oxidizers.
    - d. Organic peroxides.
- G. Hazardous materials must not be carelessly washed down storm drains or sewers. Such action could compound the problem and hasten disaster.
- H. In some cases, it may be better to let a fire involving certain hazardous materials to burn. In such cases, the run off water from fire extinguishment operations may pose more of a hazard than the fire itself.

- I. Fires involving hazardous materials in closed containers such as tank trucks, tank farms, etc., require special decision-making considerations and may also indicate a non-attack posture.

**SUBJECT:** FLAMMABLE LIQUIDS**SECTION:** 303.02**REVISED:** JANUARY 8, 2004**PAGE(S):** 2

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## **PURPOSE**

To establish guidelines for the handling of flammable fuel spills (liquid or gas).

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## **POLICY**

It shall be the policy of the fire department to allow these guidelines in the handling of flammable fuel spills and to insure the safety of the personnel and citizens.

### **A. UPON ARRIVAL**

1. When approaching area, slow down or stop if necessary to assess any visible action taking place. It may be necessary to "stage" incoming units away from the scene.
2. Attempt to determine hazardous area (flammable vapor area).
3. Give report on conditions and request additional equipment or special equipment, if needed.
4. Determine if rescue or evacuation problem exists.
5. Formulate a plan of action based on initial size-up plan - plan of action must provide for:
  - a. Safety of citizens and firefighters.
  - b. Evacuation of endangered area if necessary.
  - c. Control of situation.
  - d. Stabilization of the spilled material.
  - e. Disposal or removal of spilled material.
6. Coordinate with law enforcement personnel for evacuation and traffic control.

### **B. SAFETY**

1. Avoid commitment of personnel and apparatus until a complete size up has been made.
2. All personnel should be in full protective clothing and breathing apparatus.
3. Keep all bystanders a minimum of two thousand (2000) feet away from the hazardous area
4. Remove all ignition sources in the hazardous area. This may mean closing a highway.
5. Some flammable liquids give off toxic vapor whether they are burning or not.
6. If flammable liquid/gas is leaking from burning tank or cylinder, keep clear of the container ends. If the whistling sound from pressure relief valves

on the container becomes louder evacuate the area, explosion is imminent.

7. In the case of a tank fire, fire streams must be used to cool the vapor area of the tank (area above liquid level).
8. Do not extinguish tank or cylinder fire unless shut-off can be effected.
9. If personnel must operate in a precarious position, they must be protected with another fire stream.
10. Do not park apparatus in low areas - flammable vapors may have accumulated there.

#### C. CONFINEMENT

1. Unless immediate hazard to life is involved, any efforts to remove spill by flushing into any drainage system should be restricted. If a spill is flushed, it will have to be picked up downstream.
2. Isolate the spill by the use of dikes and absorbent materials (i.e. sand, dirt or sawdust).
3. Spill fires which are flowing to an area where they can burn safely should be allowed to do so.
4. Direct spill away from exposures.
5. The biggest problem with spills is containment of spilled material; the more water you add, the larger the containment problem becomes.

#### D. CONTROL

1. Use fog streams to dissipate the vapors if possible, without disturbing the liquid.
  2. Determine if water can be used based on specific gravity of the spilled material.
  3. The use of foam (proper type) can prevent ignition of spilled material.
  4. Attempt to shut-off leak - shutting off valves, plugging container.
  5. Heavy streams can be used to divert flames from exposures. Burning fuel must be flushed from under and around tanks.
  6. Recover the fuel by absorption or use of vacuum trucks.
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**SUBJECT:** ELEVATOR EMERGENCIES**SECTION:** 303.03**REVISED:** FEBRUARY 6, 2003**PAGE(S):** 2

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## **PURPOSE**

To establish guidelines for handling elevator emergencies in the safest way possible.

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## **POLICY**

When it has been determined that persons are trapped in an elevator the following guidelines have been established.

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## **PROCEDURE**

### **A. UPON ARRIVAL**

1. Request dispatcher to notify elevator mechanic to respond. (Obtain name and phone number from occupant.)
2. Reassure trapped passengers that efforts are underway for their release. Ascertain if any passengers are ill or injured.
3. Locate the position of the stalled car and obtain over-ride keys, if so equipped.

### **B. SAFETY PRECAUTIONS**

1. The safest means of rescue is through elevator doors (hoistway and car).
2. If passengers are being removed from elevator by any means other than the car doors, then the mainline disconnect must be opened.
3. Whenever possible, elevator emergencies should be handled by elevator mechanic with fire department personnel assisting.
4. Barricade any openings into the hoistway.
5. When a car is stalled more than three (3) feet below a landing, it is recommended that passengers be removed through the top escape hatch.

### **C. PROCEDURE FOR FREEING PASSENGERS**

1. Locate the stalled car.
2. Communicate with passengers either by elevator phone or by yelling through the elevator doors.
3. Check the power supply systems. (Mainline disconnect, breakers, fuses, etc.)
4. Have passengers check the Emergency Stop button.
5. Push the landing button and have passenger push "Door Open" or "Floor" button simultaneously.

6. Shake hoistway doors and have passengers shake car doors simultaneously.
7. Attempt to break light beam with thin piece of cardboard or paper. (Power on)
8. Turn power off.
9. Have passenger open car doors. (Rescuer may have to enter through top hatch to perform this.)
10. Have passenger or rescuer open hoistway doors.
11. Trip the interlock using tools available.
12. Cut or pry doors. (Life or death situation only.)

**SUBJECT:** ROPE RESCUE**SECTION:** 303.04**REVISED:** NOVEMBER 1, 2005**PAGE(S):** 2

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## PURPOSE

To establish uniform and standard guidelines for rope rescue for the Reading Fire Department.

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## POLICY

The Reading Fire Department shall respond to all high angle incidents within jurisdiction. The Incident commander shall determine rescue or recovery, and actions to be taken based on manpower, equipment available and level of training of personnel. Only members who have been trained may hang from rope, rig or operate systems and perform evacuations of victims. Rope rescue is a dangerous activity and safety shall be stressed. All other means of access and egress must be considered first.

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## REFERENCE

1. *IMS Model Procedures Guide for Structural Collapse and US&R Operations, 1<sup>st</sup> edition, 1998.*
2. *Rescue Technician, 1<sup>st</sup> edition, 1998.*
3. *Rope Rescue Manual, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, 1992.*

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## PROCEDURE

### I. Assessment

- A. Establish command.
- B. Survey the scene.
- C. Evaluate equipment and systems already in place.
- D. Control any observed or anticipated hazards already in place, this would include lock out/tag out and control of utilities.
- E. Take steps to prevent further injury to victim or injury to rescuers.
- F. Assess the victims condition to determine what resources will be needed to perform evacuation
  1. Reading Fire Department Recall with dual response from Evendale Fire Department
  2. Hamilton County USAR team
  3. Cincinnati Squad 52
  4. Green Township High Angle
  5. Anderson Township High Angle

## II. Operations

- A. Systems normally used within Reading Fire Department operations are 4:1 pre-rigged, 3:1 Z Drag and standard rappel.
- B. All raising and lowering systems shall have a brake rigged and available for use. Brakes will be backed up and sized to accommodate any actual or possible load.
- C. Standard commands such as “on belay”, “off belay”, “tension”, “slack”, “haul”, “haul slow”, “set”, “stop” shall be used at all times.
- D. Once a rescuer is over edge, only a designated Edge person will communicate with rescuers and haul teams. The Edge Person shall be secured to an anchor.
- E. A safety check shall be performed on each system prior to use, this also includes systems already placed in service prior to FD arrival. Only trained members can deem rigging safe for use by another member. If operations does not delegate a safety officer then responsibility is assumed by operations.

## III. Equipment

- A. All personal equipment shall be pre-approved before use in either training or actual rescue. Equipment shall be manufactured and maintained by nationally recognized organizations, such as NFPA, ANSI, OSHA, UIAA, etc., who are known for establishing requirements for rope equipment shall be referenced for guidelines used in equipment evaluations.
- B. All rope shall be in kernmantle construction. Unless used in prussic, all rope shall be of no less than one half inch (1/2) /thirteen millimeters (13) in diameter. Prussik rope shall be a minimum of 8 mm in diameter.
- C. All carabiners shall be locking and have a 10 thousand pound capacity. Carabiners may be doubled to achieve protection factor.
- D. Tandem prussiks will be system of choice for brakes and lifting cams.
- E. Power winches, cranes, etc. are not acceptable as means of movement of rescue personnel or victims.

**SUBJECT:** STRUCTURAL COLLAPSE**SECTION:** 303.05**REVISED:** FEBRUARY 13, 2004**PAGE(S):** 5

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## PURPOSE

To provide guidance during "Technical Rescue Operation" that require search and rescue operations to occur in any form or type of collapsed structure or damaged structure.

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## REFERENCE

1. *IMS Model Procedures Guide for Structural Collapse and US&R Operations, 1<sup>st</sup> edition, 1998.*

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## PROCEDURE

### I. Response

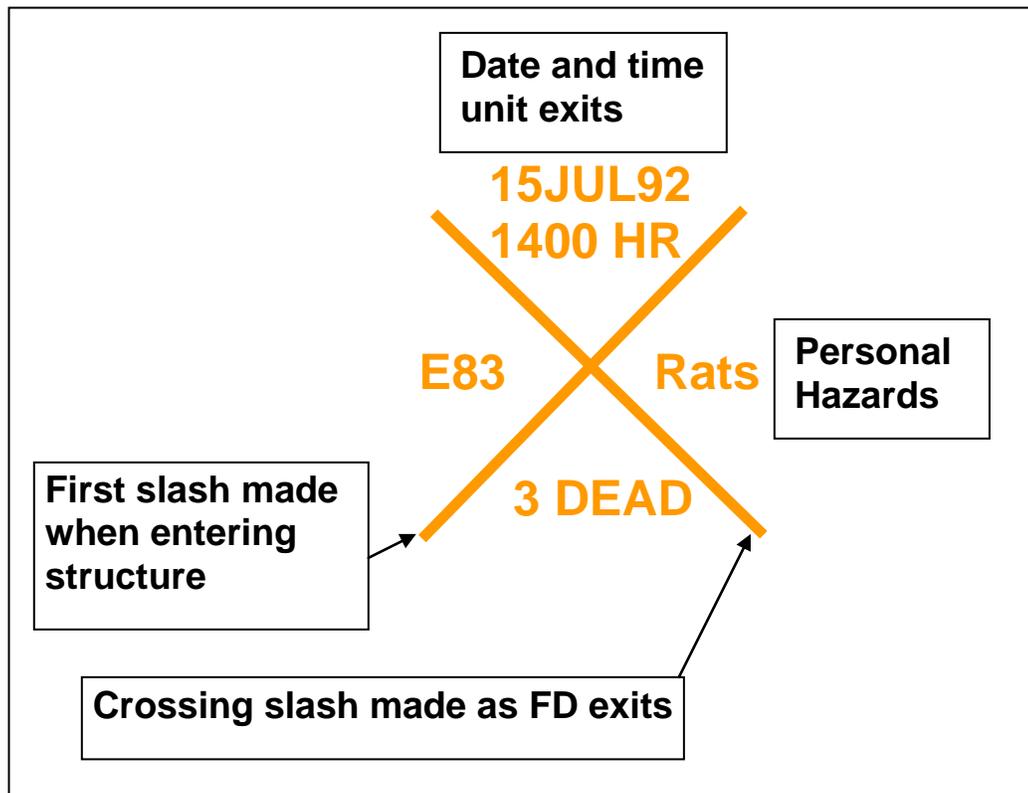
- A. Any incident involving structural collapse or damage where the possibility exists of victims being trapped or buried might require the response of the Hamilton County USAR team.
- B. No personnel should enter a collapsed or damage building to render patient care or extrication until a general survey and size up of damage is done.

### II. Search and Rescue Stages

- A. Reconnaissance. Provide for a general survey of the area and size up of the damage. Find out the following information:
  1. Building's use.
  2. Number of occupants.
  3. Number of victims trapped and their probable location.
  4. Are rescue operations currently underway?
  5. Presence of hazards:
    - a. Gas & utilities.
    - b. Flammables.

- c. Electrical.
    - d. Flooding from burst mains.
    - e. Plumbing and sewer disruption.
  6. Structural stability of adjoining buildings.
  7. Rescue efforts already underway by untrained personnel and/or citizens. Stop such efforts immediately.
- B. Immediate rescue of surface casualties
  1. Victims found on top of the debris or lightly buried should be removed first.
  2. All rescue efforts should be directed to the victims who can be seen or heard.
  3. Rescue efforts should be also directed to reach those victims whose location is known even if you cannot see or hear them.
- C. Scene organization and management
  1. Working within the Hamilton County Incident Management System is essential to a successful operation.
  2. The following checklist is to be followed:
    - a. Shut down all utilities.
    - b. Evaluate structural integrity, assign a safety officer.
    - c. Request an engineer or architect.
    - d. Direct rescue operations from a safety stand point.
    - e. Assign team leaders for each designated rescue team.
    - f. Divide the collapse area into manageable areas.
    - g. Draw up a contingency plan and place on standby.
- D. Entry into Structures
  1. Prior to entry into buildings the FEMA marking system (a 2x2 slashed marking by each entry) should be utilized:

## BUILDING MARKING SYSTEM SEARCH ASSESSMENT



### E. Exploration and Rescue from Likely Survival Places

1. Seek out casualties by looking in places that could have afforded a reasonable chance for survival. Typical areas that should be searched are:
  - a. Spaces under stairways.
  - b. Basement and cellar locations.
  - c. Locations near chimneys or fireplaces.
  - d. Voids under floors that are not entirely collapsed.
  - e. Undemolished rooms whose egress is barred.
  - f. Voids created by furniture or heavy machinery.
2. Locate casualties using the "hailing system."
  - a. Place rescuers in "call" and "listen" positions.

- b. Have the operations officer call for silence.
- c. Going "around the clock" each rescuer calls out or taps on something. A period of silence should follow each call.
- d. All members should attempt to determine a "fix" on any sound return.
- e. After a sound has been picked up, at least one additional "fix" should be attempted from another angle.
- f. Once communications with the victim have been established, it should be constantly maintained.

## F. Breaching and Shoring

1. In some instances, victims may be reached by breaching and shoring.
  - a. Initially try to avoid the breaching of walls. This may undermine the structural integrity of the rest of the building.
  - b. It is safer to cut holes in floors and use the shaft approach.
  - c. If you must breach a wall or cut a floor, cut a small hole first to assure that you are not entering a hazardous area.
2. Shoring may be used to support weakening walls or floors. The normal shoring operation of the Reading FD will be T-Shores and Cribbing
  - a. Shores should not be used to restore the structural elements to their original positions.
  - b. An attempt to force beams or walls into place may cause collapse.
  - c. If you decide to shore, keep the following in mind:
    1. The maximum length of a shore should be no more than 50 times its width.
    2. The strength of a shore is dependent on where it is anchored. If anchored to a floor, it will be dependent on the strength of the floor.
    3. Shoring should be attempted only by qualified personnel or under the supervision of technical rescue personnel.
    4. Air-shores may be used in place of timbers and will provide a stronger shoring system.
    5. Shoring should NEVER be removed once in place.

#### G. Selected Debris Removal

1. This stage of the rescue process will consist of reducing the size of the rubble.
2. This must be accomplished based on a pre-determined plan.
3. Cranes and heavy equipment may be needed to accomplish this portion of the rescue. Consult the fire department's resource log to obtain these.
4. Remove debris from the top down.
5. Remove debris from selected areas where information suggests that victims might be.

#### H. General Debris Removal

1. This should be employed after all other methods have been used.
2. This should be used only after the decision has been made by the incident commander that no other victims may be found alive.
3. This basically amounts to the demolition phase.

### III. General

- A. It is safer to reach entrapped victims from above.
- B. Diagram the building on the command board.
- C. Ensure control of all accesses to the site.
- D. Beware of "at will" response by volunteers or citizens.

**SUBJECT:** TRENCH OPERATIONS**SECTION:** 303.06**REVISED:** NOVEMBER 1, 2005**PAGE(S):** 3

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## PURPOSE

To provide guidelines during entry and rescue operations during trench emergencies

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## POLICY

The Reading Fire Department shall respond to all trench incidents within jurisdiction. The Incident commander shall determine rescue or recovery, and actions to be taken based on manpower, equipment available and level of training of personnel. Any operations in excavations greater than 15 feet deep should be attempted only after consultation with a qualified engineer.

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## REFERENCE

1. *IMS Model Procedures Guide for Structural Collapse and US&R Operations, 1<sup>st</sup> edition, 1998.*

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## PROCEDURE

### I. Assessment

- A. Upon arrival at an excavation emergency, the OIC should establish command and make assessment based on the following points:
  1. Nature of problem- EMS call within trench or entrapment.
  2. Locate site foreman and crew, collect information and assess rescue needs and operational goals.
  3. Determine the need for lockout/tag out or supporting exposed utilities.
  4. Notify necessary resources such as sewer, water or electrical service to respond.
- B. Control access to the area. Establish a hot zone. Hot zone should be established with caution tape or similar barrier to restrict access to rescue area to those actively involved in rescue operations. A staging area for equipment such as trench tools should be established near the trench for convenience but not too close as to cause problems from noise or vibration from generators or saws being operated in tool staging area. Responding emergency apparatus should be staged a minimum of 150 feet away with the trench equipment approximately 100 feet away from the trench. When possible these vehicles should be shut off to reduce vibration hazards.

- C. Approach from end of the excavations/trench. Ground pads should be installed by first crew to safeguard the working areas around the trench. This may occur prior to barrier tape, restricting access. A minimum of one ladder should be taken to trench during first approach to provide self rescue.
- D. Determine the size and the bottom excavation both before and after the collapse.
- E. Determine the need for spoil pile removal. Spoil; pile should be two feet away from trench lip.
- F. Confirm number and location of people trapped, and whether it may be rescue or recovery.
- G. Determine sources of vibration that may effect the rescue site.
- H. Determine what additional resources will be needed:
  - 1. Reading Fire Department Recall with Evendale FD
  - 2. Hamilton County USAR Team
  - 3. Green Township Trench trailer
  - 4. Anderson Township Trench team
  - 5. Delhi Fire Department Trench trailer

## II. Operations

- A. No personnel shall enter an unprotected trench for any reason. All trench/excavations will be made safe/protected prior to entry. Only personnel actively involved in rescue should be in hot zone. Trenches less than five feet deep can be entered after the following have been completed:
  - 1. Heavy equipment shut off
  - 2. Ground pads applied to edges
  - 3. Two ground ladders for egress
  - 4. Utilities controlled
  - 5. Atmosphere monitored
  - 6. Spoil pile retained
- B. The officer in charge of operations should be positioned at the end of the trench.
- C. Ladders should be placed at both ends of trench to provide egress.
- D. Atmosphere should be monitored for O<sub>2</sub>, LEL, CO. Any deviation from normal readings and ventilation should be initiated.
- E. Superimposed loads such as sidewalks, buildings, trucks, back hoes etc. shall be removed or supported by suitable extra shoring and bracing. Removal should occur only if necessary to perform rescue or if item presents larger hazard than its removal would.
- F. Support systems will be installed and removed in manner that protects rescuers from cave-ins. Support systems will be installed to resist sudden or other hazardous movements of lateral loads.
- G. Trench jacks and or cross bracing should be placed in true horizontal position in vertical alignment, and be secured to prevent sliding, falling or kick out.

- H. Vertical bracing should be no more than two feet from surface and bottom and no more than four feet apart.
- I. The victim should be supported with the necessary medical treatment to maintain stability. Plans should be made for victim removal upon extrication.
- J. All materials and equipment used for rescue and shoring shall be in good servicable condition. Timber used shall be sound and free of defects.
- K. Rescuers working in bell bottom pier holes and other similar deep confined footing areas shall wear harness with attached life safety line. Rope should be attended at all times. This is not intended to pull on trapped rescuers.
- L. Methods should be used to control hazards and water infiltration into excavation.
- M. All equipment and tools should be staged away from trench lip to protect rescuers equipment from falling into the excavation.

### **III. General**

- A. Structural firefighting gear is not suitable for trench rescue. Recommended protection: Helmet, eye protection, ordinary duty uniform, leather gloves, leather work boots.
- B. A safety officer should be appointed by the operations officer. The operations officer should serve as safety officer until he/she appoints one.
- C. Before equipment removal, visual documentation should be accomplished to maintain a record of event. All equipment should be removed in reverse order of installation. Safety shall be the primary concern with no personnel put at risk to recover equipment.
- D. Notification of enforcement agencies should include OSHA and Plumbing Inspector as applicable.

**SUBJECT:** VEHICLE RESCUE & EXTRICATION**SECTION:** 303.07**REVISED:** NOVEMBER 5, 2007**PAGE(S):** 3

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## PURPOSE

To establish guidelines for operations at vehicle accidents.

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## POLICY

- A. It will be the policy of the department to safely and efficiently remove and care for all patients involved in vehicle accidents.
- B. The incident commander shall set up the incident command system, determine the need for additional resources and work closely with police supervisor to ensure traffic and crowd control. Additional resources can include but are not limited to:
  1. A fire department Recall, based on need for additional personnel;
  2. Additional EMS units, based on number of injuries;
  3. Air Care, based on severity of injuries;
  4. If significant entrapment/entanglement is present, an additional hydraulic rescue tool should be requested. Departments with multiple tools based on geographic areas are Blue Ash, Evendale, Sycamore Township and Springfield Township.
- C. All victims of a vehicle accident should be evaluated/treated in accordance with department SOP, Academy of Medicine guidelines and acceptable pre-hospital care practices.
- D. Incident commander should insure that vehicle scene is safe prior to leaving scene. Although this may not be the direct responsibility of fire department the OIC should coordinate with the police to protect the public safety.

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## REFERENCES

1. *Principles of Extrication IFSTA First Edition (1990)*
2. *Advanced Vehicle Entrapment Rescue by L.M. Watson (1994)*
3. *Vehicle Rescue, First Edition, by Harvey Grant and James Gargan (1997)*

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## SAFETY

- A. Full turnout gear, complete with eye protection and gloves should be utilized at scenes of motor vehicle accidents, unless the incident commander determines that lesser level of personal protective equipment is indicated.
- B. A charged hose line should be placed in service.

- C. Battery cable should be cut on all vehicles involved in extrication operations. Both the negative and the positive cables should be cut with negative cable cut first. The positive cable should be cut twice with an approximate 2 inch section removed to ensure that power is not restored by accidental touching of wires.
- D. Air bags:
  - 1. Identify vehicle(s) for deployed and loaded airbags-front, sides, rear and roofline. Notify all personnel of airbags involvement and the deployed or loaded status of each.
  - 2. Remove power from vehicle ASAP. Even after power is removed airbags may deploy due to capacitors. Capacitors store energy for one second up to 20 or more minutes with the average stored energy time about 90 seconds.
  - 3. Personnel should be aware and stay away from the inflation zones of loaded airbags
  - 4. Doors with side airbags require the following variations from normal:
    - a. Forcible entry should be done from the hinge side.
    - b. Do not place a small backboard between door and patient as protection. If side bag deploys the protection could be pushed into the patient.
- E. A clear working area should be maintained around vehicle. Any material removed by FD personnel should be placed in area so as not to present a trip hazard.

## PROCEDURE

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- A. Assess the scene
  - 1. Proper placement of responding vehicles is 100-150 feet uphill and upwind of accident when possible. Fire department vehicles may be used a barricade to close the road for additional safety.
  - 2. In order to properly assess the scene the first arriving personnel should walk a 360 degree circle around the incident and set up work zones: hot, warm and cold zones. Although not always practical a 50 foot hot zone should be established around the vehicle(s) with only essential and properly equipped personnel in zone. An evaluation of possible hazards such as electrical wires, airbags, bystanders, fuel leaks, fires, smoke, hazardous cargo, environmental conditions, unstable vehicles should be noted and steps taken to alleviate hazards. Stay focused on the big picture of the entire incident. Scene should be made safe prior to personnel entering area. Remember that assessment is an ongoing process.
- B. Tactical priorities of vehicle rescue
  - 1. Stabilize vehicles- techniques include but are not limited to cribbing, chocking, rigging or jacks. Assume vehicle is unstable and take necessary steps to assure vehicle stability. Rescuers should not enter vehicle or remove victims until stability is insured.

2. Access vehicle/patient- Primary access is used to quickly gain access to patient and begin emergency care. Normal ingress methods are through open doors and windows. Try all doors and windows before breaking glass. Once entry into vehicle is secured, vehicle should be turned off, placed in park and brake set. Rescuer inside vehicle should provide protection to victim during extrication.
3. Secondary access- access that provides more complete access and removal of patient from vehicle. Secondary access can be gained with hand tools, power tools or hydraulic tools. This includes door and roof removal. Various methods can be employed to gain secondary access with multiple tools being used simultaneously. The OIC should decide which method is the optimum for given conditions.
  - a. Doors - displacement or removal can be opened from latch or hinge side, complete removal of both doors or make a third door. Suggested approach is to start from the latch side of the door.
  - b. Roof removal- complete roof removal, forward displacement or rear displacement. Suggested approach for roof removal is complete removal of roof.
4. Disentanglement- actual entrapping of patient from vehicle. All unattached materials should be removed first. Disentanglement could include moving or removal of seats, displacement of dash, move or removal of steering column, removal or move pedals, removal or move steering wheel. If mechanically moving steering column care should be taken to protect patient due to moveable joints in the column.
5. Removal of patient- Proper patient packaging with c-spine considerations and minimal manipulation of patient s injuries. Remember the golden hour with trauma patients. Securing of scene- Fire department will normally remain on scene during removal of vehicle by towing company if any possibility of a hazard exist. Roadway should be cleared of debris and liquid spills absorbed or flushed as needed. All equipment used should be checked and placed in response ready condition.

**SUBJECT:** CARBON MONOXIDE RESPONSES**SECTION:** 303.08**REVISED:** OCTOBER 15, 2003**PAGE(S):** 3

## PURPOSE

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Establish a procedure for the Reading Fire Department's response to reports of Carbon Monoxide (CO) incidents.

## GENERAL

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Carbon monoxide is an odorless, tasteless, colorless gas that is deadly. It is a byproduct of a fuel burning process. Many applications in the home can produce carbon monoxide.

Carbon monoxide poisoning may be difficult to diagnose. Its symptoms are similar to the flu, which may include headache, nausea, fatigue, and dizzy spells.

OSHA has established a maximum safe working level for carbon monoxide at 35 parts per million (ppm) over an 8 hour period, in the general work place. The US E.P.A. has established that residential levels are not to exceed 9 ppm over an 8 hour average.

## PROCEDURE

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- A. Verification of type of alarm.
  - 1. Arriving unit(s) shall attempt to determine if the alarm is a smoke detector or a carbon monoxide detector.
    - a. If it is a smoke detector alarm:
      - i. Investigate the cause of the alarm.
      - ii. Take the necessary action to mitigate the situation.
      - iii. Call for assistance if needed.
    - b. If it is a carbon monoxide alarm:
      - i. Determine if anyone is exhibiting any symptoms of CO poisoning; If so, immediately evacuate the premise.
      - ii. Treat the victim(s) and advise them of the need to be transported to a medical facility for evaluation.
      - iii. If victims refuse treatment/transportation, they must sign a release form.
      - iv. Request additional assistance if needed.
      - v. Begin the investigation procedure.
- B. Investigation Procedure
  - 1. Follow start up procedures as recommended by the meter manufacturer.

2. Zero the meter.
3. Initiate a survey of the entire premises to determine if there are any levels of CO present.
  - a. Evacuate the premises if CO levels greater than 9 ppm are detected by the meter.
  - b. The company officer, at his/her discretion, should request that the gas company respond to the scene if:
    - i. A CO level over 9 ppm is indicated on the meter.
    - ii. There is a need to shut off a gas appliance.
    - iii. Someone is showing signs of CO poisoning.
    - iv. The company officer feels a response of the gas company is needed.
4. Attempt to reconstruct the residence to a "like" condition prior to when the alarm activated.
  - a. Determine which appliances were on at the time of the alarm and turn them back on.
  - b. Determine which openings were open/closed and set these in their pre-alarm position.
  - c. Allow the appliances to operate for at least 10 minutes prior to taking readings.
  - d. Remember that vehicles and grills can also produce CO levels if operated in confined areas.
5. Should the above procedure prove uneventful, set up the premises in a "worse case" scenario.
  - a. Close all doors and windows in the building.
  - b. If there is a fireplace, close the damper – provided there is no fire in the fireplace.
  - c. Turn on all fuel fired appliances; including the furnace, water heater, stove, dryer, and portable space heaters.
  - d. Turn on all exhaust fans including bathroom and kitchen (if vented outside).
  - e. Wait 10 minutes and take readings.
6. **Readings of 9 ppm or less:**
  - a. Inform the occupants that our instruments did not detect an elevated level of CO at this time.
  - b. Recommend occupants check their detector per manufacturer recommendations.
  - c. Attempt to reset the detector.
  - d. Inform occupants that if it activates again to call the fire department again.
7. **Readings of more than 9 ppm but less than 100 ppm:**
  - a. Any readings above 9 ppm shall be considered above normal.
  - b. Occupants should be informed that we have detected a potentially dangerous level of CO.
  - c. Recommend that all persons leave the premises and begin ventilation.

