

**SUBJECT:** USE OF CIVILIANS  
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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.