- d. If it is determined that an appliance is malfunctioning and thereby producing CO, it shall be shut down and red tagged.
  - e. Once the premise has been reduced to a safe level of CO, the premises may be occupied at the discretion of the occupant.
  - f. Attempt to reset the detector.
  - g. Inform occupants of the action that have taken place and that C.G.&E./Cingery has been requested to respond. Also inform them that if the detector activates again, to call the fire department.
8. **Readings of 100 ppm or greater:**
- a. Inform the occupants that we have detected a potentially lethal level of CO.
  - b. Order the occupants to leave the premises immediately.
  - c. If an appliance is determined to be malfunctioning and producing CO, it shall be shut down and red tagged.
  - d. Ventilate the premises immediately.
  - e. Once the premise has been reduced to a safe level, it may be occupied at the discretion of the occupants.
  - f. Attempt to reset the detector.
  - g. Inform the occupant of the actions that have taken place and that C.G.&E./Cingery has been requested to respond. Also inform them that if the detector activates again, to call the fire department.
9. A “notice of findings” form shall be completed and signed by the occupants. One copy is to be given to the occupants and the other filed with the report.
10. Meter should be taken back into fresh air and allowed to clear itself before being shut off.

**SUBJECT:** NATURAL GAS INCIDENTS**SECTION:** 303.09**REVISED:** FEBRUARY 12, 2008**PAGE(S):** 3

## PURPOSE

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The purpose of this document is to establish a guideline on the response to natural gas incidents by the Reading Fire Department.

## PROCEDURE

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Fire Department units may encounter natural gas in a variety of situations and incident types with each presenting a different set of hazards and problems. The following guidelines present approaches that will be applicable in the majority of situations, but do not replace good judgment and experience on dealing with any particular incident.

Natural gas is much lighter than air and will dissipate rapidly in the outside environment. Inside buildings however, it tends to pocket, particularly in attics and dead air spaces. The flammable limits are approximately 4% to 15% in air. Natural gas itself is nontoxic, however it displaces oxygen and can result in asphyxiation if in a confined space. A combustible gas instrument can only determine the presence of a combustible gas, not the gas ranges and oxygen contents.

**Burning natural gas should not normally be extinguished, since this would change the situation from a visible to invisible hazard with explosive potential. Stopping the flow of fuel should control fires.**

## INCIDENTS AT WHICH AN EXPLOSION HAS OCCURRED

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Units arriving at the scene of a structure explosion must consider natural gas as a possible cause. Explosions have occurred in structures that were not served by natural gas (Underground leaks may permit gas to travel considerable distances before entering a structure through the foundation, around pipes or through void spaces), with these circumstances, the cause of the explosion may be difficult to determine.

1. Until it can be determined that the area is safe from the danger of further explosions, evacuate all civilians and keep the number of Fire Department and/or other emergency personnel (i.e. Cinergy Gas Company personnel) in the area to the minimum number necessary to stabilize the situation.
2. Do not rely on gas odor. Use combustible gas detectors to check all suspected areas.

3. Check areas systematically using combustible gas detectors. Start outside of the area of the explosion, and move into the area until readings indicate detectable concentration. Map the readings for the affected area.
4. If a gas concentration is encountered inside, adjacent to, or underneath any building, secure all possible sources of ignition in the affected area. Cut electricity from outside the affected area to avoid arcing. Ventilate buildings where gas is found with explosion proof equipment only.
5. The use of ground probes is essential to evaluate potential underground leaks. When Cinergy Gas personnel are on the scene, ground probe readings and locations must be coordinated. Time, location and concentration should be recorded for each probe. Subsequent readings should be taken from same holes when possible. Manhole covers should be removed if explosive levels are found.
6. Command should provide for effective interaction between Cinergy Gas personnel and the Fire Department. Cinergy Gas personnel are responsible for locating and eliminating leaks in the gas system. As industry specialists, they can provide Command with valuable assistance in the effective handling of these incidents. These personnel should be directed to Command to report their arrival, etc. In most cases, Fire Department personnel with a portable radio will be required to supervise during their on-site operations.

## **INCIDENTS INVOLVING A REPORTED GAS OR LEAK – NO FIRE OR EXPLOSION**

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Calls for "odor of gas", "gas leak", "broken gas line" and similar situations may range from minor to potentially major incidents. All of these should be approached as potentially dangerous situations.

With Cinergy Gas personnel on the scene of an incident, it should be standard procedure for the Fire Department unit to provide effective interaction between agencies. Cinergy Gas personnel shall be responsible for locating and eliminating leak sources.

In all cases, Fire Department units should take whatever actions are necessary to provide for life and property safety.

1. Evacuate any civilians in the area of escaping gas.
2. Attempt to locate the source of the gas and any shut off devices available using a combustible gas indicator and leak detector.
3. Gas leak situations within a building where the source of the leak is unknown or uncontrolled, the gas supply shall be shut of at the meter. Command shall ensure the meter is red-tagged and locked off until repairs are complete. This is most easily accomplished with the cooperation of Cinergy.
4. If there is any indication of gas accumulating within a building, evacuate civilians from the structure and control ignition sources. Shut off electrical power from an outside breaker. Check for explosive concentrations with a structure. Ventilate using explosion proof blowers to pressurize if necessary.

5. If Cinergy Gas personnel must excavate to shut off a leak, provide stand-by protection with a charged 1-3/4" line and two firefighters in full protective equipment and SCBA.
6. Consideration must be given to the flammable limits if ventilation is being used (bringing natural gas through the explosive limits).

## PERSONNEL SAFETY

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All personnel working in the vicinity of a known or suspected gas leak should wear full protective clothing with SCBA's. Personnel working in a suspected ignitable atmosphere (i.e. attempting to shut off a gas line) shall USE SCBA and should be covered by a manned protective hose line. The number of exposed personnel will be kept to an absolute minimum at all times.

A safety perimeter shall be established and maintained around any suspected gas leak and "fire line" tape should be used to identify the safety perimeter when necessary.

## NATURAL GAS SUMMARY

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- Natural Gas is lighter than air.
- It will pocket in buildings.
- Flammable limits are 4% to 15%.
- Natural Gas displaces oxygen.
- Burning Natural Gas generally should not be extinguished.
- Turning off the flow should control fires.

## RESPONSIBILITY

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1. All Officers of the Reading Fire Department are responsible to comply with and ensure that personnel under their command are adequately trained, fully understand, and comply with this guideline.
2. All members of the Reading Fire Department have the responsibility to learn and follow this guideline.

<b>SUBJECT:</b> Clandestine Drug Laboratories	<b>SECTION:</b> 303.10
<b>REVISED:</b> DECEMBER 3, 2003	<b>PAGE(S):</b> 3

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## PURPOSE

The number of clandestine drug laboratories has increased dramatically in recent years. The number of seizures, "busts," or "raids," made by law enforcement agencies has also increased. Clandestine drug laboratory investigations, seizures, and arrests of suspects are all police department or law enforcement agency matters. However, local law enforcement agencies are calling upon fire departments, EMS, and hazardous incident response teams for assistance during raids and for advice on safety matters.

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## POLICY

The Reading Fire Department will provide limited support for police departments and other agencies, when requested, at sites of clandestine drug laboratories. Support may consist of, but is not limited to: providing research and information on chemicals that are suspected or are known to be in the laboratory, EMS, hose lines for safety, remote exterior air monitoring, and decontamination of police entry personnel.

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## HAZARDS

Substitution of proper equipment with unsafe items is prevalent in low budget clandestine laboratory operations. For example, pressure cookers have been substituted for three neck flasks in the initial cooking stage of methamphetamine. Without ventilation, this type of operation can easily generate toxic levels of phosphine gas.

Booby traps have been left in place and armed even after a lab has been abandoned. Opening or moving doors, windows, refrigerator doors, chemical containers, or furniture may be a triggering mechanism for an explosive device or chemical reaction that is lethal. Trip wires made from monofilament fishing line may be strung across doorways, hallways, or across rooms to activate different types of devices. It is imperative that **nothing** is moved, shut off, turned on, or touched, at a laboratory, whether it is operational or abandoned. Electric switches, vacuum pumps, glassware, chemical containers, or anything that is plugged into a wall outlet should not be touched. Water sources, especially to reflux or condensing towers, should not be shut off. Shutting off the water supply to a cooking process can result in an explosion.

## INDICATORS

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Personnel should be aware of the indications of potential clandestine drug laboratories when responding to EMS, fire, check odor, or other service request. Proper disposal of the hazardous material(s) in a clandestine laboratory is the responsibility of the law enforcement agency that is making the seizure. The law enforcement agency on-scene must arrange clean-up with the proper contractor. Common indicators are:

- Unusual odors like ether, acetic, solvents, and odors of urea.
- Glassware that is normally associated with school or industrial laboratories, such as flasks, beakers, flasks with vacuum ports, glass cooling towers, and funnels.
- Heating elements, hot plates, or heating mantles.
- Vacuum pumps, plastic or rubber tubing.
- Marked and unmarked chemical containers of various sizes.

## SUSPECTED DRUG LABORATORY OPERATION – NOTIFICATION PROCESS

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Personnel that encounter a suspected laboratory should withdraw to a safe location as soon as it is possible, using discretion on actions and radio conversation. The on-duty supervisor and the Police Department should be notified of the situation. If a situation warrants additional immediate action (e.g. evacuation of surrounding areas, several victims, a chemical release or spill), the Dispatch Center should be requested to dispatch an all-call.

## NOTIFICATION FOR USE OF FIRE DEPARTMENT UNITS

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Any agency requesting the fire department for assistance during seizure of a clandestine drug laboratory shall contact the on-duty supervisor. The agency that is requesting the assistance shall provide information on location, time, staging area, and the type of assistance that is needed. A pre-incident meeting shall be scheduled between the agency and chief fire officer to address the concerns noted above. Security of information will be strictly adhered to.

## TACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS

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The recognition of the presence of a clandestine drug laboratory that is involved in a fire may not occur until after fire control has been achieved. The initial indications of the presence of a laboratory may be subtle or very apparent. Depending on the products involved, a fire in a lab can spread faster and burn with more intensity than what might normally be expected. The color of the flames may appear to be an unusually bright or dark orange, or the flames may be of several different colors. An unusual color of smoke or odor may also be present.

A laboratory that is involved in a fire situation should be viewed pessimistically by Command. A defensive mode may be appropriate for personnel safety. Standard

protective clothing and SCBA use may not afford complete protection. An acceptable alternative is to protect any exposures and allow the fire to burn, providing the products of combustion being generated are not complicating the problem further. Run-off may also create a problem and diking may be necessary.

## **HEALTH AND SAFETY**

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Personnel showing any signs or symptoms of a chemical exposure during or after any incident involving a laboratory or a suspected laboratory should be treated and transported to University Hospital. Critical life threatening injuries may require transport to the closest hospital. All potentially exposed personnel and equipment must be decontaminated.

## **ENTRY**

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Reading Fire Department personnel **will not** participate in a law enforcement agency entry operation into a suspected and unsecured clandestine drug laboratory. Security shall mean that the Police Department has surveyed the area and all suspects are in custody, and confirmation that the building has been searched and no explosive devices were found. Reading Fire Department personnel, in appropriate level of protection, may make an entry into a secured drug laboratory if an emergency situation involving hazardous materials develops and if the safety of Reading Fire Department personnel is not jeopardized.

Prior to taking any action at a suspected clandestine drug laboratory, the Reading Fire Department will request the response of a representative of the Drug Enforcement Authority (DEA). If a representative from the DEA is unable to respond directly to the location of the incident, every effort will be made to contact a representative by telephone to inform them of the situation. This should be accomplished by Command.

## **ADDITIONAL FIRE DEPARTMENT RESOURCE**

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Additional resource requirements needed at the scene will be determined by Command. A multi-company response will cause the activation of the incident command system.

## **DISPOSAL**

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Proper disposal of the hazardous material(s) in a clandestine laboratory is the responsibility of the law enforcement agency that is making the seizure. The law enforcement agency on-scene must arrange clean-up with the proper contractor.

**SUBJECT:** CONFINED SPACE OPERATIONS**SECTION:** 303.11**REVISED:** FEBRUARY 17, 2009**PAGE(S):** 4

## PURPOSE

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To provide guidelines during entry and rescue operations in a confined space.

## ASSESSMENT

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Upon arrival at confined space OIC should establish command and make an assessment of the confined space based on the following points:

- A. Assess type of space.
- B. Assess product storage hazards.
- C. Locate and secure job foreman or a reliable witness.
- D. Determine location and number of victims.
- E. Obtain blue prints, maps or have site personnel draw sketch of the site.
- F. Determine any mechanisms of entrapment or nature of illness.
- G. Make a conscious decision as to whether this is a RESCUE or RECOVERY operation.
- H. Determine number of entry points and locations.
- I. Determine electrical, mechanical, chemical and any additional hazards.
- J. Obtain permit entry form if available.
- K. Start documentation on confined space rescue form.
- L. Additional manpower or equipment needed:
  - 1. Reading Fire Department Recall with Evendale FD
  - 2. Hamilton County USAR team (Hamilton County Dispatch)
  - 3. The following departments have confined space equipment: Sycamore

## SITE SAFETY

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- A. Provide scene security and perimeter control. Establish the incident command system per the department SOG.
- B. Monitor atmosphere outside and inside confined space (if possible prior to ventilation). Do not sacrifice ventilation for monitoring.
- C. Ventilate space and area as soon as possible using positive pressure or combination of positive pressure and exhaust.
- D. Open all additional appropriate openings into space to assist with ventilation.

- E. Begin space isolation by lock out, tag out or blocking. All fixed mechanical devices and equipment capable of causing injury shall be placed in zero mechanical state.
- F. Assure that fire control measures are taken. Eliminate sources of ignition.

## **ENTRY PREPARATION**

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- A. Assure lock out, tag out and blank out procedures are complete.
- B. All fixed mechanical devices and equipment capable of causing injury shall be placed in zero mechanical state (ZMS).
- C. All electrical equipment (excluding lighting) shall be locked out in the open (off) position.
- D. All atmospheric readings shall be recorded on the rescue entry permit.
- E. In event atmospheric readings become unsafe to conduct operations, all entry teams will be removed from the space until such time that conditions are improved.

## **ATMOSPHERIC MONITORING**

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- A. Atmospheric monitoring shall occur prior to and during all entries into a confined space.
- B. It should be stressed that lack of positive alarm level readings does not eliminate the requirement for proper respiratory protection.
- C. Monitoring should be accomplished at all levels of the space.
- D. All atmospheres shall be tested for:
  - 1. Oxygen deficiency-less than 19.5%.
  - 2. Oxygen Excess- greater than 23.0%.
  - 3. Toxicity- any limit above the Permissible Exposure Limit (PEL).
  - 4. Flammability- at 10% of the Lower Explosive Limit (LEL).

## **ENTRY**

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- A. Once the best method and location for entry has been determined, teams can begin entry into space for reconnaissance, rescue or recovery operations.
- B. Entry decisions shall be made based on known locations of victims, safety of the opening, atmospheric readings and ease of recovery.
- C. If possible, attempt two prong attack to reach victim(s) if their location is known or suspected.
- D. Prior to entry, each team member shall be logged on a rescue entry permit with time of entry noted.
- E. Teams shall be limited to fifteen (15) minutes in any space with a standard SCBA (45 minute bottle) and thirty (30) minutes with a SABA- Thirty minutes should be the maximum allowed time in a space during operations.

- F. If you must remove your SCBA to enter space, ENTRY SHALL NOT BE PERMITTED.
- G. When entering with standard SCBA, go no more than twenty-five (25) feet from entrance in a horizontal direction.
- H. Assure one (1) back up team for every entry team.
- I. Always work in teams of two (2).
- J. Each entry team shall be equipped with the following:
  - 1. Communication equipment
  - 2. Lighting
  - 3. Atmospheric monitor
  - 4. Proper protective gear
  - 5. An entry/egress line shall accompany team
  - 6. A victim retrieval system and SCBA/SABA for victim
- K. If the entry team must enter a vertical shaft of greater than eight (8) feet, each member must wear a personal harness and be attached to a fall arresting system upon entering.
- L. Post non-essential personnel at tagged utilities for monitoring purposes.
- M. Once inside the space:
  - 1. Assure adequate interior team communications
  - 2. Markings can be made to assure egress
  - 3. Move towards the suspected victim(s) as a team
  - 4. Beware of elevation differences and unstable footing
- N. Once the victim(s) have been located, decide:
  - 1. Is this rescue or recovery?
  - 2. If rescue, can SCBA/SABA unit be placed on the victim(s)?
  - 3. Can the victim(s) be easily moved toward the opening?
  - 4. Is an additional team needed?
  - 5. Communicate decisions to outside command.
- O. Once the victim has been attached to a removal system
  - 1. Assure that all team members are stationed to the egress side of the victim (in event the victim becomes blocked).
  - 2. Always try to avoid being blocked in by the victim.
  - 3. Assure that the move is made quickly and smoothly.
  - 4. Assure that the outside personnel are aware of the egress plan.

## **SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS**

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- A. If rigging, hauling or use of rope hardware is needed in the space, assure only aluminum or non-sparking carabineers and hardware are used.
- B. In the event an airline or SABA failure occurs, the entire team shall leave the space immediately until the problem is remedied.
- C. Never leave a partner in trouble unless you must clear a path for his/her egress.

## TERMINATION

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- A. Assure that all teams have a confirmed PAR
- B. Inventory and inspect all equipment.
- C. Place damaged equipment out of service
- D. Secure entry points and contact responsible party to assure no entry.

<b>SUBJECT:</b> RESPONDING TO A PACKAGE WITH SUSPICION OF A BIOLOGICAL THREAT	<b>SECTION:</b> 303.12
<b>REVISED:</b> FEBRUARY 13, 2004	<b>PAGE(S):</b> 7

## PURPOSE

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The purpose of these guidelines is to provide a model procedure for first-arriving emergency service personnel for addressing potential bioterror events primarily involving suspicious letters, packages or containers. While some information may reach beyond the typical scope of the first responder, it is outlined so that a first responder will have knowledge of the broader process in which they may be requested or required to assist.

## REFERENCES

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*Model Procedures for Responding to a Package with Suspicion of a Biological Threat*, International Association of Fire Chiefs (January, 2004).

## DEFINITIONS

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**Biological threat:** Any biological material capable of causing: death, disease, or other biological malfunction in a human, an animal, a plant, or another living organism; deterioration of food, water, equipment, supplies or material of any kind; or harmful alteration of the environment. Also, an expression of intention to use any such material for such purposes.

**First responder:** An emergency worker who responds to an incident within a set amount of time. The term is usually specific to fire, law enforcement and EMS' immediately arriving assets. Those arriving on scene at later intervals may be called a responder, an emergency responder, a secondary responder, a subject matter expert or a special law enforcement assignment.

**Hazmat responder:** A trained and certified individual who is a member of a hazardous material response team and qualified to respond to incidents involving toxic industrial chemical, chemical warfare agents and other weapons of mass destruction.

**Package:** A letter, box, jar, suitcase or any other container that may hold a suspect material.

**Weapons of mass destruction (WMD):** WMDs may be any nuclear, biological, incendiary, chemical, explosive or radiological weapon that may be used for death or destruction. For the purpose of this guideline, we will be referring to only biological agents.

## **POLICY: Identifying and Assessing Biological Threats**

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- A. Personnel safety is the number-one priority in handling any suspected bioterror event.
- B. **Emergency Service Personnel must:**
  - 1. Perform a scene survey (size-up) that includes a risk assessment of the threat for an improvised explosive device (IED) prior to approaching any suspicious package. If an explosive threat exists, or an explosion has occurred, evaluate the scene for a secondary IED. If an explosive threat exists, it will take precedence over any biological threat until rendered safe.
  - 2. **Not touch, move or open any suspicious package until a risk assessment on the package can be performed in coordination with hazmat personnel and law enforcement!**
  - 3. Notify appropriate law enforcement (Reading PD, FBI, postal inspectors) when a potential threat is identified.
  - 4. Don protective gloves (surgical, vinyl, etc.) as the minimum level of protective clothing for incidents involving suspicious packages.
  - 5. Use SCBA (or approved NIOSH respiratory protection) when the risk assessment indicates a respiratory threat. Many biological agents pose a significant health risk by inhalation.
  - 6. Only certified hazardous material technicians will participate in the handling of unknown or suspicious packages.
  - 7. Ensure that materials are safely packaged. Try to retain enough suspicious material for:
    - a. Laboratory analysis, if necessary;
    - b. Use as criminal evidence, regardless of whether the threat is ultimately determined to be infectious, toxic or a criminal hoax.
  - 8. Transfer custody of evidence to a law enforcement officer as soon as possible. Maintain chain of custody by obtaining a record of names and signatures every time custody of a suspicious material or sample for laboratory analysis changes hands. The Hamilton County Health District shall be consulted regarding the handling/transport of samples.
  - 9. Complete an incident report with the initial law enforcement agency, which will be forwarded to the local FBI WMD coordinator.

## **RESPONDER PROCEDURE: Assessment**

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- A. Assess the hazard by:
  - 1. gathering information from the reporting party, bystanders, witnesses and any other first responders.
  - 2. determine who has physically had contact with the package.
  - 3. conducting an initial evaluation of the package; consider using binoculars while standing a safe distance away from the suspicious package.

- B. Determine the answers to the following questions:
1. Was the package accompanied by a verbal or written threat?  
(see Appendix A on threat considerations)
  2. Is the package open, leaking, giving off an odor or have any suspicious markings?
  3. If the package is open, was any substance released from the package?
  4. Is anyone who came into contact with the package feeling ill?
  5. Is the package making noise?
  6. Are there any wires protruding?
3. When possible, the final hazard determination should be a coordinated effort with a hazardous material response team and a bomb squad.

**If the answer to all assessment questions is “NO”:**

1. If they are not already on the scene, law enforcement should be contacted and appraised of the incident, and a collective determination on the removal or disposal of the package should be agreed upon.
2. The package should be placed in a sealable plastic bag and double-bagged.
3. Anyone who touched the package should thoroughly wash hands or affected area with soap and water. A package that is not hazardous may still be unsanitary.
4. Consult with Health District and be prepared to face media coverage.

**If the answer to any assessment question is “YES”:**

1. If they are not already on the scene, notify local law enforcement. Establish a unified command with the lead emergency service agencies. Ensure all special called agencies are included in the unified command structure.
2. Request special assistance (e.g. Cincinnati Bomb Unit, Greater Cincinnati HazMat, Cincinnati CBRNE, Health District, state/federal authorities, etc.) as soon as a threat requiring their involvement is identified.
3. Control the scene.
  - a. **Establish hot, warm and cold zones.** The size of the hazard control zones should be based on the assessed threat. Depending on the scenario, the initial hot zone may range from the desk top in an office to an entire building depending on the situation. Use barrier tape to cordon off open areas.
  - b. **Shut down the building ventilation system if there has been a substance release.**
  - c. **Turn off high-speed mail processing equipment** that may have handled the suspicious package.
  - d. **Isolate those who have been exposed or potentially exposed and consider shelter-in-place as an initial tactical consideration. Do not evacuate the building unless as immediate threat is evident.** Individuals, including emergency service personnel, who contacted the

package must be assessed for the need for decontamination (see decon guidelines – level of decontamination may vary from washing with soap and water, to full gross decon) and transport for evaluation. Only under extreme medical emergency conditions should a contaminated victim be transported prior to decontamination and then should only be transported after being placed in a protective envelope (e.g. Tyvek® suit) to minimize secondary contamination of the general population and/or environment.

- e. **Consider location and well-being of those unexposed or unlikely exposed.** Non-victims may need to be gathered together for law enforcement interviews, or to receive information from the Health District or other officials to inform and allay fears.
4. Consider/request the assistance of Greater Cincinnati HazMat to assist with screening for hazard assessment, sample collection, decontamination and other mitigation activities.
5. Appropriate local law enforcement should notify FBI WMD coordinator.
6. As needed, conduct a threat assessment via the FBI WMD coordinator, with the FBI Counter-Terrorism Division's WMD Operations Unit, the FBI Laboratory Division, and other appropriate federal agencies. Coordinate with any designated regional threat assessment center.
7. Contact the Hamilton County General Health District (who should in turn notify state authorities and the CDC) if casualties are involved or a threat of public health exposure or environmental contamination exists.
8. In coordination with law enforcement, notify the US Postal Inspection Service, whenever it appears that the threat was delivered through the US Postal Service. Assist with ensuring that origin and tracking information is obtained from the package (ideally, photographs of the front and back).
9. Treat the scene as a crime scene. Preserve evidence in coordination with law enforcement (local/state/federal). Assist in identifying and collecting biological evidence.
10. Coordinate transport of public health samples with law enforcement.
11. Be prepared to perform basic field screening of the biological sample to rule out radiation, flammability, corrosives, and volatile organic compounds to gain acceptance into the appropriate laboratory.
12. Identify and list names of anyone who may have been exposed to the suspicious substance so they may be contacted once results of the substance are available or if there is other additional information requiring dissemination.
13. In coordination with law enforcement (local/state/federal), identify a single point-of-contact for follow-up.
14. Prepare to intelligently relate to the media.

## **RESPONDER PROCEDURE: Decontamination Guidelines**

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### **A. Unopened, no leak or exposure**

1. Thoroughly wash hands or affected area with soap and water.
2. General Health District may be notified for further assistance.

### **B. Unopened, oily or granular leak, no exposure**

1. Thoroughly wash hands or affected area with soap and water.
2. Shower at home with soap and water.
3. Launder clothes separately in hot water with soap.\*
4. General Health District may be notified for further assistance.

**C. Opened, no exposure**

1. Thoroughly wash hands or affected area with soap and water.
2. General Health District must be notified.

**D. Opened, oily or granular substance present, with exposure to:**

**1. Hands only (minimal contact)**

- a) Thoroughly wash hands or affected area with soap and water.
- b) Change and place clothes in a sealed plastic bag.
- c) Shower at home with soap and water, shampoo hair.
- d) Launder clothes separately in hot water with soap.\*
- e) General Health District must be notified.

**2. Hands and clothes**

- a) Remove clothes and seal in plastic bag onsite.
- b) Gross decontamination by emergency service that is based on and justified by the hazard assessment.
- c) Transport for evaluation, after decontamination.
- d) Leave contaminated clothing onsite for later pick-up by the Health District or other determined agency, as appropriate.

\*As an extra layer of precaution, consult with Health District about refraining from washing any clothing, keeping them bagged until any investigation or lab tests are completed.

## APPENDIX A: Identifying Suspicious Packages

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Suspicious packages should be risk assessed for articulated threats.

Examples would include:

- Actual threat message in or on the package
- Addressee in position of authority, e.g., government employee, political figure, private sector executive
- Addressee in controversial business, e.g., Planned Parenthood, chemical industry, forestry

**What kind of packages should be considered suspicious?**

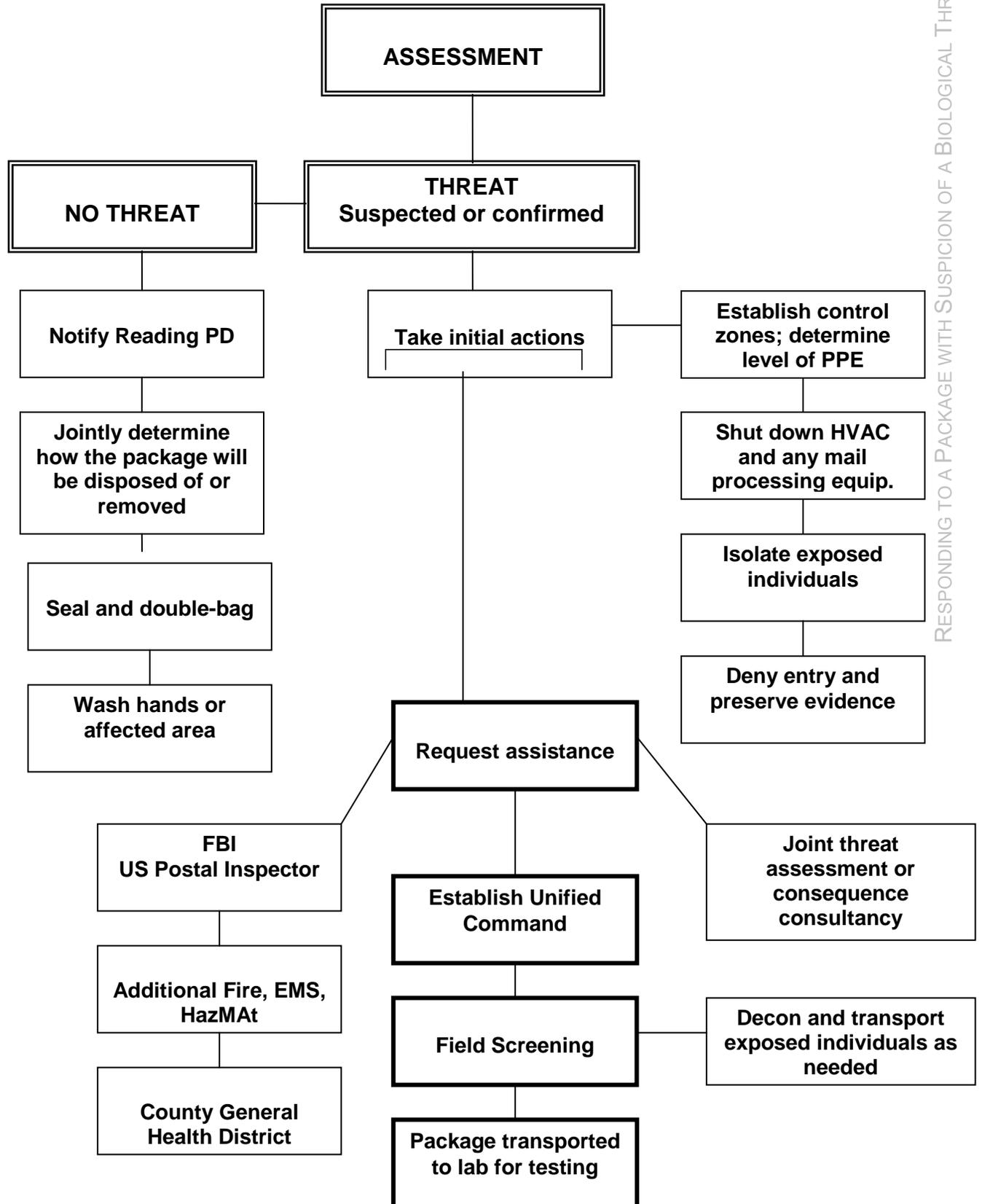
*Some characteristics of suspicious packages and envelopes include the following:*

- Inappropriate or unusual labeling
  - Excessive postage
  - Handwritten or poorly typed addresses
  - Misspellings of common words
  - Strange return address or no return address
  - Incorrect titles or title without a name
  - Not addressed to a specific person
  - Marked with restrictions, e.g., “Personal” or “Do not x-ray”
  - Marked with any threatening language
  - Postmarked from a city or state that does not match the return address
- Appearance
  - Powdery substance felt through or appearing on the package
  - Oily stains, discolorations or odor
  - Lopsided or uneven envelope
  - Excessive packaging material such as tape, string, etc.
- Other suspicious signs
  - Excessive weight
  - Ticking sound
  - Protruding wires or aluminum foil

If a package or envelope appears suspicious, **NON-EMERGENCY PERSONNEL SHOULD NOT OPEN OR TOUCH IT.** Emergency personnel should limit direct contact with the package. Only those with hazardous material technician training should proceed to handle the package when necessary.

Based on the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s FAQs regarding anthrax. [www.bt.cdc.gov](http://www.bt.cdc.gov)

**APPENDIX B: Decision Matrix**



<b>SUBJECT:</b> INCIDENT MANAGEMENT SYSTEM	<b>SECTION:</b> 304.01
<b>REVISED:</b> JANUARY 3, 2006	<b>PAGE(S):</b> 2

## PURPOSE

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The NIMS Incident Command System enhances Firefighter safety by providing a modular organizational structure that can be used at all incidents both emergency and non-emergency. Additional components of the ICS will include common terminology, integrated communications, unity of command, a unified command structure, consolidated incident action plans, a manageable span of control, and designated incident facilities.

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6. *Model Procedures Guide for High Rise Firefighting, Second Edition, National Fire Service Incident Management System Consortium, 2003.*
7. *IMS Model Procedures Guide for Structural Collapse and US&R Operations, 1<sup>st</sup> edition, 1998.*
8. *IMS Model Procedures Guide for Hazardous Materials Incidents, 1<sup>st</sup> edition, 2000*
9. *Fire Ground Command, Second Edition, Alan V. Brunacini, 2002.*

## POLICY

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- A. The Reading Fire Department will utilize the National Incident Management System (NIMS) which contains the Incident Command System (ICS) on all responses.
- B. It shall be the policy of the Reading Fire Department to implement and use the Incident Management System in the following situations:
  1. Emergency responses consisting of two or more engine or truck companies,
  2. Emergency responses to hazardous material spills,
  3. Mass casualty incidents,
  4. Any other response or situation in which the on-scene commander feels that the IMS is required for safe and effective emergency operations.

- C. It is recommended that IMS principles be implemented and used for all emergency responses; however, the IMS does not need to be formally implemented.
- D. The procedures used for the IMS are those procedures detailed in the above listed references.
- E. It shall be the responsibility of the first arriving company or chief officer to assess the situation and determine if the IMS is needed. If the IMS is needed, that officer shall assume command (Incident Commander or IC) and begin implementing the IMS.
- F. The IC shall adapt the IMS framework to the requirements of the specific emergency situation at hand. This includes assigning necessary staff and sector positions.
- G. The IC shall continuously monitor the current status of the IMS and the changing needs of the emergency situation. The IC shall adapt the IMS as required to accommodate those needs while maintaining an effective span of control.
- H. A higher ranking officer may request command be transferred to that officer but should not assume command until command has been formally transferred.
- I. The IC should transfer command to another officer only after that officer has been briefed on the current status of the situation. Transfer of command should be announced on the command radio channel.
- J. The IC shall terminate command only after the emergency situation has been mitigated and the incident has de-escalated below the thresholds established for IMS implementation.

## TRAINING

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- A. All members of the Reading Fire Department will receive training in the IMS as part of their initial training requirements.
- B. All members should receive on-going annual training in the IMS.
- C. Whenever appropriate, the IMS should be used in training activities and drills

## CONCLUSION

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The IMS is an important part of safe and effective emergency operations. The Reading Fire Department is committed to its use both formally as defined above and informally on all other responses. Effective use of the IMS comes from the continuous application of its principles in all emergency operations and training activities.

<b>SUBJECT:</b> AREA EVACUATION	<b>SECTION:</b> 304.02
<b>REVISED:</b> OCTOBER 16, 2003	<b>PAGE(S):</b> 3

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## PURPOSE

To provide a means of closing an area or moving people from an area in which life safety conditions have become unsafe or may become unsafe due to an emergency situation. An area is defined here as anything more than a single structure.

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## POLICY

In a variety of possible situations, it may be necessary to evacuate an area of the City. An evacuation of any thing more than a single structure requires a coordinated effort between Fire and Police supervisors at the scene to ensure that evacuation is rapid, complete, and without unnecessary duplication of effort. It requires a definite plan and a method of reporting progress.

- A. When evacuation of an area is indicated due to an imminent hazard, the limits of the evacuation area will normally be determined by Fire Department Command at the scene in consultation with the Police Supervisor at the scene. The practical considerations of what resources are available and what degree of risk is involved will necessarily be factors in the determination of evacuation limits.
- B. The Incident Commander should, upon determination of the necessity for evacuation, coordinate with the Police Supervisor on the scene to plan and execute evacuation of an area.
- C. Fire personnel may advise people to leave an area but they cannot force them to evacuate.
- D. Fire companies and units will not normally be utilized for evacuation operations. However, they may be utilized if available and not needed for control operations.

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## AUTHORITY

The City of Reading code gives authority to all emergency departments within the city limits the authority to close disaster areas and order evacuation.

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## PUBLIC INFORMATION

Any major evacuation will require and benefit from complete Public Information notification. A Public Information Officer should be assigned to communicate with radio and television stations as quickly as possible to explain exactly what the situation is and what people involved should do.

## EMERGENCY OPERATING CENTER

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In situations where the Emergency Operations Center (E.O.C.) has been activated, the Fire Department Command Post at the scene may be required to report information to and receive direction from the E.O.C.

## EVACUATION CENTERS

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- A. In most situations it is desirable to have a procedure for contacting people responsible for opening buildings designated as disaster shelters.
- B. When long term evacuation (more than two to three hours) is anticipated, contact Red Cross to set up a temporary shelter. This is usually best accomplished by using one of the pre-determined sites.
- C. The Command Post must have direct communications with the evacuation center.
- D. The Fire Chief and the dispatcher have a list of disaster shelters for use in an emergency situation.

## ORGANIZATION OF EVACUATION

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Once the desired area of evacuation and the operational perimeter have been established, a plan is necessary to actually effect the desired evacuation. This will be dependent on the resources available (Fire, Police, other agencies) and the type situation. Personnel from one or several agencies may be involved in actually alerting citizens and assisting them to evacuate.

- A. Establish a Unified Command Post. Utilize maps of the area to make assignments and report progress jointly to avoid duplication or omissions. If it is infeasible to have the Fire and Police Command Posts together, liaison will have to be established.
- B. Assign units or companies (if they are available) to evacuate specific objectives (a building, a block, a street, etc.) and report completion.
- C. Start with areas in most immediate danger first. Assign priorities according to degree of risk.
- D. Advise personnel if evacuees are to be directed to particular Evacuation Centers.
- E. Use the following means for notification of the public:
  - 1. NOAA weather radios – contact Hamilton County Dispatch
  - 2. Outdoor warning sirens – contact Hamilton County Dispatch
  - 3. Emergency Broadcast System – PIO
  - 4. Door to door – for small scale evacuations
  - 5. Vehicle public address system – for large scale evacuations

## **ADDITIONAL SITUATIONS**

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In addition to conventional evacuations, some situations may indicate different approaches.

- A. Atmospheric Hazard: Some hazardous materials situations may pose a problem to persons exposed to outside air only. This may be caused by a wind-carried irritant vapor or gas. In this case the best alternative may be to advise people to Shelter-in-Place.
- B. Advisory Notification: In some situations it may be necessary to notify citizens of potential risk and suggest that they relocate for their own convenience. As an example, this situation could occur when street flooding is expected, but no immediate threat to physical safety is indicated.
- C. Some special populations such as, schools, health care facilities, and some industry occupancies have their own Shelter-in-Place and evacuation plans.

## **RESPONSIBILITY**

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- A. The Police Department will be responsible for securing the perimeter of the evacuation area, and for coordination of the evacuation.
- B. The Fire Department Incident Commander will be responsible for assessment of the degree of danger and the need for evacuation, and for the physical safety of personnel operating within the evacuation zone.

**SUBJECT:** PUBLIC HEALTH CONSIDERATIONS**SECTION:** 304.03**REVISED:** FEBRUARY 13, 2004**PAGE(S):** 2

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## PURPOSE

- A. To identify those situations this may pose a health hazard to the general public.
- B. To initiate the notification of the proper agency (ies) whenever a public health hazard has been identified.

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## POLICY

- A. Fire Department members should be alert and able to identify public health hazards while operating at alarm incidents or while on fire prevention or pre-fire planning inspections.
- B. Whenever a public health hazard has been identified, based upon the listed criteria (see Criteria), and the hazard is of a nature which will expose the general public (more than a single family occupying a private residence) to said hazard, then the Incident Commander should contact the Hamilton County General Health Department, via dispatch.

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## CRITERIA

The following criteria are to be considered when making any determination considering notification of the Hamilton County General Health Department and appropriate city departments and/or divisions.

- A. Identification of the following health hazards:
  - 1. Sewage spills and leaks.
  - 2. Unreasonable amounts of dirt, grease, and bad house keeping fostering unsanitary conditions.
  - 3. The presence of infectious diseases.
  - 4. The presence of rodents.
  - 5. Abnormal amounts of insects.
  - 6. Food which has been exposed to products of combustion.
  - 7. Hazardous materials spills and leaks.
- B. Determination of the type of occupancy involved:
  - 1. Any public assembly.
  - 2. Businesses where the general public may be involved.
  - 3. Situations where employees are subjected to unhealthy conditions.
  - 4. Public areas and throughways.

5. Multiple occupancy residences, such as, hotels, motels, and apartments (where the hazard affects people other than those living in a single residence).

## PROCEDURE

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Whenever a public health hazard has been identified and said hazard meets the listed criteria (see Criteria) or when in the opinion of the Fire Department a definite endangerment of the public health exists, the following guidelines should apply:

- A. The officer in charge should contact dispatch and request notification of the Hamilton County General Health Department.
- B. If an unhealthy situation is discovered in a private residence (home, apartment, condominium, etc.), it will be necessary to establish that this condition affects people other than those living in the residence before notification of the Health Department can be made.
- C. Depending upon the nature of the situation, other city or county departments and/or divisions may be notified to respond. These may include:
  1. Police Department
  2. Social Services
  3. Public Works Department
  4. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)

## RESPONSIBILITY

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- A. Fire Department officers in charge of routine details or commanding emergency operations, who become aware of public health hazards which meet the listed criteria and guidelines within this policy, are responsible for notification of the Hamilton County General Health Department and those county departments and/or divisions which may be appropriate to the situation.
- B. Fire Department members, who suspect or identify a public health hazard, are responsible for notification of their immediate supervisor.

**SUBJECT:** WELFARE**SECTION:** 304.04**REVISED:** FEBRUARY 12, 2008**PAGE(S):** 1

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**PURPOSE**

To provide aid and assistance beyond the spectrum of normal Fire Department services to those citizens who may have been adversely affected by fire or other incidents.

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**POLICY**

At all incidents causing serious loss to an inhabited dwelling where the occupants are temporarily without shelter, food, clothing, etc., and unable to assist themselves, the Incident Commander should make contact with either the American National Red Cross or the Salvation Army, or the appropriate designated representatives.

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**PROCEDURE**

Whenever the need to contact the American National Red Cross or Salvation Army presents itself, the Incident Commander should notify the Dispatcher who shall contact the appropriate agency using the list of current phone numbers maintained in the Dispatcher Office. The Dispatcher shall then advise the Incident Commander of the services the contacted agency can provide.

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**RESPONSIBILITY**

All Fire Department officers are responsible for evaluating situations of human need which they or their subordinates may encounter and for ensuring that contact is made with the appropriate agency.

<b>SUBJECT:</b> INCIDENT CRITIQUE	<b>SECTION:</b> 304.05
<b>REVISED:</b> FEBRUARY 12, 2008	<b>PAGE(S):</b> 3

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## PURPOSE

- A. To provide a means of objectively analyzing fire department operations in a post-emergency environment.
- B. To provide a continuing review and development process through which improved methods and operations may be realized.

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## POLICY

- A. A formal post-incident critique should be conducted for every major incident occurring within the fire department's jurisdiction.
- B. A major incident is defined as any incident which taxes the fire department's resources to the point where outside assistance must be summoned and extensively utilized, any incident which, by its very nature, presents unusual and/or challenging problems worthy of analysis, or any incident involving the serious injury or death of civilians or fire department personnel.
- C. Semi-formal and informal critiques should be conducted by fire department officers on an as needed basis, in an effort to provide training and overall improvement of fire department operations.

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## PROCEDURE

### A. INFORMAL CRITIQUES

The informal critique simply involves an informal discussion of the events which transpired during an emergency incident.

1. The informal critique can be utilized at the company level after any type of an alarm to which the involved fire company (ies) may have responded.
2. Members of the involved company (ies) may simply meet together in quarters and informally discuss the various aspects of the incident.
3. A Company Officer should serve as the chairperson of the informal critique.
4. Training tips relating to the incident should be brought up during the discussion.
5. The critique emphasis must be on overall operational improvement and should not be designed to embarrass anyone.

## B. SEMI-FORMAL CRITIQUE

The semi-formal critique is primarily designed for department discussion of emergency incidents.

1. As soon as possible, following an emergency incident, the Incident Commander (IC) may initiate (at his discretion) a semi-formal critique.
2. The IC should decide upon the time and place for the critique.
3. The IC should serve as chairperson of the semi-formal critique.
4. A plot plan of the incident, which can easily be seen by the group, should be provided at the location of the critique.
5. Discussion should begin with the involved facts of the incident include:
  - a. Date of the incident.
  - b. Time.
  - c. Location.
  - d. Weather conditions.
  - e. Building construction (if applicable).
  - f. Occupancy (if applicable).
  - g. Topography (if applicable).
  - h. Water supply.
6. Discussion of fire department operations should begin with the first officer or member on the scene, describing conditions upon arrival and initial actions and continue by allowing each involved officer and/or fire personnel (in order of arrival at scene) to describe the observations and actions of their particular company.
7. After a description of the facts and the operations has been completed, the discussion should be opened up for questions and answers and expression of opinions by all those present at the critique.
8. The emphasis must be on overall operational improvements and should not focus on embarrassing any individual or group.

## C. FORMAL CRITIQUE

The formal critique is designed to involve all levels of the fire department. It is intended to be utilized as a method of detailed analysis of major emergency operations.

1. Based on the nature of the emergency, the Chief may initiate a formal critique.
2. The Chief should make arrangements for the time and place at which the critique should be conducted.
3. The Chief should also notify all outside agencies and departments which may have participated in the incident.
4. A plot plan and all other applicable visual aids should be coordinated by the Chief and provided for the incident critique.
5. The Chief should serve as chairman of the critique and shall appoint a scribe to take notes during the critique. The scribe should not be chosen from among the officers involved in the incident.

6. The critique should begin with a description of the involved facts, including:
  - a. Date.
  - b. Time.
  - c. Location.
  - d. Weather conditions.
  - e. Topography.
  - f. Water supply.
  - g. Occupancy (if applicable).
  - h. Building construction (if applicable).
  - i. Special conditions (such as traffic, crowds, etc.).
7. Fire Department operations should be discussed in chronological order by allowing the involved officers to recount and discuss their observations and actions in order of their arrival at the scene.
8. Involved non-fire department agencies should be allowed to describe their respective involvement of the incident.
9. Once the facts and a description of the operations involved have been presented, the discussion should be opened for questions and answers and expression of opinions from all those present at the critique.
10. The emphasis must be on overall operational improvement and should not focus on embarrassing any individual or group.
11. The Chief should conclude the critique by summarizing the key points involved and providing additional comments as may be necessary.
12. The Chief should prepare a summary of the incident critique and retain one copy on file and provide copies to all involved officers.

## RESPONSIBILITY

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- A. The Incident Commander or Chief is responsible for initiation of the formal critique process following every major incident or whenever directed to do so by the Fire Chief.
- B. The Officer in Charge or Acting Officer in Charge is responsible for initiating semi-formal or informal incident critiques following any incident which may prompt numerous questions from subordinates and/or may (in the opinion of the O.I.C. or acting O.I.C.) provide a valuable training opportunity.
- C. Company Officers are responsible for initiating the informal incident critique process whenever an incident prompts numerous questions by subordinate personnel and/or may (in the opinion of the Company Officer) provide a valuable training opportunity.
- D. The Chief is responsible for serving as critique chairman at all formal critiques.
- E. The Assistant Chief is responsible for preparing a summary report based on information obtained during a formal critique and insuring that the Fire Chief, and the officers involved in the incident receive a copy of the summary. The Assistant Chief is also responsible for maintaining a file of all the formal critique summary reports.

<b>SUBJECT:</b> CODERED EMERGENCY NOTIFICATION SYSTEM	<b>SECTION:</b> 304.06
<b>REVISED:</b> AUGUST 15, 2010	<b>PAGE(S):</b> 3

**PURPOSE**

To establish procedures and guidelines governing the use of the City of Reading’s Reverse 911 System: *CodeRED Emergency Notification System*

**POLICY**

The *CodeRED Emergency Notification System* may be used for both crisis and non-crisis situations to notify those citizens that are provided services by the City of Reading, as deemed necessary by the Safety-Service Director; Police Chief; Fire Chief; Chief of Public Works; Public Health Commissioner; and, or their designees. Examples of information that may be communicated through the *CodeRED Emergency Notification System* are:

<p><b>Man-Made Disasters</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Terrorism Threats</li> <li>• Bomb Threats</li> <li>• Nuclear Hazards</li> <li>• Bio Terrorism Threats</li> <li>• Chemical Spills</li> <li>• Gas Leaks</li> <li>• HAZMAT Emergencies</li> <li>• Hostage Situations</li> </ul>	<p><b>Search and Rescue</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Missing Children</li> <li>• Missing Elderly</li> <li>• Missing Disabled</li> <li>• Evacuation Notices</li> <li>• Evacuation Routes</li> </ul>
<p><b>Environmental (Natural Disasters)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fires</li> <li>• Floods</li> <li>• Dangerous Water Conditions</li> <li>• Water Safety Alerts</li> <li>• Mill Creek issues</li> </ul>	<p><b>Public Works</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Drinking Water Contamination</li> <li>• Viral Outbreaks</li> <li>• Utility Outages</li> <li>• Street Closings</li> <li>• Public Notifications</li> </ul>
<p><b>Administration</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• City government Information of importance to citizens</li> </ul>	<p><b>Crime</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prisoner Escape Warning</li> <li>• Sexual Predator Alert</li> <li>• Amber alerts</li> </ul>

The *CodeRED Emergency Notification System* for the City of Reading shall be activated only when approved by the System Coordinators or his/her designee.

The *CodeRED Emergency Notification System* shall not be used for any non-governmental purpose.

## DEFINITIONS

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The **CodeRED Emergency Notification System** is an extremely high speed telephone communication service that can deliver customized pre-recorded emergency messages directly to homes and business at the proven capacity of millions of calls per day. Any emergency broadcast messages can be from anywhere in the world via a secure Internet web site.

The Police Chief and Fire Chief, or their designee, shall jointly serve as **System Coordinators** and shall oversee the operations of the *CodeRED Emergency Notification System*, including resolving operational issues, ensuring that there are sufficient authorized users, ensuring that users are properly trained to operate the system, development of pre-scripted messages, and ensuring that the system is tested regularly.

The Police Chief, or his/her designee, shall serve as the **System Administrator** and shall be responsible for the software and hardware for the *CodeRED Emergency Notification System*.

**Authorized Users** are personnel employed by the City of Reading who are trained in the operation of the *CodeRED Emergency Notification System* and have been designated by the System Coordinators to activate the notification system. A list of authorized users will be maintained by the System Administrator and can be found in the Reading Police Department's Dispatch Resource Manual.

## PROCEDURE

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Activation of a Notification. The following procedures shall be followed to activate a notification through the *CodeRED Emergency Notification System*:

1. A request for any notification will generally be activated by the Safety-Service Director; Police Chief; Fire Chief; Chief of Public Works; Public Health Commissioner; and, or their designees.
2. The party who is proposing that a notification be sent shall verify that accurate and complete information is obtained for the message. A message notification form shall be completed and submitted to a System Coordinator, or a designee for approval which shall include the message being sent and the geographic area to whom the message should be sent. The System Coordinator will have the approved message recorded for system activation.
3. The Mayor, Safety-Service Director and all Department Heads shall be notified of any emergency system activations.
4. The approved message notification form shall be forwarded to an authorized user for activation when steps 1-4 are completed.

5. All non-crisis or informational messages (i.e. planned street closings, etc.) shall be sent so as to be completed prior to 8:00 PM.
6. Emergency messages should be forwarded to listed media contacts for broadcasting on television and/or radio.

System Maintenance. The System Administrator will collect, maintain, and update lists of those authorized to be contacted through the *CodeRED Emergency Notification System*. Those authorized to be included into the system may request to be added or deleted from the database at any time. These requests may be submitted through the City of Reading's website or the automated phone extension designated (240).

The *CodeRED Emergency Notification System* will be tested on a quarterly basis to ensure it is working properly.

<b>SUBJECT:</b> RADIO SYSTEM CONFIGURATION	<b>SECTION:</b> 305.01
<b>REVISED:</b> SEPTEMBER 20, 2010; NOVEMBER 5, 2007	<b>PAGE(S):</b> 3

## PURPOSE

To provide a standardized format for the operation of the Fire Department Communications System in the City of Reading, Ohio.

## POLICY

It shall be the policy of the Reading Fire Department to maintain a portable and mobile based radio system for emergency and non-emergency communications between fire and police units, the Hamilton County Dispatcher and mutual aid fire units.

## PROCEDURE

**“PRIMARY RADIO SYSTEM”** - The primary radio system utilized by the Reading Fire Department shall be an 800 Mhz. digital system licensed to the Hamilton County Communications Center. The Reading Fire Department shall utilize this system under contract with the Hamilton County Commissioners.

The system design will allow for base station, mobile and portable radio operation. The talkgroup configuration utilized in all department radio equipment shall be as follows:

	“A”	“B”	“C”	“D”	“E”
1)	FD East	Fireground 12	Reading Fire	Reading City	Mutual Aid 11
2)	Fireground 2	Fireground 13	Evendale	Mutual Aid 1	Mutual Aid 12
3)	Fireground 3	Fireground 14	Amberley	Mutual Aid 2	Mutual Aid 13
4)	Fireground 4	Fireground 15	Arlington	Mutual Aid 3	Mutual Aid 14
5)	Fireground 5	Fireground 16	DPSJFD	Mutual Aid 4	Mutual Aid 15
6)	Fireground 6	Fireground 17	Golf Manor	Mutual Aid 5	Mutual Aid 16
7)	Fireground 7	Fireground 18	Lockland Fire	Mutual Aid 6	Mutual Aid 17
8)	Fireground 8	Fireground 19	Sycamore	Mutual Aid 7	Mutual Aid 18
9)	Fireground 9	Fireground 20	Woodlawn	Mutual Aid 8	Mutual Aid 19
10)	Fireground 10	Fireground 21	Arlinton PD	Mutual Aid 9	Mutual Aid 20
11)	FD West	Fireground 22	Reading PD	Mutual Aid 10	Mutual Aid 21
12)	Hospital	Fireground 23	8 Tac 94	HC 4	Mutual Aid 22
13)	FD Admin	Fireground 24	8 TAc 93	HC 3	Mutual Aid 23
14)	Valley Fire	Fireground 25	8 Tac 92	HC 2	Mutual Aid 24
15)	FD Central	Fireground 26	8 Tac 91	HC 1	Mutual Aid 25
16)	MAYDAY 1	MAYDAY 2	8 Call 90	HC Call	Mutual Aid 26

## CINCINNATI FIRE TALKGROUPS

	“F”	“G”	“H”	“I”
1)	Main Disp.	CFD FG 11	CMA 1	OH-KY 1
2)	CFD FG 2	CFD FG 12	CMA 2	OH-KY 2
3)	CFD FG 3	CFD FG 13	CMA 3	OH-KY 3
4)	CFD FG 4	CFD FG 14	CMA 4	OH-KY 4
5)	CFD FG 5	CFD FG 15	CMA 5	OH-KY 5
6)	CFD FG 6	CFD FG 16	CMA 6	OH-KY 6
7)	CFD FG 7	CFD FG 17	CMA 7	OH-KY 7
8)	CFD FG 8	CFD FG 18	CMA 8	OH-KY 8
9)	CFD FG 9	CFD FG 19	CMA 9	OH-KY 9
10)	CFD FG 10	CFD FG 20	CMA 10	OH-KY 10
11)	Norwood FD		CMA 11	
12)	Norwood FG		CMA 12	CBU 4
13)	CFD CMD 3		CMA 13	CBU 3
14)	PF Ground		CMA 14	CBU 2
15)	Main Aux.		CMA 15	CBU 1
16)	MAYDAY A	MAYDAY B	CMA 16	CBU CALL

**“FD EAST TALKGROUP”** - The Reading Fire Department shall utilize the “FD EAST Talkgroup” as the main talkgroup for communications with the dispatcher.

**“READING FIRE TALKGROUP”** - The “Reading Fire Talkgroup” will be utilized when radio traffic that for responding units and a fireground talkgroup has not been assigned. This talkgroup can also be utilized for day-to-day communications and training.

**“FIREGROUND and MUTUAL AID”** - Any “Fireground” or “Mutual Aid” talk group can be utilized for an incident or training upon the assignment by the Hamilton County Fire Dispatcher. Firegrounds will routinely be assigned to incidents per the CAD. To utilize a “Fireground” or “Mutual Aid” talkgroup not assigned, the Incident Commander should request a talkgroup assignment from the Hamilton County Dispatcher. All talkgroups assigned to area fire and police departments may be utilized according to that department’s Standard Operating Guidelines.

**“8 TAC”** – The “8 TAC” talkgroups in position C12 - C15 are simplex talkgroups and do not function through the trunked repeater system. These talkgroups may be utilized when radio traffic through the repeater system is not possible due to coverage problems, or personnel assigned to an incident are within close proximity of each other. “8 Tac 2” will be the primary frequency for radio communications with University Air Care. Procedures for contacting University Air Care are covered in “University Air Care Communication”.

**“CINCINNATI FIRE TALKGROUPS”** - In zones F through I, the Cincinnati Fire Department talkgroups are programmed. When making a response into the City of Cincinnati, all units will switch to the City talkgroup assigned to the incident. If the talkgroup is not given on dispatch, units can contact the Cincinnati Fire Dispatcher on “Main DSP” to ascertain the working talkgroup.

**“EMERGENCY BUTTON”** - The “Emergency Button” on all radio equipment shall send a signal to the Hamilton County Dispatcher when it is depressed. This button should only be utilized when a firefighter, crew or civilians are in immediate, life threatening danger, and units are not acknowledged after declaring a “May Day”. When on a Hamilton County talkgroup, the “Emergency Button” will change the radio to the FD East for communications with the dispatcher. To reset the “Emergency Button” the user should hold the button down continuously for 5 seconds or turn the radio off, then back on.

*Note:* When operating on a Cincinnati Fireground, the “Emergency Button” will activate on the talkgroup already selected.

**HIGH BAND SYSTEM** – The Reading Fire Department shall maintain an FCC license and operation of a VHF High Band radio System. This system should be utilized primarily for dispatch purposes, and for contact with other Valley agencies and industries utilizing VHF High Band Systems. This frequency will also be utilized for radio communications with the Reading Public Works Department.

## **RESPONSIBILITY**

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All personnel shall be responsible for abiding by these guidelines and the procedures contained herein when communicating over the department radio system

<b>SUBJECT:</b> RADIO UNIT DESIGNATORS	<b>SECTION:</b> 305.02
<b>REVISED:</b> OCTOBER 27, 2008	<b>PAGE(S):</b> 2

## PURPOSE

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To provide a standardized format for the operation of the Fire Department Communications System in the city of Reading, Ohio.

## POLICY

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It shall be the policy of the Reading Fire Department to utilize the “Standard Unit Designation Listing” as adopted by the Hamilton County Fire Chief’s Association.

## PROCEDURE

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The apparatus listed below shall use the follow unit radio designators:

- 1) “Engine 83” - First out engine from Station 83
- 2) “Engine 283” - Second out engine from Station 83
- 3) “Tower 84” - First out aerial ladder from Station 84
- 4) “Engine 84” - First out engine from Station 84
- 5) “ALS 83” - Paramedic unit from Station 83
- 6) “Squad 83” - Ambulance from Station 83
- 7) “Squad 84” - Ambulance from Station 84
- 8) “Support 83” - Pick-up truck from Station 83
- 9) “8301” - Fire Chief’s Staff vehicle
- 10) “8302” - Asst. Chief’s Staff vehicle

The officer assigned to a specific apparatus will use that unit’s radio designator when communicating on the radio system. (e.g. - “Tower 84)

The operator assigned to a specific apparatus will use the term “Operator” before the unit designator when communicating on the radio system. (e.g. – “Operator Engine 83”)

Additional personnel assigned to a specific apparatus will use the suffix “A”, “B”, etc when communicating on the radio system. (e.g. – “Engine 283-A”)

**INCIDENT COMMAND** - Upon establishment of the Incident Command System, the incident commander will establish and identify divisions and groups according to geographic location or function of the crew. When a division or group has been assigned to a crew, officers shall use the division or group designation when communicating on the radio system. The following is a listing of possible sector unit identifiers:

Command	Interior	Operations
Ventilation	Roof	Safety
Salvage	Triage	Treatment
Transport	Rescue	EMS
Extrication	Staging	Public Information
Rehab	First Floor	

Career personnel shall be assigned individual **Personal Unit Designators**. These radio designators should only be used when the career member is not assigned to a piece of apparatus, or has not been designated with division or group responsibility.

## RESPONSIBILITY

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All personnel shall be responsible for abiding by these guidelines and the procedures contained herein when communicating over the department radio system.

**SUBJECT:** EMERGENCY RESPONSE COMMUNICATIONS**SECTION:** 305.03**REVISED:** NOVEMBER 5, 2007**PAGE(S):** 5

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## PURPOSE

To provide a standardized format for the operation of Fire Department Communications in the City of Reading, Ohio.

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## POLICY

The Reading Fire Department will respond to any situation which threatens LIFE, SAFETY or PROPERTY. The Hamilton County Dispatcher will dispatch the appropriate unit(s) with the assigned capability to control the situation. The judgment of both the Hamilton County Dispatcher and the responding personnel is an integral part of the decision making process, taking into consideration both the information received, and the potential that exists.

Timely response and effective management of EMS, rescue and fire control situations represent the most immediate priorities of the fire department. Upon receipt of adequate information (location and nature of the situation) the Hamilton County Dispatcher will send the appropriate assignment. The Dispatcher will upgrade the response, as required, until command is established upon arrival of the first unit.

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## PROCEDURE

- A) Fire and EMS units should be dispatched to the scene of an incident by the Hamilton County Dispatcher, based on information gathered from the call originator. This dispatch will occur by generating the appropriate alerting tone(s) on the Valley Fire dispatch frequency (158.760 Mhz.) and the Hamilton County Low Band dispatcher frequency (33.900), and announcing the unit(s) assigned location and nature of the incident and the time of dispatch. This information will then be repeated by the dispatcher.
- B) **CLEAR VOICE TRANSMISSIONS** (no codes and/or signals) will be utilized by department personnel in their normal radio communications process.

C) **ENROUTE COMMUNICATIONS** for Fire and EMS incidents are those communications to acknowledge to the dispatcher that you have received the alarm and all information is correct. All enroute, on-scene, progress reports and requests for dispatcher support will be made on the “FD East” talkgroup by all units.

- 1) All responding units will announce fully their unit identification, declare “**enroute**”, and repeat the address or location of the incident. (e.g. – Engine 83 enroute to 1000 Market Street). Units responding to Fire Incidents will also state their apparatus manning during this broadcast. (e.g. – Tower 84 enroute to 1000 Market Street with a full crew.
- 2) If the response is not from the station or immediate vicinity, the location of the unit will also be announced. (e.g. – Engine 83 enroute to 9000 Reading Road from the Hilltop Station)
- 3) During response, the unit will inform the dispatcher of any information affecting their response. (e.g. Medic 83 delayed by a train at the Benson Street Crossing)
- 4) All response communications with the dispatcher will take place on the “FD East Talkgroup”, unless directed otherwise by the officer-in-charge. Communications between responding units will occur on the Fireground Talkgroup assigned by the dispatcher or on the “Reading Fire” talkgroup if no fireground talkgroup has been assigned.

D) **FIRE INCIDENT ARRIVAL COMMUNICATIONS** are those radio communications to the dispatcher to notify that the unit has arrived on the scene, and inform the dispatcher of the conditions observed. These conditions may include “smoke showing, fire, hazardous conditions, multiple casualty reports” or other pertinent information.

- 1) The fire unit first arriving on the scene of a fire or rescue incident will announce fully their unit I.D. number, declare “**on the scene**”, report conditions that he/she observes, the type of structure or area, and establish “Command” (e.g. – “Engine 83 on the scene, reporting a working structure fire in a two-story frame dwelling. Engine 83 is establishing Reading Road Command”).
- 2) The officer of the first arriving fire unit may request an alternate fireground talkgroup if one has not been assigned to the incident. Upon this request, the dispatcher will notify all responding units of the talkgroup to be utilized for the incident.
- 3) All additional responding units will announce fully their unit I.D. number declare “**on the scene**” or “**staged**” and be ready to accept an assignment from the Incident Commander.

- 4) The Hamilton County Dispatcher shall monitor the primary dispatch talkgroup at all times. The dispatcher also maintains the capability to monitor all fireground talkgroups during an incident.
- E) **EMS INCIDENT ARRIVAL COMMUNICATIONS** are those radio communications to the dispatcher to notify that the unit has arrived “**on the scene**”. Any hazardous conditions can be announced with this broadcast. (e.g. – “ALS 83 on the scene. Notify Squad 83 to use caution in the area due to heavy traffic”.)
- F) “**ELAPSED TIME**” announcements will be made to the Incident Commander at working incidents. This benchmark shall be announced at twenty (20) minute intervals from the time of dispatch, until the incident is under control or the benchmark is requested to be discontinued by the Incident Commander. This “Elapsed Time” announcement will be made for but not limited to the following incidents:
- 1) Working structure fire
  - 2) Auto or industrial accidents with entrapment
  - 3) Cardiac arrests
  - 4) Multiple casualty incidents
  - 5) Hazardous materials incidents with on-going release
- G) **PROGRESS REPORTS** are those communications by the Incident Commander to the dispatcher to update the effectiveness of the on-scene units, and to identify the approximate time units will be working on the scene. A progress report should be given to the dispatcher at every twenty (20) minute “benchmark”, as well as at any interval that the Incident Commander deems appropriate.
- H) **AVAILABLE** reports are communications to the dispatcher to inform him/her that a unit is available to respond to another incident.
- 1) When multiple units have been operating at an incident scene, only the company leaving the scene last should report all units “**available**”, and shall terminate “Command”
  - 2) Individual units operating at an incident should report their respective unit “**available**” when leaving a scene.
  - 3) E.M.S. transport units will report “**available**,” when they are returning from a hospital and are within appropriate distance of the city to make an additional response. These locations are established as follows:
    - a) Northbound I-75 at the Towne St. exit.
    - b) Northbound Reading Rd. at Seymour Ave.
    - c) Northbound Vine St. at Paddock Rd.
    - d) Eastbound Galbraith Rd. at Winton Rd.

- e) Eastbound I-275 at I75.
  - f) Eastbound Ronald Reagan Highway at Winton Rd.
  - g) Westbound Ronald Reagan Highway at I-71.
  - h) Westbound Galbraith Rd. at Blue Ash Rd.
  - i) Westbound Pfeifer Rd. at Kenwood Rd.
- I) **AUTOMATIC AID TO OTHER AREAS** – When a dispatch is received from Hamilton County for a fire response into another community, Engine 83 will notify the Hamilton County Dispatcher of their enroute status. Engine 83 will then switch to the specific fireground talkgroup assigned to the incident for the response and announce they are responding. Engine 83 will report on-scene in these areas on the “FD East” Talkgroup”. All updates to the Hamilton County Dispatcher will be made on the “FD East Talkgroup”. If the response is into an area covered by a department dispatched on the ‘FD West” talkgroup, Reading units will switch to “FD West” for all radio traffic with the dispatcher for the duration of the incident.
- J) **AUTOMATIC REPONSE FROM OTHER DEPARTMENTS** - Automatic aid will be received from surrounding fire departments based on incident type and per CAD recommendation. When responding into Reading, these units will switch to the assigned fireground talkgroup during response, and announce this response to the Reading units.
- K) **MUTUAL AID RESPONSE** – When Reading fire or E.M.S. units are responding into another community on a mutual aid response, the Reading units shall utilize the “FD East Talkgroup” for enroute, on-scene, and progress reports to the dispatcher. While responding and while working on the scene, Reading units shall utilize the talkgroups assigned for the incident. If the response is into an area covered by a department dispatched on the ‘FD West” talkgroup, Reading units will switch to “FD West” for all radio traffic with the dispatcher for the duration of the incident.
- L) **RESPONSE AND ON-SCENE RADIO COMMUNICATIONS** shall be regulated by the following guidelines:
- 1) The sender will give his/her unit I.D. and call the receiver by his/her unit I.D. (e.g. – “Engine 83 to Tower 84”)
  - 2) The receiver will give his/her unit I.D. to indicate they are ready to receive. (e.g. – “Tower 84 go ahead”)
  - 3) The sender will communicate the message, orders, etc. (e.g. – “Tower 84, ladder the front of the building and ventilate the roof”)
  - 4) The receiver will give his/her unit I.D. and acknowledge receipt of the message by repeating the message or orders. (e.g. – “Tower 84 clear on laddering the front of the building and ventilating the roof”.)

M) **“EMERGENCY TRAFFIC”** is a term that will be utilized by any unit encountering an immediately perilous situation and will receive the highest communication priority from the dispatcher, command and all operating companies. Upon hearing this term, the talkgroup shall be cleared for Command to communicate with the unit identifying the emergency.

(e.g. – “Engine 83 to Command, Emergency Traffic” “Engine 83 reports structural collapse of the exterior wall on the “C” side of the building”)

## **RESPONSIBILITY**

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All personnel shall be responsible for abiding by these guidelines and the procedures contained herein when communicating over the department radio systems.

**SUBJECT:** ALPHA NUMERIC PAGING**SECTION:** 305.04**REVISED:** NOVEMBER 5, 2007**PAGE(S):** 1

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## **PURPOSE**

To provide a standardized format for the operation of the Fire Department Communications system in the City of Reading, Ohio.

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## **POLICY**

It shall be the policy of the Reading Fire Department to maintain a database of devices capable of receiving alphanumeric pages for all department members. This database shall be maintained in fire department offices. The alphanumeric paging system may be utilized for dissemination of emergency and non-emergency information to department members. Additionally alpha pagers on the Hamilton County Dispatch system are issued to all members for receiving Fire and EMS details, as well as all-county information.

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## **PROCEDURE**

The Hamilton County Dispatcher will activate the county alpha pager system upon any dispatch for Fire and EMS units.

The Reading Fire Department office will activate the department “Alphanumeric Paging System” for the following notifications:

- 1) Notification of “Disaster” situations, including but not limited to extra-alarm fires, mass casualty incidents, hazardous materials releases and weather related conditions. The “Disaster” alpha page notifies all city department heads and essential city support personnel.
- 2) Informational notifications of fire department staff and personnel.

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## **RESPONSIBILITY**

All personnel shall be responsible for abiding by these guidelines and the procedures contained herein when communicating on the department radio systems. The alpha paging system is not intended to be abused for personal use or horseplay.

<b>SUBJECT:</b> ALARMS RECEIVED BY FIRE DEPT. PERSONNEL	<b>SECTION:</b> 305.05
<b>REVISED:</b> NOVEMBER 1, 2005	<b>PAGE(S):</b> 1

## **PURPOSE**

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To provide a standardized format for the operation of the Fire Department Communications Systems in the City of Reading, Ohio.

## **POLICY**

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It shall be the policy of the Reading Fire Department for members to process Fire and EMS alarm information received through an alternative means of notification, such as, calls to the business phone line, in-person reports, discovery of incidents while away from the station and/or means other than direct contact to the Hamilton County Dispatcher.

## **PROCEDURE**

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Whenever fire department personnel receive alarm reports through alternative means of notification, the Hamilton County Dispatcher shall be notified immediately and provided the following information:

- 1) Location of incident.
- 2) Nature of incident.
- 3) The need for dispatch of equipment and/or personnel.

When an alarm is received in person or by phone, efforts should be made to secure and record the name, address and call-back phone number of the person making the report. This information will be provided to the dispatcher upon return of crews from the incident.

## **RESPONSIBILITY**

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All personnel shall be responsible for abiding by these guidelines and the procedures contained herein when communicating over the department radios systems.

<b>SUBJECT:</b> DISPATCH COMMUNICATIONS	<b>SECTION:</b> 305.06
<b>REVISED:</b> NOVEMBER 5, 2007	<b>PAGE(S):</b> 2

## PURPOSE

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To provide a standardized format for the operation of the Fire Department Communications System in the City of Reading, Ohio.

## POLICY

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It shall be the policy of the Reading Fire Department to have the appropriate department personnel and equipment dispatched to an incident upon a receipt of a request for service.

## PROCEDURE

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The Reading Fire Department shall be dispatched by the Hamilton County Communications Center. The dispatcher can receive requests for service via “911”, via calls directly to the Communications Center (825-2260) via calls directly from the Reading dispatch office (733-4122), via the police or fire radio system, or via direct notification by civilians.

The fire department shall maintain a base radio on the Valley Fire Frequency (158.760 Mhz.) for the purpose of dispatching fire and E.M.S. units. This frequency will also be used as a back-up for the Hamilton County 800 Mhz. radio system.

Reading Fire Department personnel will be dispatched on the Valley Fire Frequency and Hamilton County Fire Dispatch frequency by the use of the follow sets of tones:

- 1) **FIRE/EMS/RECALL Tone** - Used for dispatch of the fire apparatus to incidents, used to dispatch the ALS unit and squad crew for an E.M.S. incident, and used to notify the off-duty Reading personnel of the need to respond to a detail or incident.

These tones will activate tone and voice pagers on the Valley Fire High Band frequency issued to all department personnel.

An “alphanumeric” page will also be sent by the Hamilton County Dispatcher to all personnel carrying the county alpha numeric pagers.

## **RESPONSIBILITY**

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All personnel shall be responsible for abiding by these guidelines and the procedures contained herein when communicating over the department radio system.

<b>SUBJECT:</b> DISPATCH ERROR OR EQUIPMENT MALFUNCTION	<b>SECTION:</b> 305.07
<b>REVISED:</b> NOVEMBER 5, 2007	<b>PAGE(S):</b> 1

## **PURPOSE**

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To provide for a standard format for the operation of Fire Department communications in the City of Reading, Ohio.

## **POLICY**

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Members of the Reading Fire Department, upon experiencing communication equipment malfunction or determining that there is a dispatch malfunction, shall work to alleviate the problem as quickly and efficiently as possible.

## **PROCEDURE**

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When a fire department unit discovers or has reason to believe that an equipment malfunction or dispatch error has occurred that would affect normal response, he/she should take the following action.

- 1) Request re-dispatch of the alarm by the Hamilton County Dispatcher. If this is unsuccessful,
- 2) Request dispatch of the alarm by the Amberley Village Dispatcher.

If malfunction of the dispatch equipment is found to be the cause of the error, the Chief and Assistant Fire Chief will be contacted immediately. The shift supervisor will also assure that contact has been made with the appropriate contractor to affect repairs.

## **RESPONSIBILITY**

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All personnel shall be responsible for abiding by these guidelines and the procedures contained herein when communicating over the department radio systems.

**SUBJECT:** EXTREME WEATHER/ STORMS PROCEDURES  
**REVISED:** AUGUST 2, 2009

**SECTION:** 305.08  
**PAGE(S):** 4

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## PURPOSE

To establish a procedure adopted county-wide, an alternative method for dispatch, designed to alleviate radio traffic and assure proper processing of “true” emergency incidents.

To establish procedures outlining the operations when severe weather conditions cause, or is expected to cause an increased workload of emergency services. The goal being to establish an organized manner to receive, log and self-dispatch non-emergency runs or calls for assistance within our response district.

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## REFERENCE

1. *Hamilton County Communications Center’s Storm Plan Procedure, as adopted by the Hamilton County Fire Chiefs; February, 2009.*

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## POLICY

- I. When severe weather conditions cause or are expected to cause emergency responders workload to exceed a reasonable level, the HCCC Supervisor may initiate the HCCC Storm Plan.
  - A. When the plan is activated, an all county alpha page will be sent to all departments via the County paging system.
  - B. When the plan is activated, a message will be broadcasted on the FD EAST and FD WEST talkgroups.
  - C. All “true” emergencies including EMS incidents, structure fires, or any incident appearing to be a threat of life will be dispatched in the normal method.
  - D. Upon activation of the HCCC Storm Plan, the Officer-In-Charge shall establish a Reading Area Command and notify the HCCC that the Reading Area Command (Station 83) has been established. Assigned personnel shall monitor FG25 for non-emergency, pending incidents. The HCCC will also be advised that Station 83’s MDC will be designated to receive details.

1. Reading area command will be established once the city has been impacted and sufficient personnel are available to staff it.
  2. There will be no status changes or utility notifications on FG25.
  3. An additional talkgroup may be dedicated to handle utility notification requests. In extreme conditions, utility notifications may need to be requested via FAX.
  4. Additional FG talkgroups may be assigned by the HCCC Supervisor if necessary.
  5. Once an incident is given to the Reading Area Command (Station 83), personnel assigned shall maintain a log and assign the detail as resources are available. Details shall be assigned by priority, considering life safety and property conservation. Otherwise, runs will be assigned first call, first served.
- E. When the HCCC Storm Plan has been activated, sufficient personnel shall be assigned to staff the Valley Station Alarm Room, to be designated as Reading Area Command. Once established, the Alarm Room will be restricted. Personnel not being used for managing and dispatching requests shall stage elsewhere within the station, or as assigned otherwise. Exceptions will be permitted for limited use of telephone, support equipment and services.
1. Once the decision to assign personnel to the Alarm Room for managing requests for assistance, the Alarm Room shall be restricted. Staff assigned to manage requests for assistance will have access to the following equipment:
    - a. Radio equipment (base and portable)
    - b. Telephone(s)
    - c. MDC terminal
    - d. Computer(s)
    - e. FAX
    - f. Miscellaneous office supplies/ equipment
  2. Personnel assigned shall maintain a log of calls, capturing:
    - a. Date and Start Time of Event
    - b. Description of Situation
    - c. Description of Areas Impacted/Damage
    - d. Date and Times of Incidents Received
    - e. Location of Incidents Received
    - f. Nature of Each Incident
    - g. Time Each Incident Detailed

- h. Units Detailed for Each Incident
- i. Time Each Incident Closed
- j. Disposition of Each Incident
- k. Finish Date and Time of Event

\*\*\*reference: w:\User\FORMS\INCIDENT LOG

- F. A period of radio silence may be declared at the discretion of the HCCC Supervisor. When such a declaration is in effect, field units not operating at a major/ life threatening emergency scene are prohibited to transmit on FD EAST, FD WEST, FG 24, FG25, or any other talkgroup assigned for incident management. The only exceptions are to acknowledge an incident or emergency traffic.
- G. Automatic assignment of a FG talkgroup will be suspended when the HCCC Storm Plan is activated.
  - 1. FG talkgroups will only be assigned to units involved in a major/ life threatening emergencies, such as a structure fire.
  - 2. Units not involved in major/ life threatening emergencies are to utilize 8 ITAC 3 and 8ITAC 4. When using ITAC channels, the radio must be in the “radio to radio” mode.
  - 3. The READING FIRE and other “city band” talkgroups on the 800 MHz system should also be kept to a minimum. These talkgroups also use resources on the system, as the primary talkgroups do.
  - 4. Alternative radio channels (non-800 MHz) and runners should be used as alternative means to communicate.
- II. There may be times when it is not necessary to activate the HCCC Storm Plan for all agencies (i.e. isolated storms). The Incident Commander can contact HCCC and request activation of the Storm Plan for the single jurisdiction. Incidents will be relayed on the assigned talkgroup.

## RESPONSIBILITY

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- I. It shall be the responsibility of the Hamilton County Communications Center (HCCC) Supervisor to initiate the HCCC Storm Plan.
- II. It shall be the responsibility of all department officers to implement this operating guideline accordingly.

- III. It shall be the responsibility of all department officers to train members in the application of this guideline.
- IV. It shall be the responsibility of each member to know, understand and use this guideline as it applies to the situation at hand.

**SUBJECT:** OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH PROGRAM**SECTION:** 306.01**REVISED:** FEBRUARY 12, 2008**PAGE(S):** 1

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## PURPOSE

This standard establishes an occupational safety and health program for the department. It was promulgated to:

- A. Provide a safe working environment for the members of the department.
- B. Satisfy the requirements of NFPA 1500, *Standard on Fire Department Occupational Safety and Health Program*.

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## POLICY

It shall be the policy of the department to operate at the highest possible level of safety and health for all its members. To this end, the department shall:

- A. Make every reasonable effort to provide a safe and healthy work environment.
- B. Give primary consideration to the prevention and reduction of accidents, injuries, and occupational illnesses.
- C. Take the appropriate corrective action to avoid repetitive occurrences of accidents.
- D. Provide training, supervision, written procedures, program support, and review for all of its activities.

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## RESPONSIBILITY

- A. Safety and health is the responsibility of each member. Therefore, each member should:
  1. Cooperate, participate, and comply with all of the provisions of the occupational safety and health program.
  2. Promptly report acts and conditions that are unsafe or unhealthy and that pose a threat either to members or others.
  3. Maintain a high level of mental and physical fitness that enables the member to safely perform his assigned tasks.
- B. Supervisors shall be responsible for enforcing the requirements of the occupational safety and health program and for ensuring that each member under their command complies with the provisions of the occupational safety and health program.

<b>SUBJECT:</b> SAFETY OFFICER	<b>SECTION:</b> 306.02
<b>REVISED:</b> FEBRUARY 13, 2004	<b>PAGE(S):</b> 1

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## PURPOSE

The recognition of situations which present inordinate hazards to fire ground personnel and the proper response to safeguard personnel from those hazards is of critical importance to all Fire Department operations.

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## POLICY

Command has the responsibility to recognize situations requiring the implementation of a Safety Officer and to confirm the response of assigned personnel. Upon arrival at a working incident, assigned personnel will report to the Command Post and unless otherwise assigned, will automatically establish a Safety Officer and assume assigned responsibilities.

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## PROCEDURE

A. A Safety Officer should be established at those incidents posing a high potential danger to personnel such as:

1. Fire complexity; e.g., most multiple alarm fires.
2. Hazardous structural conditions, existing or potential.
3. Hazardous materials and chemicals etc.
4. Any other situation where a Safety Officer could be advantageous to the safety of the operation.

B. The establishment of a Safety Officer or the presence of a Safety Officer on the scene in no way diminishes the responsibility of all officers for the safety of their assigned personnel and of each and every member to utilize common (safety) sense, and to work within the intent of established safety procedures at all times.

<b>SUBJECT:</b> FIRE GROUND SAFETY	<b>SECTION:</b> 306.03
<b>REVISED:</b> DECEMBER 18, 2003	<b>PAGE(S):</b> 8

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## **OPERATIONS IN HAZARDOUS ENVIRONMENTS**

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Personnel operating in hazardous environments at emergency incidents shall operate in teams of two or more.

Team members operating in hazardous environments shall be in communication with each other through visual, audible, or physical means, in order to coordinate their activities. Team members shall be in close proximity to each other to provide assistance in case of an emergency.

At working structural fires a minimum of four personnel should be required, consisting of two personnel working as a team in the hazardous atmosphere, who should remain in voice or visual contact with each other; and two personnel who are located outside the hazardous atmosphere, who should be responsible for maintaining a constant awareness of the number and identity of those operating in the hazardous atmosphere and be prepared to perform rescue of those members if required.

Initial attack operations shall be organized to ensure that, if upon arrival at the emergency scene, the initial attack personnel find an imminent life-threatening situation where immediate action could prevent the loss of life or serious injury, such action shall be permitted with less than 4 personnel. No exception shall be permitted when there is no possibility to save lives. Any such actions taken shall be thoroughly investigated by the Fire Chief.

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## **TACTICAL POSITIONING**

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Positioning of operating companies can severely affect the safety/survival of such companies. Personnel must use caution when placed in the following positions:

- Above the fire (floors/roof).
- Where fire can move in behind them.
- When involved with opposing fire streams.
- Combining interior and exterior attack.
- Where sector cannot control position/retreat.
- With limited access - one way in/out.
- Operating under involved roof structures.
- In areas containing hazardous materials.
- Below ground fires (basements, etc.)
- In areas where a backdraft potential exists.

The safety of firefighting personnel represents the major reason for an effective and well-timed offensive/defensive decision and the associate write-off by Command. THE TWO STRATEGIES ARE BASED ON A STANDARD RISK MANAGEMENT PLAN THAT IS TO BE EMPLOYED AT ALL STRUCTURE FIRES.

### **WITHIN A STRUCTURED RISK MANAGEMENT PLAN**

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- WE MAY RISK OUR LIVES TO SAVE A LIFE.
- WE MAY PUT OURSELVES AT MODERATE RISK TO SAVE PROPERTY.
- WE WILL RISK NOTHING TO SAVE LIFE OR PROPERTY THAT IS ALREADY LOST OR DESTROYED.

When operating in a defensive strategy, operating positions should be as far from the involved area as possible while still remaining effective. Position and operate from behind barriers if available (fences, walls, etc.).

The intent is for personnel to utilize safe positioning where possible/available, in an effort to safeguard against sudden hazardous developments such as backdraft explosion, structural collapse, etc.

When operating in an offensive strategy, be aggressively offensive. An effective, coordinated interior attack operation directed toward knocking down the fire eliminates most eventual safety problems.

Due to the inherent hazards of the fire or incident scene, efforts must be made by Command to limit the number of personnel on the fireground to those assigned to a necessary function. All personnel shall be:

- Positioned in Staging.
- Assigned to a task or operating within a sector.
- Having completed an assignment and no other assignment is available within that sector; crews should be assigned to Staging or the Rehabilitation Sector until such time as they can be reassigned to an operating sector or released to in-service status.

The intent of this procedure is to minimize fireground confusion/congestion and to limit the number of personnel exposed to fireground hazards to only those necessary to successfully control the operation. Individuals or crews shall be restricted from wandering about the fireground or congregating in non-functional groups. If personnel have not been assigned to a sector or do not have a necessary staff function to perform, they shall remain outside the fireground perimeter.

When it is necessary to engage personnel in exceptionally hazardous circumstances (i.e., to perform a rescue), Command will limit the number of personnel exposed to an absolute minimum and assure that all feasible safety measures are taken.

In extremely hazardous situations (flammable liquids, LP gas, special operations, etc.), Command will engage only an absolute minimum number of personnel within the hazard zone. Unmanned master streams will be utilized wherever possible.

In situations where crews must operate from opposing or conflicting positions, such as front vs. rear attack streams, roof crews vs. interior crews, etc., utilize radio or face-to-face communications to coordinate your actions with those of the opposing crew in an effort to prevent needless injuries. Command should notify Sector Officers or Company Officers of opposing or conflicting operations.

Ground crews must be notified and evacuated from interior positions before ladder pipes go into operation.

Do not operate exterior streams, whether hand lines, master streams, ladder pipes, etc., into an area where interior crews are operating. This procedure is intended to prevent injuries to personnel due to stream blast and the driving of fire and/or heavy heat and smoke onto interior crews.

When laddering a roof, the ladder selected should be one which will extend 2' - 3' above the roof line. This should be done in an effort to provide personnel operating on the roof with a visible means of egress.

If possible, when laddering buildings under fire conditions, place ladders near building corners or fire walls as these areas are generally more stable in the event of structural failure.

When operating either above or below ground level, establish at least two (2) separate escape routes/means where possible, (such as stairways, ladders, exits, etc.), preferably at opposite ends or diagonal corners of the building or separated by considerable distance.

**Hazard Area** The Hazard Area will be defined as any area that requires an SCBA, charged hoseline, special protective clothing, or in which firefighting personnel are at risk of becoming lost, trapped, or injured by the environment or structure. The following situations would be included inside the Hazard Area:

- Entering a structure reported to be on fire
- Operating in close proximity to the structure during exterior operations
- Confined Space
- Trench Rescues
- Operating close to crane operations or close to swift water operations
- Building collapse
- Operating close to helicopter operations
- Extrication

ALL FIREFIGHTERS WORKING IN THE HAZARD AREA ZONE SHALL BE IN CREWS OF A MINIMUM OF TWO PERSONNEL WITH A PORTABLE RADIO. THE ACCOUNTABILITY SYSTEM WILL BE IN PLACE.

**Warm Zone** The Warm Zone will be defined as just outside of the Hazard Area where the firefighters start their operations on the fireground. This zone is where the firefighter is not at risk of becoming lost, trapped, or injured by the environment or structure. The following functions could be done in this zone:

- Forward fire apparatus working the incident (i.e.; engines, ladders)
- Laying lines
- HMRT and TRT developing strategies and tactics
- Utility trucks
- Special equipment needs
- Accountability Officer
- FIRE Investigations

If at any time firefighters in the Warm Zone become threatened, this area would become a Hazard Area.

**Cold Zone** The Cold Zone will be defined as outside of the Warm Zone where no one is at risk because of the incident. The following functions could be done in this area:

- Command
- Level I & Level II staging
- Support and Staff personnel
- Canteen
- Rehab
- Media
- P.D. Liaison
- Interviewing the responsible party

ALL PERSONNEL ENTERING THE HAZARD AREA SHALL:

- **WEAR FULL TURNOUTS/ SCBA AS REQUIRED**
- **HAVE CREW INTACT (with a portable radio)**
- **BE ASSIGNED TO A SECTOR**
- **ACCOUNTABILITY PASSPORT PLACED ON STATUS BOARD**

ALL OTHERS STAY OUTSIDE.

## SECTORS

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The safety of firefighting personnel represents a major reason for fireground sectorization. Sector commanders must maintain the capability to communicate with

forces under their command so that they can control both the *position* and *function* of their companies.

Sector officers and company officers shall be able to account for the whereabouts and welfare of all crews/crew members under their assignment. (See Personnel ACCOUNTABILITY System).

Company officers shall insure that all crew members are operating within their assigned sector only. Crews will not leave their respective sectors unless authorized by the sector officer.

When crews are operating within a sector, company officers should keep the sector officer informed of changing conditions within the sector area, and particularly those changing conditions which may affect the safety of personnel.

Hazards that will affect only a specific sector area should be dealt with within that sector and need not necessarily affect the entire operation.

## **REHABILITATION**

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It is the intent of this Sector to reduce the fatigue and trauma experienced during difficult operations to a reasonable (and recoverable) level and is in no way intended to lessen the individual and collective efforts expected of all members during field operations.

In an effort to regulate the amount of fatigue suffered by fireground personnel during sustained field operations, sector officers should frequently assess the physical condition of their assigned companies. When crew members exhibit signs of serious physical or mental fatigue, the entire crew should be reassigned to a Rehabilitation Sector if possible. Company officers should request reassignment to Rehabilitation Sector from their sector officer. The company officer's request should indicate the crew's position/condition, etc., and should advise as to the need for a replacement crew. Individual crews should not report to the Rehabilitation Sector unless assigned by the Fireground Commander. Crew members should report to and remain intact while assigned to Rehab.

It is the on-going responsibility of Command to summon adequate resource to tactical situations to effectively stabilize that situation, and to maintain adequate resource during extended operations to complete all operational phases.

The rotation of companies will be utilized by Command during extended operations to provide an effective on-going level of personnel and their performance. The Dispatch Center will assist in coordinating the rotation of companies during such campaign operations.

## **SAFETY SECTOR**

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The recognition of situations which present inordinate hazards to fireground personnel and the proper response to safeguard personnel from those hazards is of critical importance to all fire department operations.

Command has the responsibility to recognize situations involving a high risk to personnel and to initiate appropriate safety measures.

Command should establish a Safety Sector at incidents involving an inordinate danger to personnel. Command should consider establishing a Safety Sector on any situation where it may be advantageous to the overall safety of operations. This should be a high priority assignment.

The establishment of a Safety Sector or the presence of a Safety Officer in no way diminishes the responsibility of all officers for the safety of their assigned personnel. Each and every member shall utilize common (safety) sense and work within the intent of established safety procedures at all times.

## **STRUCTURAL COLLAPSE**

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Structural collapse has been a major cause of serious injury and death to fire fighters. The possibility of structural collapse should be a major consideration in the development of any tactical plan.

Structural collapse is always a possibility when a building is subject to intense fire. In fact, if fire is allowed to affect a structure long enough, structural failure is inevitable.

Regardless of the age and exterior appearance of the building, the possibility exists that a principal structural supporting member is being seriously affected by heat and may collapse, inflicting serious injury to firefighters.

Example: A 100' length of unprotected steel will expand 9" when heated to 1100° F.

In the typical fire involved building, the roof is the most likely candidate for failure; however failure of the roof may very likely trigger a collapse of one or more wall sections. This is especially true if the roof is a peak or dome type which may exert outward pressure against both the bearing and non-bearing walls upon collapse. In multi-story buildings or buildings with basements, the floor section above the fire may collapse if supporting members are directly exposed to heat and flames.

A knowledge of various types of building construction can be invaluable to the Fire Officer from a safety standpoint as certain types of construction can be expected to fail sooner than others. For example: light weight truss and bar joist roof construction can be expected to fail after minimal fire exposure.

Structures have been known to collapse without warning but usually there are indications which may tip off an alert fire officer. Action should be taken to avert any imminent hazard.

Signs of building collapse may include:

- Cracks in exterior walls.
- Bulges in exterior walls.
- Sounds of structural movement--creaking, groaning, snapping, etc.
- Smoke or water leaking through walls.
- Flexible movement of any floor or roof where firefighters walk.
- Interior or exterior bearing walls or columns--leaning, twisting or flexing.
- Sagging or otherwise distorted rooflines.
- Time of fire involvement.

The following construction features or conditions have been known to fail prematurely or to contribute to early structural failure when affected by fire.

Contributing Factors:

- Parapet walls.
- Large open (unsupported) areas--supermarkets, warehouses, etc.
- Large signs or marquees--which may pull away from weakened walls.
- Cantilevered canopies--which usually depend on the roof for support and may collapse as the roof fails.
- Ornamental or secondary front or sidewalls--which may pull away and collapse.
- Buildings with light weight truss, bar joist, or bow string truss, roofs.
- Buildings supported by unprotected metal--beams, columns, etc.

Buildings containing one or more of the above features must be constantly evaluated for collapse potential. These evaluations should be a major consideration in determining the strategy, i.e. offensive/defensive.

It is a principal Command responsibility to continually evaluate and determine if the fire building is tenable for interior operations. This on-going evaluation of structural/fire conditions requires the input of company officers advising their sectors and of sectors advising Command of the conditions in their area of operation.

Most structures are not designed to withstand the effects of fire, and can be expected to fail if exposed to heavy fire involvement. If after 10-15 minutes of interior operations heavy fire conditions still exist, Command should initiate a careful evaluation of structural conditions, and should be fully prepared to withdraw interior crews and change to a defensive strategy.

If structural failure of a building or section of a building appears likely, a perimeter must be established a safe distance from the area which may collapse. All personnel must remain outside this perimeter.

## **SEARCH AND RESCUE**

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Search and rescue should be performed according to an efficient, well planned procedure which includes the safety of search crew personnel.

The object of the search effort is to locate possible victims, not create additional ones by neglecting the safety of the search crew.

Prior to entering the search area, all search team members should be familiar with a specific search plan including the overall objective, a designation of the search area, individual assignments, etc. This may require a brief conference among crew members before entering the search area to develop and communicate the plan.

Individual search activities should be conducted by two or more members when possible, equipped with a portable radio.

Company officers must maintain an awareness of the location and function of all members within their crew during search operations.

A brief look around the floor below the fire may provide good reference for the search team, as floors in multi-story occupancies usually have a similar layout.

Whenever a search is conducted that exposes search crews to fire conditions (particularly above the fire floor) the search team should be protected with a charged hoseline, in order to insure a safe escape route.

If search personnel are operating without a hose line, life lines should be used when encountering conditions of severely limited visibility.

<b>SUBJECT:</b> ACCOUNTABILITY	<b>SECTION:</b> 306.05
<b>REVISED:</b> AUGUST 14, 2009; JUNE 3, 2008	<b>PAGE(S):</b> 10

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## PURPOSE

This procedure identifies a system of incident site firefighter accountability. The purpose is to account for all firefighters, at any given time, within a small geographic area, within the "hazard zone" of an incident. Use of the system will provide enhanced personnel safety for the individual firefighters and will provide the Incident Command Organization staff an improved means to track and account for all personnel working in the hazard zone.

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## REFERENCE

1. *The Hamilton County Fire Chiefs' Association Model SOG: Accountability System Policy – Effective December 19, 2007.*

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## POLICY

This procedure shall apply to all emergency operations and training exercises where the accountability of all firefighters and emergency scene personnel is essential.

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## ACCOUNTABILITY

Accountability involves a personal commitment to work within the safety system of an incident.

- A) Command will always maintain an accurate tracking and awareness of where resources are committed at an incident.
- B) Command will always be responsible for including accountability as a major element in strategy and attack planning, and must consider and react to any barriers that effects accountability.
- C) Division/Group Supervisors will always maintain an accurate tracking and awareness of crews assigned to them. This will require the Division/Group Supervisor to be in his/her assigned area and maintaining close supervision of crews assigned to them.
- D) All crews will work within the Incident Command System - NO FREE LANCING.

- E) Crews arriving on the scene should remain intact for all intents and purposes. A minimum crew size will be considered two or more members and a radio will be required.
- F) All crews entering a hazard zone must be supervised by a designated supervisor or other ranking individual.
- G) All crews will enter a hazard area together, stay together and come out together. Reduced visibility and increased risk will require very tight togetherness. Upon exiting the hazard zone, the designated supervisor shall immediately account for his/her assigned personnel and report accordingly.
- H) If a radio fails while in the hazard zone, the crew will exit unless there is another working radio with the crew.

## **PASSPORTS**

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To enhance accountability and to improve tracking of firefighters in the "hazard zone", the "PASSPORT" system will be used. Passports involve a plastic card with the crew members name affixed that is turned into an Accountability Officer. The Accountability Officer may be a pump operator, a Division/Group Supervisor, or a designated Accountability Officer, depending on the nature, type and complexity of the incident.

## **PASSPORT EQUIPMENT**

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The Passport system equipment involves multiple (3) color-coded 2.75" X 3.75" plastic cards with the department's abbreviated name (REAF), apparatus number, and company's capabilities etched on it. The Passport should have enough Velcro "loops" for the personnel assigned to apply their nametags (minimum of four).

Color-coding for the Passport:

1. Engines: RED
2. Ladder/Aerial Devices: BLACK
3. EMS Units: BLUE
4. Rescue/Support Units: GREEN
5. Support Agencies: ORANGE

- A) The Passport will be found on the operator's door. A "hooks" Velcro strip will allow the Passport to be affixed on the dash/door and easily removed.
- B) Each firefighter will be issued four individual, 2.5" X 0.5" plastic color-coded name tags. These "hooks" Velcro tags will be affixed to "loops" Velcro strips secured under the rim to the rear of the helmet.

Color-coding for name tags:

1. Officers: WHITE
2. Firefighters: YELLOW
3. EMS Only Personnel: BLUE

C) All apparatus will be equipped with an 8" X 1 0" status board. This board will be used to affix Passports, and will always be located on the inside door of the Operators position.

D) The Company Officer will be responsible for ensuring that the Passports always reflect only currently assigned personnel. When entering a hazard zone with a partial crew (i.e., operator remains at the engine), the company officer must remove name tags of those members not entering the hazard zone from the Passport. The name tags of those members not entering the hazard zone may be returned to the member, or placed in the officer's coat pocket. The operator should include his/her name tag on the Passport board on the drivers' door (upside down).

## **COMPANY IDENTIFICATION DESIGNATION - HELMETS**

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Firefighter helmets will be equipped with leather fronts permanently attached to the helmet. The fronts will identify the personnel's respective station.

## **TACTICAL BENCHMARKS**

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Several accountability benchmarks are included in tactical operations. The Personnel Accountability Report ("PAR") involves a roll call of personnel assigned. For the Company Officer, a "PAR" is a confirmation that members assigned to his/her crew are visually accounted for. For the Division/Group Supervisor, a "PAR" is an accounting for all crew members of all companies assigned to his/her division/group. Reports of PAR's should be conducted face-to face within the company or with the division/group whenever possible.

Example: "E283 to East Group, I have a "PAR"."

A Personnel Accountability Report (PAR) will be required for the following situations:

A) Any report/suspicion of missing or trapped firefighters (Command initiates a "PAR" of all crews on the scene);

B) Whenever a MAYDAY is announced;

C) Any change from an offensive to defensive mode (Command initiates a "PAR" of all crews on the scene);

D) Any sudden hazardous event at the incident - flash over, backdraft, collapse, etc. (Command initiates a "PAR" of all crews on the scene);

- E) By all crews reporting an "all clear" (Company officers of crews responsible for search and rescue will ensure they have a "PAR" for their crews at the time they report an "all clear");
- F) At a 20 minute elapsed time after arrival at the scene;
- G) At a report of fire under control;
- H) Anytime the Incident Commander believes such is necessary.

## **ACCOUNTABILITY OFFICERS**

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Accountability Officers may be operators, Division/Group Officers, or personnel specifically assigned to Division/Groups to serve as Accountability Officers for the Division/Group officer.

The first apparatus to each geographic side of the incident will serve as the initial accountability location, and will be announced by Command to all responding units. The operator of that apparatus will serve as the initial Accountability Officer. All crews entering the incident will deliver their PASSPORTS to the accountability location closest to their "point of entry" prior to entering the hazard zone. As Division/Groups are implemented, Division/Group Officers will manage PASSPORTS only if he/she is not entering the hazard zone (i.e., defensive operations). PASSPORTS will remain on the first apparatus (accountability location). As Command designates, personnel may be assigned accountability responsibilities for given Division/Groups. These personnel will report to their assigned Division/Group Officer to manage accountability for that Division/Group (i.e., second floor Division/Group). Accountability Officers will report directly to Command.

At incidents with a critical need for Accountability Officers to assist Division/Group Supervisors, Command may choose to split up a company and distribute the crew members to different divisions/groups to act as Accountability Officers.

## **ACCOUNTABILITY DIVISION/GROUP**

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As the incident escalates to the level that Accountability Officers are assigned, Command should implement an Accountability Division/Group to coordinate Accountability Officers.

The Accountability Division/Group Officer will be assigned to Command and will operate on the assigned radio channel. The Accountability Division/Group Officer should be located in the Command Post.

The Accountability Division/Group Officer's responsibilities include:

- A) Develop and implement a plan designed to track and account for all personnel working in the hazard zone.
- B) Ensure that accountability Officers are implemented in each Division/Group as necessary.
- C) Provide progress reports to Command.
- D) Initiate "PAR'S" upon benchmarks or as needed.

## **ARRIVAL FOR DUTY**

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Arriving On-Duty personnel will be responsible for immediately updating the company PASSPORT as they arrive for duty, including at shift change, arrival for trades, fill-ins or for paramedic call-ins. All personnel will place their turn-out gear on the apparatus in the appropriate manner and update the PASSPORT at that time.

Arriving personnel will remove the name tag from the PASSPORT of the crew member they are replacing. The removed name tag should be returned to the helmet of the member being replaced.

Company Officers are responsible for ensuring that the PASSPORTS and helmet I.D.'s always remain current. PASSPORTS must reflect only those members presently assigned to the company and only those crew members about to enter the hazard zone.

The On-Duty member assigned as the operator of ALS83 that shift will place his/her name tag on the PASSPORT for E83 at the beginning of the shift. In the event that M83 is detailed away from E83, the operator of ALS83 will place his name tag on the PASSPORT for the medic unit, and the Officer of E83 will remove that name from the PASSPORT of the engine.

Off-duty paramedics responding to all-calls and operating ALS83 will place their name tags on the PASSPORT for the medic unit, and deliver that PASSPORT to the first arriving engine company upon arrival at the scene.

Members responding to runs off-duty will give their personal name tag to the officer to be placed on the Passports.

All Passports and personal name tag equipment will be considered safety equipment and will be inspected annually, and will be repaired or replaced as soon as possible.

## **RULES OF THUMB**

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PASSPORT implementation should consider the following basic rules of thumb:

- A) PASSPORTS never enter the hazard zone.
- B) PASSPORTS must be maintained at the point of entry to the hazard zone.
- C) PASSPORTS must reflect only those personnel presently in the hazard zone.
- D) Crews must turn in their PASSPORTS upon entering and must retrieve their PASSPORTS upon exit from the hazard zone

## **PASSPORT IMPLEMENTATION – THE INCIDENT**

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Implementation of the PASSPORT system will occur at any incident requiring the use of S.C.B.A., any large scale incident, an incident covering a large geographical area, or as command deems necessary.

The objective of the PASSPORT system is to always have crew members PASSPORTS near the point of entry and that they are accurate, reflecting only those members entering the hazard zone. For those situations where it is not clear-cut as to when or where to turn in the PASSPORT, crews should consider the above cited objective for their decision.

For single company incidents, the PASSPORT should be placed on the operator's door of the apparatus upon arrival at the scene. The operator will assume accountability Division/Group responsibilities.

For multiple company assignments, the PASSPORT system will function as follows:

- A) The first apparatus to each geographic side of the incident becomes the initial accountability location for all later arriving companies to that side of the incident, and will be announced by Command.
- B) The PASSPORT of the first apparatus to each geographic side of the incident shall be placed on the operator's door.
- C) The operator becomes the initial Accountability Officer until PASSPORTS are collected later in the incident by the Division/Group or Accountability Officer who assumes Accountability responsibilities.

D) The Company Officer of later arriving units should be responsible for making sure that the PASSPORTS of his/her crew are taken to the initial apparatus (accountability location).

E) The operator of the first apparatus (accountability location) will assemble the PASSPORTS from these additional companies, and mount them on the status board at the accountability location.

F) As the incident escalates, and Division/Group Officers and/or Accountability Officers are assigned, all PASSPORTS will be delivered to these officers prior to entry into the hazard zone.

G) When the Division/Group Officer is operating within the hazard zone, PASSPORTS must remain outside the zone with a designated Accountability Officer (i.e., initial operator or staff officer). A Division/Group Officer operating within the hazard zone will not have PASSPORT Accountability responsibilities.

H) Command must maintain an awareness of which companies are serving as Accountability locations, and provide this information to companies being assigned to each geographic side of the incident (Division/Group).

## **POINT OF ENTRY CONTROL**

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PASSPORTS will remain with the designated Accountability Officer near the "point of entry" to the hazard zone. Upon entry, crews will turn in their PASSPORT. Upon exit, the crew must retrieve their PASSPORTS. The Accountability status board will contain only the PASSPORTS of those crews in the hazard zone.

Crews exiting at a different location than the original point of entry must immediately notify their original Division/Group Officer and/or Accountability Officer of their changed status. The PASSPORT must then be retrieved. The Accountability Officer will remove the initial PASSPORT from the status board and hold same until retrieval by the company in question.

Where physical distance/barriers prevent easy retrieval of the PASSPORT, and where the crew is being assigned to another Division/Group, a "make-up" PASSPORT must be assembled. Crew members will provide the new Division/Group Officer another name tag. Where another "make-up" PASSPORT is not available, the individual name tags will be placed on the accountability status board. The original Division/Group Officer and/or Accountability Officer must be made aware of the change.

When crews from companies on the scene are split into smaller teams, the use of the "A" or "B" PASSPORTS for that company will be initiated and remain in effect as long

as the crew is split. If the crew is again combined for another assignment, the original company PASSPORT will be used.

## **MULTI-STORY/HIGHRISE**

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Multi-story or high rise incidents present only a minor modification in the standard approach to PASSPORT accountability.

- A) The first apparatus to each geographic side of the incident remains the accountability location.
- B) All arriving apparatus will take their PASSPORTS to the appropriate Accountability location as they are assigned.
- C) Once a lobby Division/Group is established, all crews reporting to the building will deliver their PASSPORTS to the lobby Division/Group.
- D) The lobby Division/Group will be responsible for collecting the PASSPORTS of the initial companies as soon as possible, and may use incoming crews reporting to the building to pick them up.
- E) The Accountability Division/Group Officer will collect the PASSPORTS of all crews assigned to fire combat positions. Command will assign Accountability Officers at each point of entry to stairwells, etc.
- F) PASSPORTS for crews assigned to the lobby Division/Group or any support Division/Groups within the building (non-hazard zone crews) will be maintained by the Division/Group Officer.

## **TERMINATING THE PASSPORT SYSTEM**

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PASSPORT accountability will be maintained throughout a report of "fire under control," at which time a "PAR" for all crew members must be obtained. Command will determine at that time, based on the situation and risk, as to whether to continue with the PASSPORT system. If visibility is still impaired or a significant hazardous condition still exists, Command may choose to extend the PASSPORT system further.

Upon termination and release from the incident, Company Officers and crew members will ensure that the PASSPORT is returned to their apparatus and that the PASSPORT is up-to-date.

## **RAPID ASSISTANCE TEAMS**

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Command will assign "Rapid Assistance Teams" (RAT's) to each side of the incident or point of entry when an incident escalates and/or crews are operating at a special hazard (i.e., confined space rescue) . These crews will serve as stand-by rescue teams during all hazardous operations.

## **LOST OR MISSING FIRE FIGHTER**

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An absent member of any crew will automatically be assumed lost or trapped in the hazard zone until otherwise determined safe. Company Officers must immediately report any absent members to Division/Group Officers or Command. For any reports of missing firefighters, Command must initiate an immediate roll call "PAR" of all companies assigned to duty in the hazard zone. Command must also send the Rapid Assistance Team (RAT) to the last reported working area of the lost firefighter to begin a search. Simultaneously with these actions, Command must adjust on-scene strategies to a priority search and rescue effort.

## **SUMMARY OF ACCOUNTABILITY RESPONSIBILITIES**

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Accountability will only work with a strong personal commitment to the safety system. This commitment involves the following responsibilities:

**FIREFIGHTER** - Responsible for staying with his/her crew at all times and ensuring that his/her name tag is on the PASSPORT at all times.

**OPERATOR** - The operator of the first apparatus to each geographic side of the incident becomes the initial Accountability Officer. The operator must collect PASSPORTS from crews and apparatus assigned to his/her side of the incident (Division/Group) and manage accountability until relieved by a Division/Group Officer or Accountability officer.

**COMPANYOFFICER** - Responsible for keeping his/her crew intact at all times and that the PASSPORT is current and accurate. The PASSPORT must reflect only those personnel entering the hazard zone. The PASSPORT must be turned in at the point of entry and retrieved upon exit.

**DIVISION/GROUP OFFICER** - Responsible for accounting for all crews in his/her assigned Division/Group, maintaining an awareness of their exact location, and maintaining accurate PASSPORTS of those crews in the hazard zone.

In those situations where the Division/Group Officer must enter the hazard zone, PASSPORTS will continue to be managed by the Operator of the first apparatus to each side of the incident or a designated Accountability Officer for his/her Division/Group.

**ACCOUNTABILITY OFFICER** - Responsible for teaming up with the assigned Division/Group Officer and to manage all accountability for that Division/Group. The Accountability Officer must collect all PASSPORTS from operators, apparatus or the Division/Group Officer. The Accountability Officer must maintain close coordination with other Accountability Officers.

**ACCOUNTABILITY DIVISION/GROUP OFFICER** - Responsible for managing Accountability Officers and system. Initiates "PAR's" at tactical benchmarks or as needed.

**COMMAND** - Responsible for tracking the location of all crews. Must advise later assigned crews of which apparatus is serving as the accountability location for PASSPORTS or that the Division/Group or Accountability Officer will be accepting PASSPORTS at the point of entry.

**SAFETY OFFICER** - Responsible for monitoring and assessing safety hazards, unsafe situations, and developing measures for ensuring personnel safety. The Safety Officer shall report directly to Command, and be a member of the Command Staff.

**SUBJECT:** RAPID ASSISTANCE TEAM(S)**SECTION:** 306.06**REVISED:** AUGUST 14, 2009; MARCH 3, 2008**PAGE(S):** 6

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## PURPOSE

To establish procedures outlining the operations of a Rapid Assistance Team (RAT) at an emergency scene. The goal of this procedure is to establish a proactive Rapid Assistance Team at each emergency scene with the intent of removing barriers to facilitate firefighter self-rescues; if deemed necessary, to locate and provide breathing air to any firefighter needing assistances, and; if deemed necessary, to initiate immediate rescue assistance to any firefighter(s).

It is the intent of the Reading Fire Department to train all members engaged in structural firefighting, to identify dangerous fireground conditions/operations and the ability to proactively perform basic RAT operations and rescue operations.

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## REFERENCE

1. *Hamilton County Fire Chiefs' Association, Model SOG for Rapid Assistance Teams; revised February 1, 2008.*
2. *Ohio Administrative Code – Chapter 4123:1-21 Fire Fighting*

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## RESPONSIBILITY

- I. It shall be the responsibility of all department officers to implement this operating guideline.
- II. It shall be the responsibility of all department officers to train members in the application of this guideline.
- III. It shall be the responsibility of each member to know, understand and use this guideline as it applies to the situation at hand. Each member will use good judgement in the use of this guideline.
- IV. The RAT Company is responsible to operate within the incident command structure, reporting to the Incident Commander (or as otherwise directed).

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## POLICY

- I. On all working incidents, at least one RAPID ASSISTANCE TEAM (RAT) shall be maintained by the Incident Commander. This will include all incidents where an interior fire attack is made or whenever an operation places crews in the hazard zone.

- A. The Hamilton County Communications Center CAD shall include an assigned RAT company for all *23S Structure Fire* dispatches.
  - B. In the "initial stages" of an incident, at least two members shall remain outside the hazard zone and be responsible for maintaining a constant awareness of the number, location, function, time of entry, and identity of the members operating inside the hazard zone (two in – two out). There is an exception for this when an imminent life-threatening situation presents upon arrival, where immediate action could prevent the loss of life or serious injury.
    - 1. The "initial stages" refers to the tasks undertaken by the first arriving fire company with only one team operating in the hazard zone.
    - 2. The standby members shall be permitted to perform other functions such as pump operator or incident commander.
    - 3. The standby members shall have a complete set of protective clothing, including SCBA.
    - 4. The standby members shall be permitted to perform rescue of the one operating crew if it becomes necessary.
      - a. If the standby members perform a rescue, the Dispatcher shall be notified and the incoming companies notified of the same.
  - C. Once the second crew is assigned or operating in the hazard zone, the incident is no longer considered to be in the "initial stages" and at least one RAT should be established.
- II. A RAPID ASSISTANCE TEAM shall consist of a minimum three (3) trained members (preferably an engine or truck company) and shall be available for rescue of a member or a crew if the need arises. If not assigned at dispatch, the Incident Commander should notify the arriving company to be assigned to RAT as soon as possible. The assigned crew shall be equipped with the appropriate protective clothing, SCBA, portable radio(s), handlights, hand tools, and specialized equipment that might be needed given the specifics of the operation underway. (Example of equipment in the appendix of this guideline.)
- A. The assigned RAT shall report to the Incident Commander and familiarize themselves with the incident action plan, current strategies/tactics, assure that accountability is established, and locations of operating companies.

1. The RAT should remain in close proximity to the Incident Command, assisting with monitoring operating channels (urgent or MAYDAY messages), monitoring status changes in strategies/tactics, operating modes, and company assignments. Incident Command may shift staging of the RAT to an Operation Officer's position.
2. Once on the scene, perform a 360° size-up of the building, occupancy, and location and extent of the fire. The RAT Company Officer should use the *RAT Company Checklist*. Any findings of the size-up shall be reported to the Incident Commander.
3. The RAT, particularly in small buildings, can be used to open up additional escape routes/ laddering upper floors, removing access obstructions, to prevent firefighters from becoming entrapped. *Glass in windows shall not always be considered a barrier preventing firefighter escape.* If employed in this manner, the RAT must still remain intact, ready to respond to an emergency.
4. When firefighters are operating above ground level, portable or aerial ladders should be placed to upper story windows or roofs. These ladders are to provide multiple escape routes interior or roof operations become untenable. The following priorities should be considered by the RAT company when placing ladders:
  - a. Roof
  - b. Fire area near the point of firefighter entry
  - c. Area above the fire
  - d. Fire area opposite the point of firefighter entry
5. Members of the RAT Company must maintain a “ready” state at all times to facilitate a rapid response if necessary. Avoid involvement in other fire ground duties, not included as a proactive measure, unless directly reassigned by the Incident Commander or Operations.
6. Companies assigned to the RAT can be rotated through in increments of 30-45 minutes to avoid fatigue of the company. Proper exchange of information to the newly assigned RAT is crucial. It is recommended that a Division/Group Officer be assigned for Rapid Intervention, assuring continuity of valuable information.

7. The RAT should remain intact at least until "Under Control/Loss Stopped" is reported. The Incident Commander should determine when a RAT is no longer needed: firefighters are no longer at risk.
  8. The Incident Commander may exercise reassignment of any responding companies based on arrival sequence and incident conditions, but must immediately make arrangements to replace any reassigned RAT companies. Additional companies must be dispatched to maintain adequate resources on the fireground.
- B. On multiple alarms and complex incidents, more than one RAPID ASSISTANCE TEAM may be needed. The Incident Commander must maintain as many RATs as is determined to be necessary. Multiple entry points separated by long distances may also indicate the need for multiple RATs.
1. When multiple RAT teams are assigned, an additional geographic identifier should be attached.
  2. The Incident Commander should create a "RAT Group", assigning an officer to manage the function of RAT.
  3. On any incident where a RAT is assigned, the Incident Commander should also assign an ALS unit to standby for medical assistance.
- C. Specific priorities to consider when a "MAYDAY" is declared.
1. Incident Commander
    - a. Shall request/maintain additional resources in a staging area and assure a Staging Officer has been assigned.
    - b. Shall notify the Communications Center of the MAYDAY and seek assistance in monitoring the talk group on which the MAYDAY originated.
    - c. Shall appoint a RAT Group Officer to manage the rescue operations and coordinate RAT Companies if not already assigned.
    - d. Shall direct all fire suppression companies operating on the scene to the alternate fire ground channel assigned (MAYDAY Talk Group); the distressed firefighter(s) shall remain on the original fire ground channel.
    - e. Shall have the Accountability Officer conduct a PAR on the MAYDAY Talk Group to determine who and how many firefighters are in need of assistance.

- f. Shall continue to direct the suppression operations, to the extent safely possible; thus making the structure more tenable for rescue operations. (*The IC must focus attention of controlling the fire and allow the RAT Group Officer to manage the rescue effort*).
2. RAT Group Officer
    - a. Shall report directly to the Incident Commander
    - b. Shall communicate directly with the downed firefighter(s) on the fire ground talk group on which the MAYDAY originated.
    - c. Shall direct the rescue effort of the RAT Companies assigned from the exterior of the structure or a forward command location in the event of a high-rise or large structure.
    - d. May assemble RAT Assist Teams to assist with the rescue efforts. This may entail laying additional hose lines to protect the RAT Companies and/or victim(s). If a victim is entrapped, a protective hoseline should be positioned.
    - e. Shall maintain accountability for all RAT Company members deployed into the structure.
    - f. Radio designations shall be "RAT Group Officer".
  3. Rapid Assistance Team (RAT)
    - a. Upon declaration of a MAYDAY, shall report/communicate immediately to the Incident Commander to determine last known location of distressed firefighter(s) and retrieve RAT pack.
    - b. Determine the best location for making entry to search for distressed firefighter(s).
    - c. Shall perform a rapid search of the structure with emphasis on the distressed firefighter's last known location.
    - d. The use of a tag line while conducting a search is highly recommended.
    - e. Upon locating the distressed firefighter(s), shall immediately report to the RAT Group Officer the location, identity, and condition of the firefighter(s), as well as, any necessary support/equipment needed to assist with rescue.
    - f. The RAT Company shall immediately assess the distressed personnel and assure adequate breathing air is made available.
    - g. If no extrication is involved, the RAT Company shall facilitate the removal of the firefighter from the hazard area.

- h. If extrication is required, the RAT Company shall determine the most efficient access to the distressed firefighter, communicate this information to the RAT Group Officer, and deploy the RAT rope to the exterior of the structure. *The RAT rope will signify the most direct route to the firefighter from the exterior of the structure.*
- i. The RAT Company Officer shall supervise the rescue effort from the interior, reporting to the RAT Group Officer.
- j. The RAT Company Officer shall maintain close supervision of the members working RAT and remain cognizant of their air supply and physical condition.

## APPENDIX

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The tools that should be considered (not limited to) by the Rapid Assistance Team as they step from the rig and report to the Incident Commander:

- Thermal Imaging Camera
- 200' search rope with direction travel markings
- Gasoline powered saw (metal cutting capability)
- Gasoline powered saw (wood cutting capability)
- Rescue SCBA (aka RAT Pack): face mask, strap/harness, minimum 12' quick fill hose with universal fittings, and a 60 minute rated air cylinder
- Rescue rope and hardware (min 100' of 9mm (or larger) rescue rope and 4 carabineers
- Wire cutters
- RAT ID tags/ bands (helmet or bottle)
- Four loops of tubular webbing
- Portable radio (each member equipped preferred)
- Set of irons (flat head axe and halligan tool)
- Sledge hammer
- Egress rope (equipped with RAT packs)
- EMS trauma shears
- Stokes/Reeves stretcher
- Ladders suitable for the building
- Laminated RAT Company Officer Check List

<b>SUBJECT:</b> MAYDAY AND EMERGENCY TRAFFIC DECLARATION PROCEDURES AT EMERGENCY INCIDENTS	<b>SECTION:</b> 306.07
<b>REVISED:</b> DECEMBER 13, 2010	<b>PAGE(S):</b> 5

## PURPOSE

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The purpose of this procedure is to identify the roles and responsibilities of all the parties involved at an incident where a “MAYDAY” or “EMERGENCY TRAFFIC” has been transmitted.

## REFERENCE

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*Hamilton County Fire Chiefs’ Association, Model “MAYDAY” and “EMERGENCY TRAFFIC” Declaration Procedure; Revised: February 20, 2008.*

## DEFINITIONS

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**Alert Tone** – An audible tone of consistent frequency and duration intended to draw attention to radio traffic. This tone is generated by the dispatch center and is often referred to as “Alert Tone 3”.

**Emergency Evacuation Signal** – The audible signal used on the fireground to alert all present of the need/order to evacuate the structure and regroup outside for safety and accountability purposes. The signal is **three (3) sequential sets of three (3) long air horn blasts.**

**Emergency Traffic** – The term and radio traffic to be used when a priority communication is necessary to address potential dangerous circumstances that exist.

**MAYDAY** – The term and radio traffic to be used in **ANY** situation where a firefighter’s life or safety is in jeopardy and he/she may require assistance to remove themselves from the threatening situation or IDLH environment.

## DESCRIPTION OF USE: “MAYDAY”

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The radio message "MAYDAY" will be used by fire fighters to report their status as being lost, trapped, or injured and needing assistance to exit the threatening situation or IDLH environment. A firefighter must declare a MAYDAY when confronted by, but not limited to the following situations:

- A. Immediately upon a firefighter believing he/she is disoriented or lost and unable to exit any existing IDLH environment;
- B. Immediately upon the sounding or detection of one's low air alarms and a firefighter not being able to promptly exit any existing IDLH environment;
- C. Immediately upon a firefighter becoming trapped or entangled to the point of requiring assistance;
- D. Immediately upon a firefighter sustaining ANY injury which impairs his/her ability to exit any existing IDLH environment;
- E. Immediately upon discovery of a vital PPE equipment problem which poses a substantial threat of harm and a firefighter unable to immediately exit the IDLH environment;
- F. Immediately upon discovery of another firefighter experiencing any of the above situations.
- G. Any time a firefighter feels it is necessary.

### **"MAYDAY" PROCEDURE**

The following procedure will be used to alert firefighters on the emergency scene of a Mayday.

- A. To clear all radio traffic on the fire ground frequency, the firefighter requesting the mayday shall use the term "**MAYDAY, MAYDAY, MAYDAY**" followed by the nature of mayday, location, identification and company number of the firefighter(s) involved if possible and what, if any plans they have to remove themselves from the situation.

*(Example – "Mayday, Mayday, Mayday, firefighter down, second floor, Firefighter Jones from Engine 83).*

- B. Any fire company finding a firefighter down shall declare a mayday and the mayday information shall be repeated including the manner of removal from the structure.

*(Example – "Mayday, Mayday, Mayday, firefighter from Engine 83, we will be coming out Side C door, ground floor).*

- C. Missing, injured, or trapped personnel should press the *Emergency Button* on their portable radios as a last resort (when unable to transmit a MAYDAY as described above), sending an emergency alert tone and visual emergency readout to all units monitoring the Fire Department East talkgroup.
- D. PASS devices shall be activated to alarm, providing rescuers with an audible signal for locating missing or trapped personnel.

## DISPATCH RESPONSIBILITIES

- A. When the Dispatcher receives an emergency activation from a portable radio, the Dispatcher will first identify the company which activated the alert. Dispatch will then go to that company's current radio talkgroup for direct contact with the affected company to determine if an emergency exists. When the activation occurs during an incident where command has been established, Dispatch will contact Command directly. Command will contact the affected companies to determine if an emergency exists.
- B. When a firefighter is declared lost, trapped or injured, the Dispatcher will confirm the Incident Commander is aware of the "MAYDAY" declaration.
  - a. Transmit "*Alert Tone 3*" on the fireground talkgroup the MAYDAY originated, upon the request of the Incident Commander;
  - b. Clear all non-emergency traffic – keep radio traffic to a minimum;
  - c. Dispatch any extra resources requested by the Incident Commander;
  - d. Make any notifications as directed by the Incident Commander;
  - e. Assist in monitoring any traffic on the fireground talkgroup where the MAYDAY originated;
  - f. When the Incident Commander clears the MAYDAY situation, announce "MAYDAY cleared per Incident Command, resume normal traffic" on the primary fire and fireground talkgroup(s).

## COMMAND RESPONSIBILITIES

- A. When notified of missing or trapped personnel, the Incident Commander and all other personnel on the scene will focus their efforts in a coordinated effort to protect and rescue those missing or trapped. The following actions should be taken:
  - 1. **The Incident Commander, upon hearing the MAYDAY declaration, can immediately request the dispatcher activate the *Emergency Alert Tone* on the fireground talk group.** The Incident Commander will direct all companies to switch to the designated alternate **fireground MAYDAY talk group (MAYDAY 1 or MAYDAY 2) for continuation of routine fireground communications.** The original fireground talk group will be reserved for the distressed firefighter(s) and the assigned Rapid Assistance Team(s).
  - 2. The Incident Commander should assign a deputy/aide to monitor the talkgroup on which the MAYDAY originated and the Primary Dispatch talkgroup in the event the missing firefighter broadcasts on either talkgroup. The Incident Commander can also seek assistance in monitoring from the Hamilton County Communications Center, when resources are available.

3. The Incident Commander shall call for a PAR of all personnel.
  4. Additional resources, including additional RAT teams, should be requested by the Incident Commander to reinforce the efforts of those already performing rescue, in addition to the personnel needs due to serious potential for fire or hazard extension (one additional alarm recommended).
  5. The RAT Team(s) under the supervision of a RAT Group Officer will immediately be assigned to the rescue operation.
  6. Shall continue to direct the firefighting efforts to extinguishing the body of fire threat, to the extent safely possible, thus making the structure more tenable for rescue operations. (The IC must focus attention on controlling the fire and allow the RAT Group Officer to manage the rescue effort – the attack on the fire must continue).
  7. Shall designate a staging officer and staging area for all incoming resources.
- B. At the conclusion of an incident involving missing or trapped personnel, the Incident Commander should notify all units operating on the scene to return to normal operations, decide how talkgroups are reassigned and the elimination of emergency radio restrictions.

### **INDIVIDUAL RESPONSIBILITIES**

- A. To follow directions from superiors.
- B. **DO NOT ABANDON FIRE FIGHTING POSITIONS--HOLD POSITIONS AND PREVENT FIRE SPREAD**
- C. In the event of a situation where personnel not at the incident hear a “**MAYDAY**” transmission and realize that those on the incident scene have not heard it, it shall be the responsibility of personnel who hear such a message to immediately alert the Incident Commander and/or Dispatcher that a “**MAYDAY**” has been transmitted and provide any essential information.

### **DESCRIPTION OF USE: “EMERGENCY TRAFFIC”**

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To be used when a priority communication is necessary to address potentially dangerous circumstances that exists:

- A. Any imminent potential for or an actual structural failure;
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- B. Rapidly changing fire conditions;
- C. Water supply interruption;
- D. Any circumstance that poses a material risk to firefighter safety;
- E. Immediate evacuation of the building is necessary for any of the above, or for any circumstance the Incident Commander deems necessary;
- F. Request for additional alarm(s).

### **“EMERGENCY TRAFFIC” PROCEDURE**

The following procedure will be used to clear radio traffic for priority communication when necessary to address potentially dangerous circumstances:

- A. To clear all radio traffic on the fireground talk group, the firefighter requesting exclusive use of the talk group shall announce his/her unit ID and declare **“EMERGENCY TRAFFIC”**. At this time no other radio traffic shall be transmitted until the **nature, location and type of emergency** is identified. The **“EMERGENCY TRAFFIC”** declaration shall be reserved for situations on the fireground presenting imminent danger to firefighters. (i.e. potential building collapse, energized electrical wires posing electrocution hazard, loss of water supply with firefighters inside the structure, etc.)
- B. All firefighters operating at the emergency scene shall refrain from transmitting any messages upon hearing the “EMERGENCY TRAFFIC” transmission and remain alert for the emergent command from the Incident Commander until such time that the “all clear, resume radio traffic” directive is issued by Command for the continuation of normal radio traffic.
- C. **The Incident Commander, upon hearing the EMERGENCY TRAFFIC declaration, shall immediately request the dispatcher activate the Emergency Alert Tone on the fireground talk group. The Incident Commander will then repeat the EMERGENCY TRAFFIC as well as the issuance of orders to rectify or retreat from the situation.**

***Example: Alert Tone - "Emergency, Emergency, Emergency - All companies operating at 123 Main St. retreat!"***

- D. If the building is to be evacuated, Incident Command is to authorize activation of the **Emergency Evacuation Signal** (*three sequential sets of three long air horn blasts*) and make an evacuation announcement on the fire ground talk group.
- E. Subsequent to evacuation, a PAR is to be immediately taken and appropriate action taken based on the result.

**SUBJECT:** REHABILITATION  
**REVISED:** FEBRUARY 13, 2004

**SECTION:** 306.08  
**PAGE(S):** 6

## PURPOSE

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To ensure that the physical and mental condition of members operating at the scene of an emergency or training exercise does not deteriorate to a point that affects the safety of each member or that jeopardizes the safety and integrity of the operation.

## POLICY

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This procedure shall apply to all emergency operations and training exercises where strenuous physical activity or exposure to heat and/or cold exist.

## PROCEDURE

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- A. The Incident Commander will establish a Rehabilitation Sector when conditions indicate that rest and rehabilitation is needed for personnel operating at an incident or training evolution. A member will be placed in charge of the sector and shall be known as "Rehab Officer".
- B. The location for the Rehabilitation (Rehab) Area will normally be designated by the Incident Commander. If a specific location has not been designated, the Rehab Officer should select an appropriate location based on the site characteristics listed below.
- C. Site Characteristics:
  1. It should be in a location that will provide physical rest by allowing the body to recuperate from the demands and hazards of the emergency operation or exercise.
  2. It should be far enough away from the scene that members may safely remove their turnout and SCBA.
  3. It should be isolated enough to afford mental rest from the stress and pressure of the emergency operation or training evolution. Maintain adequate crowd control and limit access to the media.
  4. It should provide suitable protection from the prevailing environmental condition. During hot weather, it should be in cool, shaded area. During cold weather, it should be in a warm, dry area.
  5. It should enable members to be free of exhaust fumes from apparatus, vehicles or equipment (including those involved in the Rehab Sector).
  6. It should be large enough to accommodate multiple crews, based on the size of the incident.
  7. It should be easily accessible by EMS units (in and out).

8. It should allow prompt re-entry back into operation upon recuperation.

## GUIDELINES

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### A. Rehabilitation Sector Establishment

Rehab should be considered by staff officers during the initial planning stages of an emergency response. However, the climatic or environmental conditions of the emergency scene should not be the sole justification for establishing a Rehab Area. Any activity/incident that is large in size, long in duration, and/or labor intensive will rapidly deplete the energy and strength of personnel and therefore merits consideration for rehabilitation.

Climatic or environmental conditions that indicate the need to establish a Rehab Area are a heat stress index above 90 F (see table 1-1) or a wind chill index below 10 F(see table 1-2).

### B. Possible Rehabilitation Sites

1. An open area in which a Rehab Area can be created using tarps, fans, etc.
2. A nearby garage, building lobby, or other structure.
3. Several floors below a fire in a high rise building.
4. A Metro bus, school bus, or mobile office.
5. Fire apparatus, ambulance, or emergency vehicle at the scene or one renovated as a Rehab Unit.

### C. Hydration

A critical factor in the prevention of heat injury is the maintenance of water and electrolytes. Water must be replaced during training and at emergency incidents. During heat stress, the member should consume at least one quart of water per hour. The rehydration solution should be a 50/50 mixture of water and a commercially prepared activity beverage (Gatorade) and administered at about 40F.

Rehydration is important even during cold weather operations where, despite the outside temperature, heat stress may occur during firefighting or other strenuous activity when turnout or other protective equipment is worn.

Alcohol and caffeine beverages should be avoided before/during heat stress because both interfere with the body's water conservation mechanisms. Carbonated beverages should also be avoided.

### D. Nourishment

The department should provide food at the scene of an extended incident when units are engaged for three or more hours. A cup of soup, broth, or stew is highly recommended because it is digested much faster than sandwiches and fast food products. In addition, foods such as apples, oranges and bananas provide supplemental forms of energy replacement. Fatty and/or salty foods should be avoided.

### E. Rest

The "two air bottle rule", or 45 minutes of work time, dictates a mandatory rehabilitation. Members should rehydrate (at least 8 ounces) while SCBA's are being changed out. Firefighters having worked for two full, 30-minute rated bottles (cylinders), or 45 minutes, should be immediately placed in the Rehab Area for rest and evaluation. In all cases, the objective evaluation of a member's fatigue level shall be the criteria for rehab time. Rest shall not be less than 10 minutes and may exceed an hour as determined by the Rehab Officer. Fresh crews, or crews released from the Rehab Sector, should be available to ensure that fatigued members are not required to return to duty before they are rested, evaluated, and released by the Rehab Officer.

### F. Recovery

Members in the Rehab Area should maintain a high level of hydration. Members should not be moved from a hot environment directly into an air conditioned area because the body's cooling system can shut down in response to the external cooling. An air conditioned environment is acceptable after a cool-down period at ambient temperature with sufficient air movement. Certain drugs impair the body's ability to sweat and extreme caution must be exercised if the member has taken antihistamines, such as Actifed or Benadryl, or has taken diuretics or stimulants.

### G. Medical Evaluations

1. EMS should be provided and staffed at a minimum of BLS level. They should evaluate vital signs, examine members, and make proper disposition (return to duty, continued rehab, or medical treatment and/or transport. Continued rehabilitation should consist of additional monitoring of vital signs, providing rest, and fluids for rehydration. Medical treatment for members, whose signs and/or symptoms indicate potential problems, should be provided in accordance to existing protocol. EMS personnel should be assertive in an effort to find potential medical problems early.
2. The heart rate should be measured for 30 seconds as early as possible in the rest area (once turnout has been removed). If a member's heart rate exceeds 110 beats per minute, a body temperature should be taken. If any member's temperature exceeds 100.6F, he/she should not be permitted to wear protective gear. If it is below 100.6F and the heart rate remains above 110 beats per minute, rehabilitation shall be increased. If the heart rate is less than 100 beats per minute, the chance of heat stress is negligible.
3. The blood pressure should also be monitored during the rehabilitation period. The strenuous physical work and/or exposure to heat can also effect the member's blood pressure. Blood pressure readings will often be higher than what is generally considered normal. Completely asymptomatic patients do not require treatment of their hypertension. Remember to treat the patient, not the numbers. Physical findings of a diastolic blood pressure of 130 or above and a systolic blood pressure of 180 or above may be a hypertensive emergency. Symptoms might include headache, blurred vision, nausea and confusion. Extend the

rehabilitation time and provide high flow, high concentration oxygen. Repeat blood pressure and treat per local protocol only if the blood pressure remains elevated according to the above criteria.

4. All medical evaluations should be recorded on standard forms along with the member's name and any complaints. The record must be signed, dated and timed by the Rehab Officer or his/her designee (attached).

#### H. Accountability

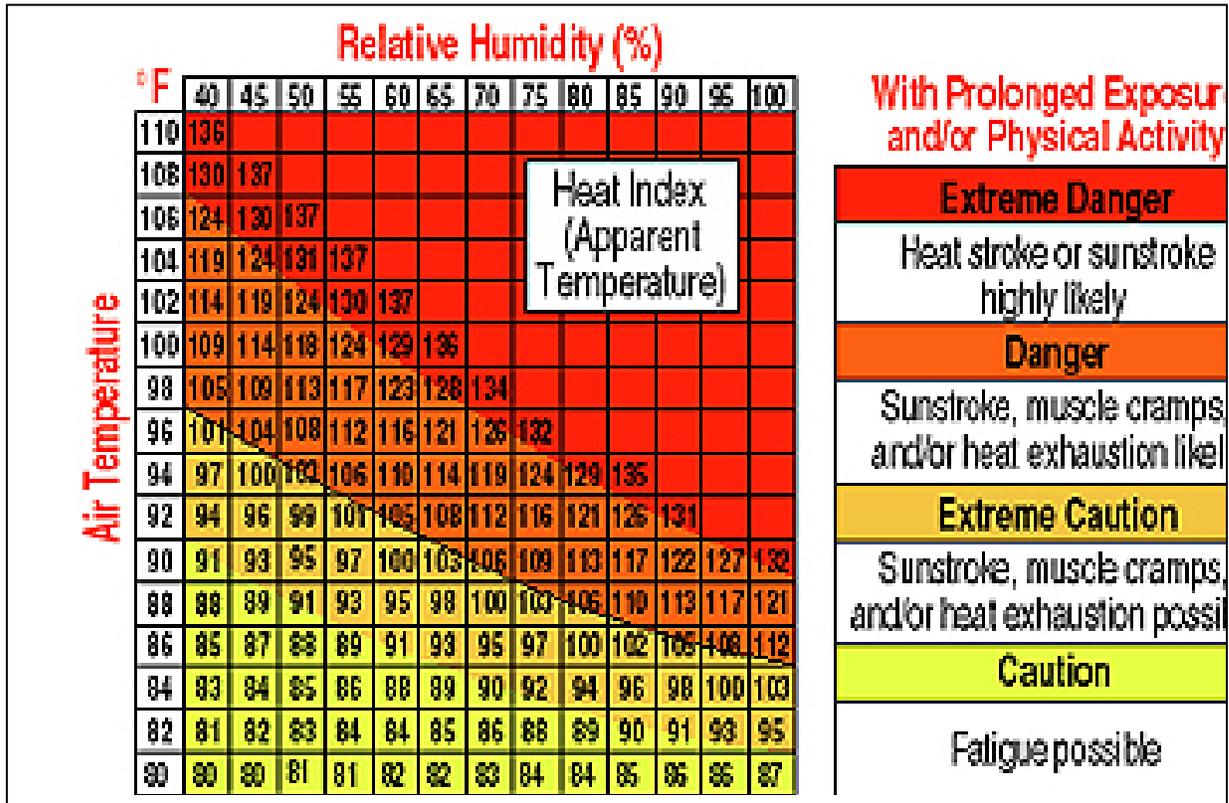
Members assigned to the Rehab Sector should enter and exit the Rehab Area as a crew. The crew designation, number of crew members, and the times of entry to and exit from the Rehab Area shall be documented by the Rehab Officer or his/her designee on the Company Check-In/Out Sheet(attached). Crews shall not leave the Rehab Area until authorized to do so by the Rehab Officer. Cause for extended rehabilitation by any member may require the remainder of the crew to return to duty while the member is rehabilitated.

## RESPONSIBILITY

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- A. The Incident Commander should consider the circumstances of each incident and make adequate provisions early in the incident for the rest and rehabilitation for all members operating at the scene. These provisions should include medical evaluation, treatment and monitoring, food and fluid replenishment, mental rest, and relief from extreme climatic conditions and the other environmental parameters of the incident. The rehabilitation shall include the provision of EMS at the Basic Life Support (BLS) or higher.
- B. All supervisors shall maintain an awareness of the condition of each member operating within their span of control and insure adequate steps are taken to provide for each member's safety and health. The command structure shall be utilized to request relief and the reassignment of fatigued crews.
- C. All members should be encouraged to drink water and activity beverages during the periods of hot weather. During any emergency incident or training evolution, all members shall advise their supervisor when they believe that their level of fatigue or exposure to the climate is approaching a level that could affect themselves, their crew, or the operation in which they are involved. All personnel should also remain aware of the health and safety of other members of their crew.

# HEAT STRESS INDEX



Heat Index/Heat Disorders	
Heat Index	Possible heat disorders for people in higher risk groups
130° +	Heatstroke/sunstroke <b>highly likely</b> with continued exposure.
105°-130°F	Sunstroke, heat cramps or heat exhaustion <b>likely</b> , and heatstroke POSSIBLE with prolonged exposure and/or physical activity.
90°-105°F	Sunstroke, heat cramps and heat exhaustion <b>possible</b> with prolonged exposure and/or physical activity
80°-90°F	Fatigue <b>possible</b> with prolonged exposure and/or physical activity.

**Table 1-1**



# Wind Chill Chart

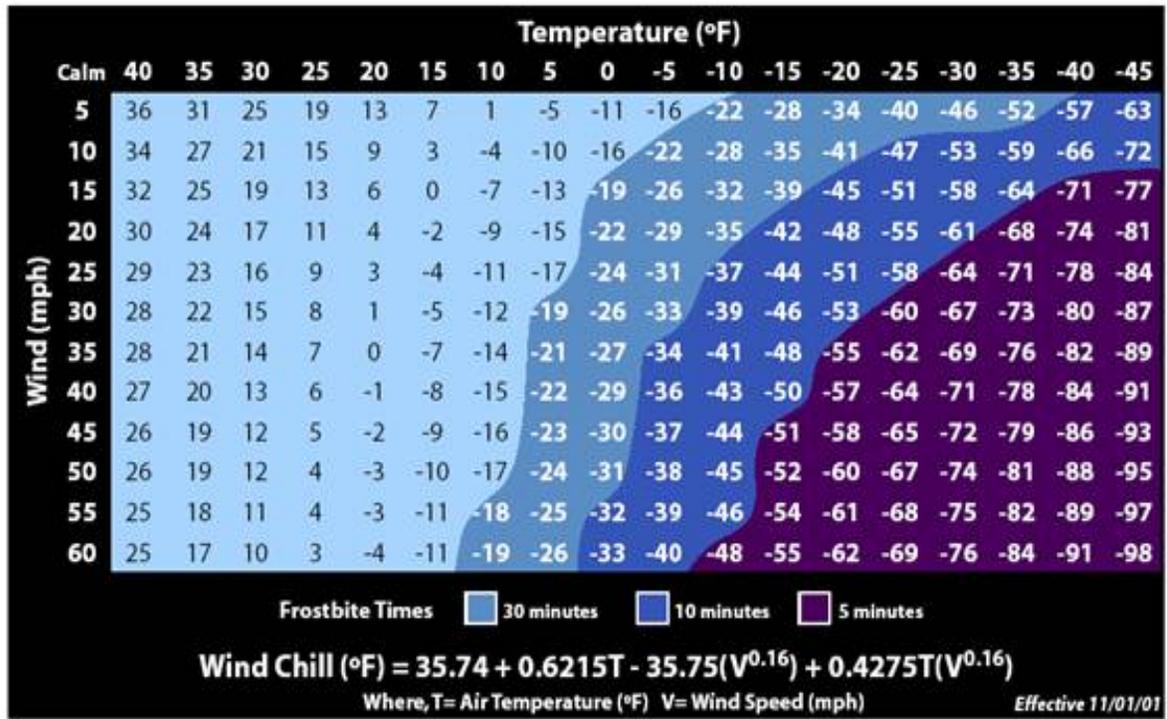


Table 2-2

**SUBJECT: SAFETY PROCEDURES FOR PROTECTIVE CLOTHING****SECTION: 306.09****REVISED: OCTOBER 15, 2002****PAGE(S): 3**

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**PURPOSE**

To provide policy and guidelines relative to the proper personal protection, in the form of protective clothing, to all Fire Department members exposed to dangerous situations and hazardous atmospheres and/or environments.

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**POLICY**

- A. Fire Department members shall utilize and wear protective clothing and safety gear as prescribed by those policies and procedures contained herein.
- B. Use of protective clothing as defined and prescribed within this policy shall be considered mandatory during emergency operations and/or whenever the chance of risk of personal injury to Fire Department members may exist.
- C. The Fire Department shall provide, and maintain at no cost to the employee, the appropriate protective ensemble/protective clothing to protect members from the hazards to which the member is likely to be exposed.
- D. Turnout gear shall be inspected annually by an individual qualified by the Department.
- E. Protective clothing and protective equipment shall be used and maintained in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions. This requirement applies to Fire Fighter's personally owned equipment as well as equipment issued by the Department.
- F. A washing machine has been installed at Station 84 to assist members in maintaining their protective clothing.
- G. Any protective clothing that is found unsafe should be tagged, removed from service immediately, and forward to the appropriate officer for repair.
- H. Any protective clothing that is not issued by the fire department shall be approved by the Fire Chief prior to use.
- I. Fire Fighters shall be trained in the function, donning and doffing, care, use, inspection, maintenance and limitations of the protective equipment assigned to them or available for their use.

## DEFINITIONS

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All Fire Department personnel shall wear and utilize full protective clothing that complies with all applicable NFPA standards as defined herein:

- A. Helmet with eye protection (NFPA 1972)
- B. Gloves (NFPA 1973)
- C. Turnout coat (NFPA 1971)
- D. Turnout pants with suspenders (NFPA 1971)
- E. Night boots or leather boots (NFPA 1974)
- F. Hood (NFPA 1971)
- G. SCBA facepiece (NFPA 1981)

## PROCEDURE

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### A. Emergency Operations

1. Personnel actively engaged in fire fighting shall wear full protective gear. Any person without proper gear shall not enter the fire building or engage themselves in activities in the immediate area.
2. Members should not remove protective clothing until such time as their company officer or the officer-in-charge determines that such protection is no longer necessary or that a reduced level of protective clothing will be sufficient.
3. When operating forcible entry equipment and tools, full protective clothing shall be worn.
4. Eye protection should be utilized at any time that the need seems apparent such as during overhaul, when operating hand or power tools, and when fighting trash fires, grass fires, and any other fires where the SCBA is not being worn.
5. Gloves and boots should be worn when engaged in firefighting, overhaul, training with hose and ladders, when using hand or power tools, and any other situation where injuries to the hands or feet are likely to occur.
6. Helmets and turnout coat and/or vest should be worn when operating near moving vehicles such as EMS incidents in the street.

7. In specific situations for which no guidelines have been provided, the proper protective clothing to protect against all foreseeable hazards shall be worn.

B. During Alarm Response

1. Members responding in or on fire apparatus shall wear their protective clothing.
2. It shall be optional for operators, command personnel and rescue unit personnel.
3. Those members responding to alarms in enclosed vehicles, or partially enclosed apparatus, are not required to wear helmets during response but must have all their assigned protective clothing available once they reach the scene.
4. If in quarters, all members should dress accordingly prior to response.
5. If, during response to an alarm, an unusual condition or hazard presents itself, the Company Officer may, at his/her discretion, order all personnel including drivers, into any level of protective clothing which may be necessary to protect said personnel from injury or death.

## **RESPONSIBILITY**

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- A. Fire Chief has the overall responsibility to insure that the members abide by Fire Department policies regarding the use of protective clothing.
- B. Each member is directly responsible for their personal safety and should utilize proper protective clothing as prescribed within this policy.
- C. Each member is responsible for cleaning, care, and maintenance of his protective clothing and for obtaining repairs or replacement items.

<b>SUBJECT:</b> SAFETY PROCEDURES FOR SELF CONTAINED BREATHING APPARATUS	<b>SECTION:</b> 306.10
<b>REVISED:</b> FEBRUARY 13, 2004	<b>PAGE(S):</b> 2

## PURPOSE

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To define all safety procedures for the usage of self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA).

## POLICY

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It is the policy of the Reading Fire Department that all personnel expected or likely to respond to and function in areas of atmospheric contamination, suspected areas of oxygen depletion and/or any area with an unknown atmosphere shall be equipped with and trained in the proper use and maintenance of the self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA).

## RESPONSIBILITY

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- A. Each member of the Reading Fire Department shall be accountable for the SCBA's located on the firefighting apparatus and shall check the SCBA's for condition and operation at the beginning of each shift and after each use, or at any other time it may be necessary to render the equipment in a ready state of condition. At the minimum, each member should perform an operational check of the SCBA, as defined by the manufacturer of said equipment, prior to the use of the equipment.
- B. Each member of the Reading Fire Department shall be issued a personal SCBA facepiece and shall be responsible for the cleanliness, sanitation and function of said facepiece.
- C. Each member of the Reading Fire Department should be quantitatively fit-tested on an annual basis and should receive annual SCBA training as deemed necessary by the training division.
- D. If a SCBA or personal, issued facepiece is found to be functioning improperly or in questionable need of repair, it shall be taken out of service, tagged with a brief description of the malfunction experienced or repair needed, reported to the Logistics Officer responsible for the maintenance of the SCBA or the Shift Officer and replaced as soon as possible, with first-line pumping apparatus given priority as to the replacing of SCBA units.
- E. All personnel shall utilize the provided SCBA when encountering any of the following emergencies:
  1. Above ground level

2. Below ground level
  3. Contaminated atmosphere
  4. Situations where it is likely that the atmosphere may become contaminated
  5. Suspected areas of oxygen depletion
  6. Any unknown atmosphere
  7. At any time as directed by the Fire Ground Commander, the Operations Officer or the Safety Officer
- F. Each member of the Reading Fire Department shall utilize the SCBA in a manner consistent with the operational and maintenance instructions published by the manufacturer.
- G. Each member of the Reading Fire Department should resist the tendency to prematurely remove and discontinue usage of the SCBA during routine fire operations. Each member shall be aware of the respiratory hazards which exist in ordinary, as well as, the extra-ordinary fire situation. It is generally true that carbon monoxide levels increase during overhaul due to the incomplete combustion of smoldering materials. No member should be permitted to perform overhaul procedures without a SCBA unless the determination has been made, by calibrated instrumentation, of an atmosphere containing less than 50 ppm of carbon monoxide.
- H. No member of the Reading Fire Department shall be permitted to remove or discontinue the use of SCBA until the atmosphere has been determined to be safe to operate within. Either use the SCBA or change the atmosphere.
- I. The determination as to the removal of breathing apparatus will be made by the company or sector officers in routine situations. In complex situations, particularly when toxic materials are involved, the Safety Officer, Operations Officer and/or the Fire Ground Commander should be consulted on the decision.

**SUBJECT:** SAFETY PROCEDURES FOR OPERATING POWER SAWS**SECTION:** 306.11**REVISED:** FEBRUARY 13, 2004**PAGE(S):** 3

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## PURPOSE

This standard establishes guidelines for the safe and proper operation of power saws. It was promulgated to:

- A. Prevent accidents, injuries, or deaths that might result from the improper use or unsafe operation of a power saw.
- B. Prevent damage to a power saw that might result from unsafe operation or improper use.

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## PROCEDURE

- A. Always carry a power saw with the engine stopped or the electrical power disconnected. The blade should be carried to the front with the muffler away from your body.
- B. Always keep both hands on the control handles, using a firm grip with your thumbs and your fingers encircling the handles.
- C. Make sure of your footing prior to operating a saw.
- D. Always turn off a saw when it is unattended.
- E. Have a plan of action before placing the saw into operation. The plan should include:
  - 1. The location and sequence of the cuts and openings.
  - 2. Wind direction - consider its effects on exposure and personnel.
  - 3. Escape routes - at least two means of egress.
- F. Always place the safety guard in the proper position for the use intended before operating the saw.
- G. Remember that power saw operations are safest when cutting on a horizontal surface at or below waist level.
- H. Operating a power saw above chest height is extremely hazardous and should not be attempted as a normal course of action. This type of operation should be conducted only under the direct order and supervision of an officer. The officer ordering this operation should first consider the value to be gained vs. the extreme hazard to personnel.
- I. The use of a power saw from a ladder shall only be done if no other alternatives are available.
- J. Do not operate a power saw close to a highly combustible or flammable material due to the possibility of ignition from sparks.
- K. Do not operate saws in flammable or explosive atmospheres.
- L. When operating a power saw, avoid placing side pressure or twisting the blade. Never force the saw. If too much pressure is applied to the blade, the hazard of

blade breakage (carbide tipped) or shattering (aluminum oxide or silicon carbide discs) is increased. A blade that breaks or shatters during cutting operations may cause serious injury to the operator or bystanders.

- M. The saw cut should only be as deep as necessary. Deep cuts may weaken supporting beams and lead to collapse. The experienced operator will know when he has reached a beam by the sound and feel of the saw.
- N. If conditions permit, scrape gravel and debris from the cutting path to reduce the danger of injury from flying chips and loose materials.

## **SAFETY PRECAUTIONS**

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- A. A member who operates a power saw at an emergency incident or during a training session should wear full protective clothing, including both ear and eye protection.
- B. A member who operates a power saw for the purpose of inspection or maintenance should wear ear protection and safety shoes or boots.
- C. When operating a power saw, all clothing should be close fitting and completely buttoned to prevent an accident due to moving belts, gears, chains, blades, etc.
- D. Do not operate a gasoline-powered saw with a fuel leak. Remove the saw from service.
- E. Do not restart a saw in a small-enclosed space after refueling.

## **FUELING AND MAINTENANCE**

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- A. Power saws shall be kept clean and in good serviceable condition.
- B. The cutting wheel, chain, or blade shall be examined at the beginning of each tour of duty and after each use for nicks or defects. These items should also be checked for tightness and shall be kept clean and properly lubricated. Defective items shall be replaced.
- C. Ensure that abrasive saw blades do not become contaminated with petroleum-based products. Such contamination may dissolve the resin that is used to bond the blade, thus causing the blade to shatter when used. New blades should be stored in plastic bags to ensure cleanliness.
- D. When fueling a power saw:
  - 1. Always turn the engine off.
  - 2. Make sure to use the proper fuel mixture. Many saws require a specific fuel and oil mixture.
  - 3. Wipe off the saw to remove any spilled fuel before starting it.

## **RESPONSIBILITY**

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- A. Members who respond to fire and emergency medical incidents shall be responsible for knowing how to properly and safely operate the power saws used by the department.
- B. Officers shall train the members under their command in the safe and proper use of the power saws assigned to their apparatus.

- C. An officer shall immediately stop any unsafe or improper use of a power saw and shall take the appropriate action necessary to correct the situation.
- D. Drivers should inspect each power saw carried on their apparatus at the beginning of each tour of duty and after each use to ensure that they are clean, functioning properly, and safe to operate. Any power saw discovered to be unsafe or malfunctioning shall be removed from service and properly red-tagged.
- E. Drivers should also be responsible for ensuring that saws are properly fueled and that spare fuel container are full of the correct gas/oil mixture and in the proper place on the apparatus.

**SUBJECT:** SAFETY PROCEDURES FOR OPERATING HYDRAULIC-POWERED RESCUE TOOLS

**SECTION:** 306.12

**REVISED:** FEBRUARY 12, 2008

**PAGE(S):** 2

## PURPOSE

This standard mandates safety guidelines to be followed while operating a hydraulic-powered rescue tool. It was promulgated to:

- A. Prevent accidents, injuries, and deaths that might result from the misuse or improper operation of hydraulic-powered rescue tools.
- B. Prevent damage to hydraulic-powered rescue tools that might result from misuse or abuse.

## PROCEDURE

- A. Before operating a tool, always inspect the tips to make sure that the appropriate tips are being used and that the retainer pins, if used, are in place.
- B. Place the power unit as level as possible, connect the hoses, but do not start the power unit until the tool operator gives the command to do so.
- C. Remember that it takes two people to operate the tool: one person to operate the tool and another person to operate the power unit.
- D. To start the power unit, place one foot on the bottom of the roll cage to help stabilize the unit. Hold the cage with one hand and pull the recoil starter cord with the other. Take care not to pull cord out too far. The start-up sequence is as follows:
  1. Move the choke to the closed position.
  2. Pull the recoil starter until the engine pops.
  3. Move the choke to run.
  4. Pull the recoil starter cord.
  5. Repeat the sequence if the engine fails to start.
- E. To stop the power unit, use you hand to engage the kill switch. Do NOT use your foot.
- F. When refueling the tool, always use the appropriate fuel type and take care not to spill fuel on a hot surface. NOTE: The pitch of the power unit will normally change prior to running out of fuel.
- G. Safety precautions:
  1. Full protective clothing, including ear protection, should be worn while using a hydraulic-powered rescue tool during actual rescues as well as training exercises.
  2. Ear protection, approved safety shoes or boots, and any other item of protective clothing that is appropriate should be worn while operating a tool for the purpose of inspection or maintenance.
  3. Always work on the outside of the tool. Never insert your hands or other

- parts of your body between the jaws or tips of the tool.
4. Cover and protect the victim, and always explain what you're doing, if possible, for reassurance.
  5. When bleeding or disconnecting a hose, place a rag over the coupling to prevent fluid from spraying on anyone.
  6. If fluid comes in contact with any exposed skin area, be sure to wash it off immediately.
  7. If a fluid spill does occur, immediately clean any floor area or painted surface to prevent a fall or damage.
  8. Always remember to make the required hose connections prior to starting a power unit. Hose should be laid out in such a manner as to prevent damage from sharp objects, vehicles, etc.
  9. Likewise, always stop a power unit prior to disconnecting a hose.
  10. Do not use the shears to cut a steering column or any piece of metal with a free end, since it may become a projectile. Shears are designed to create a compression fracture rather than to cut. Always remember to cut at a right angle.
  11. At a motor vehicle accident, always have a charged hoseline to protect against the possibility of fire.
  12. Rotate personnel to avoid fatigue.
  13. Rest the tool on your thigh and always maintain body balance.
  14. Guide and hold the tool; do not force it. Don't strain against the tool; rather, work with it.
  15. Always respect the tool. It is a machine and has no conscience.

## RESPONSIBILITY

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- A. Members that respond to fire and emergency medical incidents are responsible for knowing how to properly and safely operate hydraulic-powered rescue tools.
- B. Officers should train the members under their command to properly and safely operate the hydraulic-powered rescue tools assigned to their apparatus.
- C. Any officer shall immediately stop any unsafe or improper operation of a hydraulic-powered rescue tool and make the adjustments and corrections necessary to safely accomplish the assignment.
- D. Drivers should inspect the hydraulic-powered rescue tool assigned to their apparatus at the beginning of each tour of duty and after every use to ensure that they are functioning properly. A tool found to be unsafe or malfunctioning shall be removed from service and properly red-tagged.
- E. Drivers should check the fuel level in each tool to ensure that each is properly fueled. The spare fuel carried on the apparatus shall also be kept full at all times.

<b>SUBJECT:</b> SEAT BELT SAFETY	<b>SECTION:</b> 306.13
<b>REVISED:</b> FEBRUARY 13, 2004	<b>PAGE(S):</b> 1

## **PURPOSE**

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To insure the life safety of all members of the Reading Fire Department and all citizens when riding on fire department apparatus.

## **POLICY**

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All members and passengers shall wear seat belts while riding in the City of Reading Fire Department vehicles.

## **PROCEDURE**

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All persons shall be seated in an approved riding position and shall be secured by a seat belt anytime the vehicle is in motion. Exception: EMT's and EMT-Paramedics attending a patient in the patient compartment of an ambulance shall be secured to whatever extent is practical while still being able to deliver proper medical care.

## **RESPONSIBILITY**

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- A. It shall be the responsibility of each member to comply with the provisions of this standard.
- B. Drivers should not operate their vehicles unless everyone on board is in compliance with the provisions of this standard.
- C. Officers shall be strictly accountable for enforcing the provisions of this standard and shall correct any violations that are observed.

**SUBJECT:** SAFE PARKING WHILE OPERATING IN OR NEAR MOVING TRAFFIC**SECTION:** 306.14**REVISED:** DECEMBER 3, 2004**PAGE(S):** 8

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## **PURPOSE**

This procedure identifies parking practices for fire department apparatus that will provide maximum protection and safety for personnel operating in or near moving vehicle traffic. It also identifies several approaches for individual practices to keep firefighters safe while exposed to vehicle traffic.

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## **POLICY**

It shall be the policy of the Reading Fire Department to position apparatus at the scene of emergencies in a manner that best protects the work area and personnel from vehicle traffic and other hazards.

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## **PROTECTIVE CLOTHING FOR PERSONNEL**

1. Structural fire helmets must be properly donned at all times when working in or near moving traffic at roadway incidents.
2. Wearing structural protective clothing is always acceptable at roadway incidents at any time the crew must work in or near moving traffic. PPE should be donned prior to the crew member beginning work at the roadway incident for the following;
  - a) Fire suppression activities
  - b) Fire safety standby hoseline or fire extinguisher
  - c) Extrication activities
3. Department vests with reflective trim may be worn with fire helmets in lieu of structural protective clothing for personnel not in fire suppression, fire safety standby duty or extrication assignments.

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## **SAFETY BENCHMARKS**

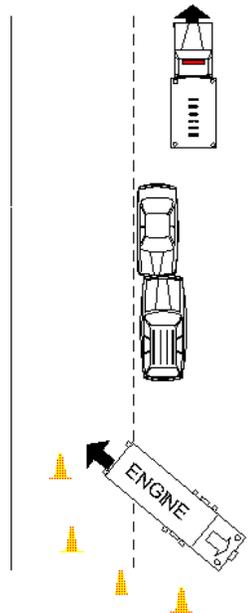
Emergency personnel are at great risk while operating in or around moving traffic. There are approaches that can be taken to protect yourself and all crewmembers:

1. Never trust the traffic
2. Engage in proper protective parking
3. Wear high visibility reflective vests
4. Reduce motorist vision impairment

5. Use traffic cones/triangles and flares

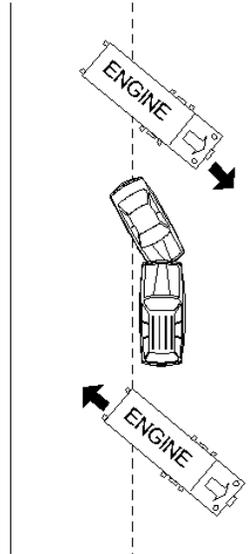
Listed below are benchmarks for safe performance when operating in or near moving vehicle traffic.

1. Always maintain an acute awareness of the high risk of working in or around moving traffic. Never trust moving traffic. Always look before you step! Always keep an eye on the traffic!
2. Always position apparatus to protect the scene, patients, emergency personnel, and provide a protected work area. Where possible, angle apparatus at 45 degrees away from curbside. This will direct motorist around the scene (See Figure 1). Apparatus positioning must also allow for adequate parking space for other fire apparatus (if needed), and a safe work area for emergency personnel. Allow enough distance to prevent a moving vehicle from knocking fire apparatus into the work areas.

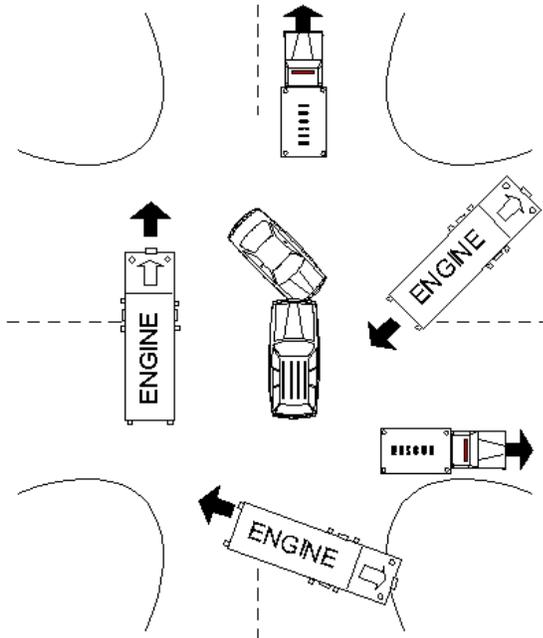


**Figure 1** Where possible, angle apparatus at a 45-degree angle from the curb.

3. At intersections, or where the incident may be near the middle of the street, two or more sides of the incident may need to be protected. Block all exposed sides. Where apparatus is in limited numbers, prioritize the blocking from the most critical to the least critical (See Figures 2, 3 and 4).



**Figure 2** Prioritize placement of the apparatus by blocking from the most critical to the least critical side.



**Figure 3** Often times two or more sides may need to be protected.

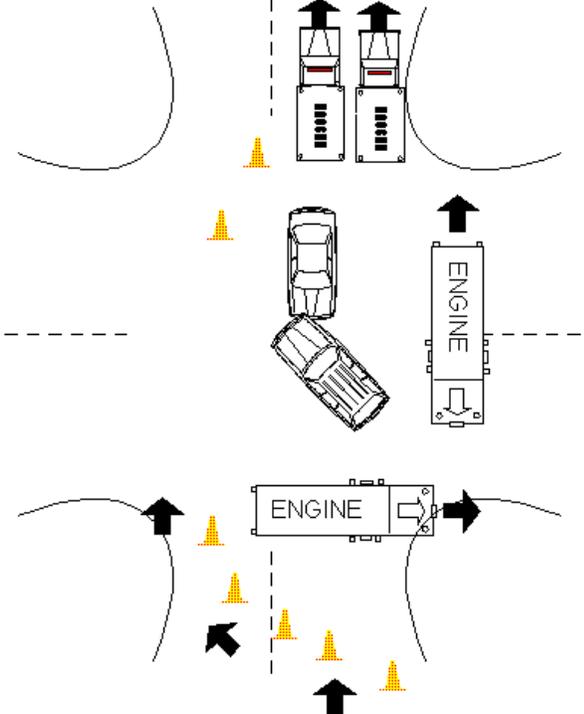


Figure 4

- 4. For first arriving engine companies where a charged hoseline may be needed, angle the engine so that the pump panel is "down stream," on the opposite side of on-coming traffic. This will protect the pump operator (See Figure 5).

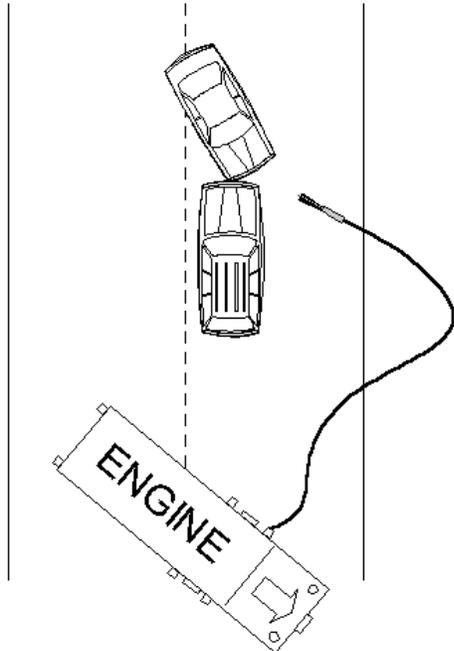
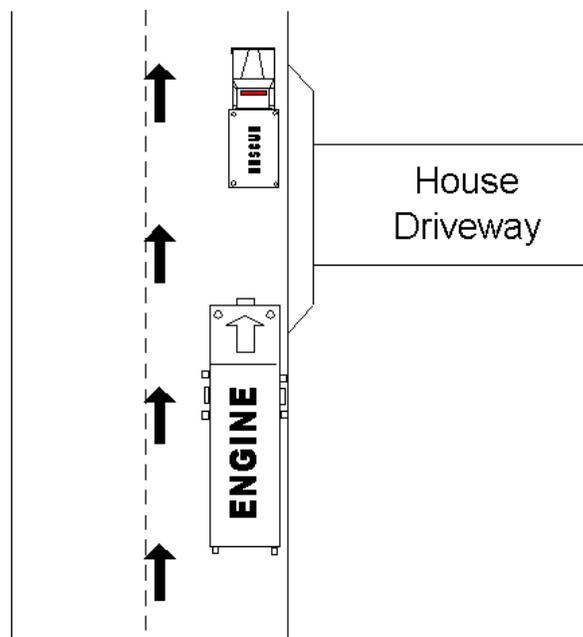


Figure 5 To protect pump operator, position apparatus with the pump panel on the opposite side of on-coming traffic.

5. The initial company officer (or Command) must assess the parking needs of later arriving fire apparatus and specifically direct the parking and placement of these vehicles as they arrive to provide protective blocking of the scene. This officer must operate as an initial safety officer.
6. During daytime operations, leave all emergency lights on to provide warning to drivers.
7. For NIGHTTIME operations, turn OFF fire apparatus headlights. This will help reduce the blinding effect to approaching vehicle traffic. Other emergency lighting should be reduced to yellow lights and emergency flashers where possible.
8. Crews should exit the curbside or non-traffic side of the vehicle whenever possible.
9. Always look before stepping out of apparatus, or into any traffic areas. When walking around fire apparatus parked adjacent to moving traffic, keep an eye on traffic and walk as close to fire apparatus as possible.
10. Wear the safety vest any time you are operating in or near vehicle traffic.
11. When parking apparatus to protect the scene, be sure to protect the work area also. The area must be protected so that patients can be extricated, treated, moved about the scene, and loaded into squads safely.
12. Once enough fire apparatus have "blocked" the scene, park or stage unneeded vehicles off the street whenever possible. Bring in squads one or two at a time and park them in safe locations at the scene. This may be "down stream" from other parked apparatus, or the squad maybe backed at an angle into a protected loading area to prevent working in or near passing traffic. At residential medical emergencies, park squad in driveways for safe loading where possible. If driveways are inaccessible, park squads to best protect patient loading areas. (See Figures 6 and 7).



**Figure 6** Where possible, park squads in driveways or position rescue to protect patient loading area.

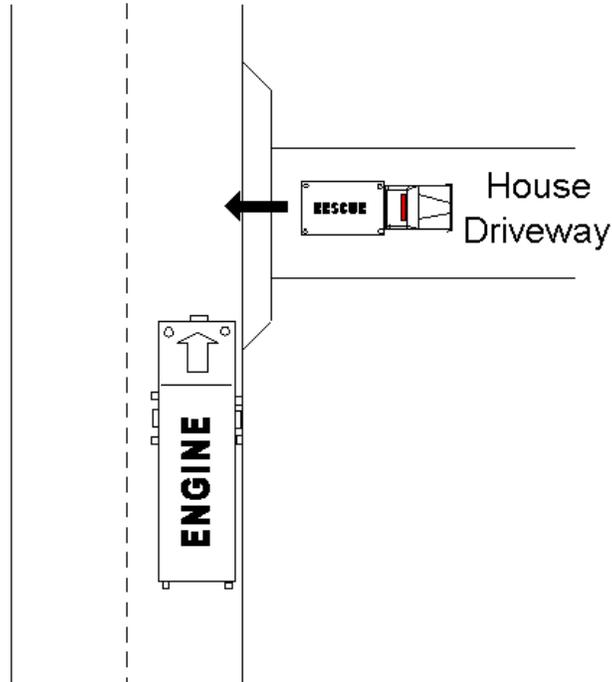
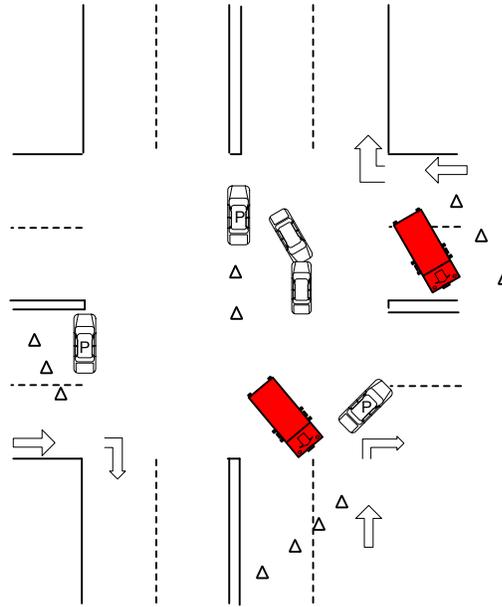


Figure 7

13. Place traffic cones/triangles at the scene to direct traffic. This should be initiated by the first company arriving on the scene and expanded, if needed, as later arriving companies arrive on the scene. Always place and retrieve cones while facing oncoming traffic.
14. Placing flares, where safe to do so, adjacent to and in combination with traffic cones for nighttime operations greatly enhances scene safety. Place flares to direct traffic where safe and appropriate to do so.
15. At major intersections, a call for police response may be necessary. Provide specific direction to the police officer as to exactly what your traffic control needs are. Ensure the police are parking to protect themselves and the scene. Position squads to protect patient loading areas. (See Figure 8)



**Figure 8** Provide specific directions to police as to what traffic control needs you have and position squads to protect patient loading areas.

## HIGHWAY OPERATIONS

Highway emergencies pose a particular high risk to emergency personnel. Speeds are higher, traffic volume is significant, and civilian motorists have little opportunity to slow, stop or change lanes.

The Police Department will also have a desire to keep the highway flowing. Where need be, the highway can be completely shut down. This, however, rarely occurs.

For highway emergencies, we will continue to block the scene with the first apparatus on the scene to provide a safe work area. Other companies may be used to provide additional blocking if needed.

The initial company officer, or command, must thoroughly assess the need for apparatus on the highway and their specific positions. Companies should be directed to specific parking locations to protect the work area, patients, and emergency personnel.

Other apparatus should be parked downstream when possible. This provides a safe parking area.

Staging of squads and other apparatus off the highway may be required. Squads should be brought into the scene one or two at a time. A safe loading area must be established.

Traffic cones should be placed farther apart, with the last cone approximately 150 feet “upstream,” to allow adequate warning to drivers. Place and retrieve cones while facing the traffic.

Command should establish a liaison with the Police Department as soon as possible to jointly provide a safe parking and work area and to quickly resolve the incident.

The termination of the incident must be managed with the same aggressiveness as initial actions. Crews, apparatus, and equipment must be removed from the highway promptly, to reduce exposure to moving traffic

## RESPONSIBILITY

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All personnel should understand and appreciate the high risk that firefighters are exposed to when operating in or near moving vehicle traffic. We should always operate from a defensive posture. Always consider moving vehicles as a threat to your safety. Each day, emergency personnel are exposed to motorists of varying abilities, with or without licenses, with or without legal restrictions, and driving at speeds from creeping to well beyond the speed limit. Some of these motorists are the vision impaired, the alcohol and/or drug impaired. On top of everything else, motorists will often be looking at the scene and not the road.

Nighttime operations are particularly hazardous. Visibility is reduced, and the flashing of emergency lights tends to confuse motorists. Studies have shown that multiple headlights of emergency apparatus (coming from different angles at the scene) tend to blind civilian drivers as they approach.

**SUBJECT:** EMS SAFETY**SECTION:** 306.15**REVISED:** FEBRUARY 11, 2010**PAGE(S):** 2

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## PURPOSE

To provide safety guidelines for EMS personnel operating on an emergency medical incident.

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## EMERGENCY VEHICLE OPERATIONS

- A. In the cab
  - 1. Always wear seatbelts.
  - 2. Use caution when exiting the EMS unit.
  - 3. Both occupants of the cab should always watch the road.
- B. The patient compartment
  - 1. Never let tunnel vision erase the need to protect yourself. To allow patient care to totally consume your attention is to ignore the first rule of EMS: personal safety.
  - 2. Use seatbelts at all times when patient care allows.
  - 3. Secure the patient. Always fasten the stretcher belts snugly or tighten belts that are undone or loosened en-route.
  - 4. Use child restraint seat when transporting children.
  - 5. Develop the habit of “hanging on.” Certain tasks require personnel to move around the patient compartment.
  - 6. Be careful of hazardous equipment. If possible, stop the squad to start an IV.
- C. Principles of Safe Driving
  - 1. Driving with emergency lights and siren can be dangerous.
  - 2. Use emergency warning lights and sirens appropriately.
  - 3. Provide a smooth ride for passengers in the patient compartment. Be acutely aware of the impact of the ride on those in back of a moving EMS unit.
  - 4. Pay particular attention when crossing intersections.
  - 5. Watch for multiple responses and colliding sirens.
  - 6. Backing up. Always use a spotter in the rear.

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## LIFTING

- A. Consider proper lifting dynamics
  - 1. Think through the situation.
  - 2. Determine which partner will be lead.
  - 3. Communicate with helpers.

4. Check for adequate footing.
5. Stay in the most balanced position possible.
6. Use the powerful leg muscles, not the back, to accomplish the lift.
7. Keep the weight as close to the body as possible.
8. Know personal limitations.

## SCENE OPERATIONS

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- A. Arrival – greatest period of vulnerability.
  1. Ask yourself “Should we get out the EMS unit?”
  2. Potentially dangerous situations include: traffic hazards, hazardous materials, crowds, weapons, civil disturbances, etc.
  3. All apparatus shall take a staging position, approximately two (2) blocks short of any scene involving any reported/suspected violence, until the scene is deemed secure by law enforcement.
- B. Dangerous scenes
  1. Suppressing dangerous situations is a law enforcement task.
  2. Most important principle is to get away from the area. Retreat and wait for law enforcement to secure the scene.
- C. Dangerous animals
  1. Try not to let fear show.
  2. Adopt a “take charge” presence.
  3. Use a commanding, loud tone of voice.
  4. Do not turn away from the animal.
  5. If an attack becomes inevitable, try to protect the throat and face.
- D. Other considerations
  1. Never knock while standing in front of the door.
  2. Walk separately. Bunching together creates an easy target. Walk on opposite sides of the hallway or several steps apart.
  3. Glance around corners first.
  4. Concentrate.

## HOSTILE SITUATIONS

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- A. Determine the threat level by reading body language.
- B. Stay out of reach until achieving an acceptable level of confidence.
- C. Use peripheral vision to gauge how far back to stand to avoid being kicked.
- D. A Law enforcement officer should handle weapons that are found during a patient evaluation.

<b>SUBJECT:</b> CRITICAL INCIDENT STRESS MANAGEMENT (CISM)	<b>SECTION:</b> 306.16
<b>REVISED:</b> MAY, 18, 2004	<b>PAGE(S):</b> 4

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## PURPOSE

The procedure identifies the application of a "Critical Incident Stress Management".

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## BACKGROUND

Case studies of major incidents where numerous injuries or fatalities occurred have revealed that significant numbers of emergency personnel experienced some form of stress-related symptoms following the incident. Many of these symptoms were transitory and most personnel had no long-term detrimental effects. These studies, however, have also revealed that a small percentage of personnel do experience some form of long-term detrimental effects resulting from exposure to such incident. Some of these effects have been delayed, surfacing later after a period of no apparent symptoms. Without professional intervention, these personnel have experienced declining work performance and deterioration of family relationships, as well as increased health problems. The objective of this procedure is to provide professional intervention (immediately) after major incidents to minimize stress-related injury to Fire Department personnel.

The Department's Medical Director will provide medical guidance in the management of the critical incident stress program.

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## THE CRITICAL INCIDENT

Fire Department response to incidents that expose personnel to unusually strong emotional involvement may qualify for "Critical Incident Intervention". The following are examples of incidents that may be selected for intervention:

1. Serious injury or death of a Fire Department member or other emergency personnel.
2. Mass Casualty Incidents.
3. Suicide of a Fire Department member.
4. Serious injury or death of a civilian resulting from Fire Department operations (i.e., auto accident, etc.).
5. Death of a child, or violence to a child.
6. Loss of life of a patient following extraordinary and prolonged expenditure of physical and emotional energy during rescue efforts by Fire Department personnel.
7. Incidents that attract extremely unusual or critical news media coverage.

8. Any incident that is charged with profound emotion.
9. An incident in which the circumstances were so unusual or the sights and sounds so distressing as to produce a high level of immediate or delayed emotional reaction.

### ON-SITE MANAGEMENT

Minimizing personnel exposure to these stressful incidents results in few stress-related problems. Command should reduce this exposure by rotating personnel and by removing initial personnel from the scene as soon as possible.

Any personnel directly involved in high-stress incidents (particularly examples 1 through 6 on previous page) should be considered as high priority for immediate removal from the scene. Relief from duty for these personnel may also be a consideration. Examples 1 through 6 should be evaluated by behavioral health professionals to determine a need for early intervention and debriefing.

On-site evaluation and counseling by a intervention team member should also be considered for some critical incidents when time and circumstances permit. In such situations, intervention team members can observe, watch for acute reactions, provide support, encouragement, and consultation, and be available to help resting personnel deal with stress reactions. Team members should be considered a resource available to command for assignment to the Rehab, Welfare, or other sectors as needed.

### **ACTIVATION OF THE CISM PROCESS**

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Company Officers, Command Officers, and available Debriefing Team members bear the responsibility for identifying/recognizing significant incidents that may qualify for CISM intervention. When an incident is identified as a "Critical Incident" (as described), a request for debriefing consideration should be made as soon as possible.

Any individual can initiate the CISM intervention process simply by contacting his/her supervisor or officer. Company officers whose crew may have experienced a traumatic event may also initiate the debriefing process by contacting a chief officer. The CISM Intervention team will then be contacted and the incident will be evaluated for the level of intervention required. The specific CISM services utilized will depend greatly upon how early the team is activated, and the nature of the incident.

Contacting the SW Ohio Critical Incident Stress Management Team:

1. Through the Reading or Hamilton County Dispatcher;
2. Telephone: 1-800-212-1322 (non-emergency: 513-563-2172)
  - a. Press in your number after the tone; allow up to twenty (20) minutes for an on-duty Team Coordinator to return your call.
  - b. You will be asked the following information:

- i. Your name and phone number for re-contacting
- ii. Your agency name, address and phone number
- iii. The nature of the incident
- iv. The perceived urgency of the situation (immediate v. formal debriefing)

## **DEBRIEFING ATTENDANCE**

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Attendance to a debriefing is **MANDATORY** for all personnel who were directly exposed to the traumatic aspects of an incident or otherwise identified as a person experiencing symptoms. Further participation is voluntary within the scope of the CISM intervention.

## **DEBRIEFING**

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Critical incident defusing or debriefing is not a critique of Fire Department operations at the incident. Performance issues will not be discussed during the intervention. The debriefing process provides formats in which personnel can discuss their thoughts and reactions and, thus, reduce the stress resulting from exposure to critical incidents. All CISM interventions will be strictly confidential.

Several types of CISM interventions may be conducted depending upon the circumstances of a particular incident. They may be conducted on an individual one-on-one basis or, more typically, in small groups of not more than 25 members. The following five types of debriefings, singularly or in combination, are most commonly utilized:

- On-Scene or Near-Scene Debriefing: (see "On-Site Management")
- Initial Defusing: Conducted shortly after the incident. Primarily informational. An update and status report on the incident and related injuries. A brief review of stress related symptoms will be provided by a professional counselor. More intense debriefing may be provided on an individual basis as requested by a crew member or as the need is observed by the debriefing team during the defusing meeting.
- Formal Debriefing Meetings: Conducted within 72 hours of incident. Confidential non-evaluative discussion of involvement, thoughts, and feelings resulting from the incident. Also, discussion of possible stress-related symptoms.
- Follow-Up Debriefing: Conducted weeks or months after incident, concerned with delayed or prolonged stress symptoms, may be done informally.
- Individual Consults: Available at any time, as needed. One-to-one counseling for any concerns related to the incident.

## **LOCATION**

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CISM interventions may be conducted anywhere that provides ample space, privacy, and freedom from distractions. City facilities or other available meeting facilities, centrally located to the involved companies are worthy of consideration. Selection of the site may be determined by either the Command Officer or the CISM Team Coordinator.

## **THE DEBRIEFING TEAM**

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The SW Ohio Critical Incident Stress Management Team consists of a competent International Critical Incident Stress Foundation approved trained peers, mental health and chaplains based on the needs of the requesting agency. The Fire Department liaison's role in the debriefing process will be to assist and support the professional counselors as necessary. Any follow-up care will be administered by the counseling group under contract with the City of Reading (PEAP).

## **RELIEVING PERSONNEL FROM DUTY**

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Circumstances of a critical incident may result in a recommendation by the CISM Team that individuals or companies are taken out of service. Such decisions may include returning personnel to their station(s) in an out-of-service status and allowing crew(s) to determine for themselves when they are mentally and physically prepared to return to service. In other circumstances, the crew member(s) may decide that they cannot return to duty, or the professional counselor may recommend relief from duty for the balance of the shift. If this is the case, appropriate steps should be taken to notify the member's spouse, roommates, or family of his/her status, and to provide direction on how they can best assist the member through this difficult time. Under no circumstances is such action to be construed as a negative toward the member. Personnel taken out of service are to be viewed as, and are to be treated with the same consideration as an "Injured" Firefighter.

## **TRAINING**

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The Reading Fire Department will provide training on an on-going basis to provide members and their families the necessary information regarding stress management, signs and symptoms related to stress, the member assistance program, and the Debriefing Process.

**SUBJECT:** LAW ENFORCEMENT LIAISON**SECTION:** 307.01**REVISED:** FEBRUARY 15, 2008**PAGE(S):** 3

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## PURPOSE

To provide guidelines for inter Police and Fire Department response, and notification of special needs at, or after an emergency incident.

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## POLICY

It is the policy of the Reading Fire Department to notify Police and respond to Police Department needs by utilizing the following guidelines.

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## PROCEDURE

- A. If at any time during Fire Department operations the need for Police assistance presents itself, request such assistance via “Reading Fire” radio channel.
- B. If requested to the scene of a Police operation, make contact with the officer in charge and coordinate with same. Dispatcher can arrange common radio frequencies for communication.
- C. When requesting a Police response for traffic control, the request should be via “Reading Fire” channel specifying the exact location of the need and that “traffic control” is the nature of the request.
- D. When special traffic control measures are needed, such as with hazardous materials incidents, the basic requirements may be relayed through dispatch with a special request for a Police Supervisor to the Command Post.
- E. The Police Department shall enforce a Fire Line as identified by the Fire Department. It is the responsibility of the Police Department to keep unauthorized persons outside of the Fire Line. Authorized personnel, inside the Fire Line are the responsibility of the Fire Department, including the news media, utility personnel, etc. Command must identify the area to be controlled to the Police Department, keeping in mind the possible dangers of the situation and the area needed for operations.
- F. At incidents involving potential exposure of large numbers of citizens to some danger, such as hazardous materials incidents, it often becomes necessary to use Police Officers to effect and maintain evacuation of an area. In these

- cases it is essential that the Incident Commander and the Police Supervisor get together to coordinate manpower needs and assignments establish perimeters and exchange information. Accurate and timely information must be shared by both departments to minimize risks to personnel and the public.
- G. When Fire Department personnel encounter interference from anyone at the scene of an incident, a specific request shall be made to the Police Department identifying the type of problem encountered and the desired action.
  - H. If the situation reaches a point where Fire Department personnel are physically endangered by an unstable situation, Fire Department units will withdraw from the area until the Police Department can stabilize the situation.
  - I. Deceased persons are a responsibility of the Police Department, delegated by the Hamilton County Coroner. Care should be taken by Fire Department personnel to maintain scene integrity and avoid disturbing potential evidence that may be utilized for investigative purposes.
  - J. Request for a Coroner's response shall be made by Police Department personnel.
  - K. When providing assistance to the Police Department, coordinate with the officer in charge and provide such assistance that may be safely provided by Fire Department personnel.
  - L. As published in the Reading Police Department Procedure Manual, Directive 06-13 "Notifications". Police Department notification of the Fire Department, Medics and Life Squad is mandatory in any of the following cases.
    - a. All reports of fire, explosion, chemical spills, smoke, suspicious odors (such as natural gas).
    - b. Bomb threats.
    - c. Upon encountering any person that is seriously injured or ill, or upon receiving report of same, unless it is certain that the Medics or Life Squad has already been notified.
    - d. When it becomes necessary to transport an unruly person that is believed to be mentally ill.
    - e. When it becomes necessary for the Medics or Life Squad to be notified, whether on a "stand-by" basis or to respond to any location and stand-by at the scene in case of injury, such as impending riot, hostage situation, high-risk search warrant, etc., notification shall be made with the approval of the O.I.C. of the relief.

M. As published in the Reading Police Department Procedure Manual, Directive 06-03A "Advanced Taser". Persons who have been subjected to the Advanced Taser, or the probes, shall be treated as follows:

- a. Once in custody, the arresting officer shall advise Reading Paramedics that a person has been subjected to the Advanced Taser and relate the approximate time the action occurred. If the probes penetrate the skin, the puncture sites shall be brought to the attention of the on duty supervisor, Paramedics and/or Emergency Room Staff. Only Emergency Room Staff may remove Advanced Taser probes that are embedded in sensitive soft tissue areas such as the neck, face and groin. Removal from other areas will be at the discretion of the on-scene attending Paramedics.
- b. After examining the affected person, the Paramedics will make the determination if the person should or should not be transported to the hospital. Transportation to a medical facility will be by police transport unless an ambulance is more appropriate.
- c. In the event that a chemical irritant is deployed, the Fire Department on-duty Medics may be requested to evaluate and treat the subject when less than lethal force was deployed, and determine the need for further medical evaluation or treatment.

## **RESPONSIBILITY**

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All personnel shall follow these guidelines when notifying Police or responding to Police Department needs.

<b>SUBJECT:</b> CRIME SCENE MANAGEMENT/EVIDENCE PRESERVATION	<b>SECTION:</b> 307.02
<b>REVISED:</b> NOVEMBER 21, 2003	<b>PAGE(S):</b> 2

## PURPOSE

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To provide guidelines for the management of a crime scene and the preservation of evidence.

## CRIME SCENE MANAGEMENT

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- A. Law enforcement will be in charge of a crime scene.
- B. It will be the responsibility of the law enforcement to determine if the scene is safe for entry of fire/EMS personnel.
  - 1. In the absence of being notified, fire/EMS units should not assume that the scene is safe and take precautions to protect themselves. Fire/EMS units should stage one block away at the minimum.
- C. All fire/EMS personnel should be aware of the important evidence that can be damaged or destroyed upon entering a crime scene.
  - 1. Fire/EMS personnel shall consult with law enforcement before disturbing items that may be evidence of a crime scene.
  - 2. All involved should take precautions not to disturb crime scene evidence, (e.g., weapons, bloodstains, vehicles, skid marks, etc.) or other evidence that can be vital to investigators to reconstruct the crime or accident scene.

## EVIDENCE PRESERVATION

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- A. At any scene where criminal activity is suspected, the rescuer should:
  - 1. Immediately notify law enforcement, if they are not already present.
  - 2. Take precautions not to remove, move or otherwise disturb anything in the environment.
- B. In situations where sexual assault is alleged by the patient, or suspected, the rescuer should:
  - 1. Immediately notify law enforcement, if they are not already present.
  - 2. Not allow the patient to wash, shower, or change clothing.
- C. In situations where criminal activity is suspected and the patient must be removed to perform critical patient care activities, the rescuer will note the patient's location and position on the patient care report.
- D. When removing clothing from patients of gunshot wounds, stabbing or other assaults:

1. Do not cut garments through or near the bullet or stab wound holes if it can possibly be avoided. The bullet/stab wound hole, powder particles or powder smudges around the hole can have considerable investigative value as evidence and should not be modified.
  2. Where clothing is bloody, do not allow blood and debris on one area or garment to another area or garment if it is avoidable. Do not roll garments up in a ball. Never put wet or bloody garments in plastic bags. They should be allowed to dry. If absolutely necessary, carefully place garments in paper bags (one bag per one item).
  3. Handle clothing as little and carefully as possible. Powder flakes from gunshot wounds may fall off of them, decreasing the value of powder-deposit examination.
- E. Try to start IV's above the hands, if the patient actually fired, or may have fired the weapon. If time permits, consider bagging the hands with paper bags.
- F. When in doubt as to how to proceed, yield to the law enforcement agency on the scene.

## **RESPONSIBILITY**

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- A. It is the responsibility of all personnel to be aware of the important evidence that be damaged or destroyed upon entering a crime scene.
- B. Law enforcement shall be in charge of a crime scene.

**SUBJECT:** PUBLIC ASSISTANCE OPERATIONS**SECTION:** 307.03**REVISED:** FEBRUARY 12, 2008**PAGE(S):** 3

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## PURPOSE

- A. To provide policy and guidelines for non-emergency related incidents.
- B. To keep property damage at a minimum.
- C. To maintain a safe environment for the public.
- D. To promote public relations.

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## POLICY

- A. To respond to and assist the public, when possible, on non-emergency related incidents.
- B. To assess the type of service required.
- C. If service cannot be provided by the Fire Department, refer the party involved to the proper agency which is able to render assistance.
- D. Provide service as quickly as possible while not interfering with emergency requests.

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## PROCEDURE

### A. FLOODING

#### 1. Individual Structures

- a. Respond and insure that there are no hazards resulting from the flooding. This would include electrical equipment, gas and/or oil fired equipment, etc.
- b. Insure the safety of the occupants.
- c. Assess the amount of standing water in the residence and provide assistance in removing the water with sump and/or trash pumps.
- d. Fire Department operations do not routinely include the pumping or the removal of mud from flooded outdoor areas.

#### 2. Streets/City Blocks

- a. Assess the amount of water and area affected.
- b. Assist stranded occupants with evacuation to a safe area.
- c. Request assistance as needed (police to block streets, boats, manpower, etc.)
- d. Personnel working in pooling water above the knees should be in life jackets at all times.

## B. ANIMAL CONTROL

1. Domestic Animal (pet) Calls:
  - a. The owner of the pet has to be the person calling and has to vouch that the animal has had up to date vaccinations.
  - b. The owner of the animal must be on the scene for the animal to be removed or no removal shall be performed.
  - c. If the animal to be rescued is a cat in a tree then the cat has to have been in the tree at least twelve (12) hours.
  - d. The safety of Fire Department personnel is the foremost concern in attempting to remove animals from dwellings, trees, etc.
    - i. No animals should be removed from trees, dwelling roofs, or other high areas at night.
    - ii. Fire Department personnel should wear full protective clothing to guard against animal bites and scratches.
2. Reptile calls
  - a. The Fire Department does not answer calls for problems with reptiles. The caller is referred to the S.P.C.A.
3. Other Wild Animals
  - a. The caller is referred to the Animal Control Officer for assistance.

## C. PERSONS LOCKED IN OR OUT

1. Anytime a citizen calls requesting assistance in gaining entry to their dwelling or assistance in getting out of their dwelling the Fire Department should respond and provide assistance.
2. Determination of the person calling for assistance as being the owner or occupant should be made by the officer in charge. Call for police if necessary.
3. Advise occupant of any potential damage that may occur prior to attempting access. If resident does not wish to have damage done to their dwelling then they should be advised to call a locksmith.
4. The safety of Fire Department personnel shall be of the up most concern at all times.
5. If access can not be gained without undue damage or excessive risk to personnel, owner should be advised to contact a locksmith.

## D. BROKEN WATER MAIN

1. Respond to location and assess the break.
2. If a traffic hazard exists, request the Police Department to respond.
3. Contact the dispatcher to have the Water Department respond.

## E. SEWAGE SPILLS

1. Insure that there is not a build up of sewer gas in the dwelling if a building is involved.
2. Contact the Metropolitan Sewer District and have them respond.

## RESPONSIBILITY

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- A. It is the responsibility of the shift officer to make every attempt to assist the public and to mitigate the situation.
- B. It is the responsibility of every member of the Reading Fire Department to be of service to the public and to assist them in the most efficient and least damaging way.

**SUBJECT:** USE OF CIVILIANS  
**REVISED:** FEBRUARY 13, 2004

**SECTION:** 307.04  
**PAGE(S):** 2

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## **PURPOSE**

To provide fire officers and Incident Commanders with an understanding of their authority and responsibilities relative to the rare utilization of civilians during emergency operations.

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## **POLICY**

- A. It shall be the policy of this department to avoid the use of civilians in fire department operations.
- B. Whenever, under unusual circumstances, civilians must be utilized or are allowed to participate in fire department operations, the Incident Commander of such operations shall utilize the civilians in such capacities which will not place them in obviously dangerous areas or hazardous environments. The Incident Commander should also insure control over their actions and well being.

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## **SCOPE**

As used in this policy, the term "civilian" refers to any person who is not a member of a legally organized fire or police department.

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## **AUTHORITY**

Members of a legally organized fire department have the authority to enlist the aid and assistance of civilians in performing their tasks at the scene of an emergency. A policy of selecting only capable adults will be the requirement for the fire officer or Incident Commander during the selection process.

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## **RESPONSIBILITY**

- A. Whenever fire department personnel enlist the aid, assistance, or help of civilians, the department automatically assumes liability for both the safety of such civilians and for their actions and the results of their actions.
- B. Whenever fire department personnel allow civilians to assist, aid, help, or participate in any way during fire department operations (whether by conscious acknowledgement or tacit consent), the department automatically

- assumes liability for both the safety of such civilians and for their actions and the results of their actions.
- C. Incident Commanders are responsible for overall control of an emergency scene and, as such, shall insure control over the non-use or use and safety of civilians (whether they have been enlisted or have volunteered) during fire department operations.
  - D. All fire department members must keep the safety of the public foremost in their minds and must refrain from utilizing civilians or restrain and prohibit their participation whenever they are not needed or whenever conditions are too dangerous to allow their involvement.