

SOUTH PORTLAND FIRE DEPARTMENT

STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINES

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Category:	Fire Ground Operations	Classification:	Red

1. **PURPOSE:** The purpose of this policy is to define a standard for firefighters to follow during critical events at an incident and to achieve safe fire ground operations.

2. **PROCEDURES:**

Definitions:

Buddy System

Operating in teams of two or more firefighters. Under this system, no single firefighter shall be assigned a task to perform alone in an IDLH atmosphere.

Immediately Dangerous to Life and Health (IDLH) Atmosphere

Any area inside a structure or any area outside a structure that requires the use of self-contained breathing apparatus for the protection from smoke products of combustion, toxic vapors, potentially harmful particulate matter or an oxygen deficient atmosphere.

Operation Stage (All Hands)

The period of time having deployed more than one (1) team operating in the IDLH atmosphere indicates this period of the incident.

Rescue Team Back up Team

A designated two- (2) member rescue team assigned to be present outside the IDLH atmosphere during the Initial Stage of an Operation. This two- (2) person team shall have full turn out gear on including SCBA's. All other equipment, which may be necessary, will be readily available. These people shall remain together and one shall serve as the accountability officer for persons entering and/or leaving the atmosphere. To insure the safety of personnel of the South Portland Fire Department, at no time shall the Incident Commander be considered as part of this team. It will further be the intent not to utilize the pump operator for this position.

Rapid Intervention Crew

A specifically designated rescue team (minimum of 4 persons, maximum determined by incident) with full protective clothing, SCBA, hand tools, and a charged hose line, at the scene of an emergency operation beyond the initial stage. This team is designated to provide personnel for the rescue of fire department members operating at the incident should the need arise.

A. Definition of Alarms

- Still Alarms
 - Routine calls that are handled by one or two apparatus.

- Box Alarms: AES, Supervised (Private)
 - Calls that involve automatic alarm systems and potential large scale incidents.
 - Normally assigns 2 full time companies, 1 call company, and 1 ambulance. (3 Engines, 1 Ladder and 1 Ambulance)
- Desk Box
 - Phoned in situation, normally a building fire discovered by someone prior to or in conjunction with the alarm system.
 - Desk Boxes have an additional response of the 3rd fulltime company assigned to the scene to provide initial OSHA 2 in – 2 out.
- Special Calls
 - Unique calls to activate Call Companies which are used to allow flexibility during an event where an extra alarm is not needed.
- All Hands
 - An incident where more than one team will be operating in an IDLH environment. An All Hands may also be assigned to any other event that needs additional manpower such as, but not limited to, a; confined space rescue, rope rescue or level II hazmat event.
 - Dispatch will assign an ambulance as well as the remaining call company apparatus.
 - A 3rd ambulance will be assigned to the fire scene for EMS standby.
 - A Portland Company will be assigned to the fire scene as RIT.
 - Off duty full time firefighters, officers, and chiefs will be eligible to report voluntarily to duty. Members shall report to their assigned stations to pick up PPE.
 - Rescue 45 will be brought to the scene and additional staff should staff reserve apparatus. The remaining call back personal will be sent to the scene and shall assemble at the Resources Pool.
 - Staffed stations will be covered by spare apparatus with off duty personnel and/or mutual aid companies to a minimum of 2 Engines, 1 Quint/Ladder, & 1 Ambulance at all times.
 - A Chief Officer, or the senior off duty Officer, will assume command of the city and will work with the IC to assign apparatus and manpower to cover both the ongoing incident and the city (other Fire and EMS calls).
- 2nd Alarm
 - Assign 2 Engines and 1 Ladder to level 2 staging.
 - Request additional 2 Engines and 1 Ladder to station coverage.
- 3rd Alarm
 - An additional 2 Engines and 1 Ladder & 1 Ambulance to level 2 staging.
 - 2 Engines, 1 Ladder, & 1 Ambulance to station coverage.
- Additional alarms may be struck as needed until the incident is under control and mitigated.
- Task Force
 - The South Portland Fire Department participates in a regional task force group. A task force consists of 2 Engines, 1 Ladder, 1 Ambulance, and 1 Chief that respond together as a working group.
- Strike teams
 - 3 or more units of the same type.

B. Standard Company Functions

The following items represent the standard operations that will normally be performed by engine, ladder, and ambulance companies. These basic functions will provide the framework for field operations for these companies:

Engine Company Functions:

- Search, rescue and treatment
- Stretch & operate hoselines
- Pump hoselines
- Loss control

Ladder Company Functions:

- Search, rescue, and treatment
- Ventilate
- Forcible entry
- Raise ladders
- Provide access/check fire extension
- Utility control
- Provide lighting
- Operate ladder pipes (aerials and platforms only)
- Perform overhaul
- Loss control

Ambulance Company Functions:

- Transportation of sick and injured to hospitals.
- Search, rescue, and treatment. Ambulance companies should communicate commitment and location to Command and maintain a retrievable status for victim treatment and transportation.
- General firefighting duties as assigned by Command.

Company officers will determine, based upon conditions and the risk management profile, the priority of the functions for their company unless otherwise ordered by Command.

This does not limit a company to only its listed functions. Every company will be expected to perform all basic functions safely within the limits of their capability, and it will be the on-going responsibility of Command to integrate tasks and functions as required with the on-scene units.

C. Risk Management: Operating at Emergency Incidents poses an inherent risk of injury – or worse, death. We are committed to providing the safest possible work environment for our members. Towards that goal, all members are expected to operate under the following risk management profiles.

- We Will risk our lives a lot, in a calculated manner, to save SAVABLE lives.
- We Will risk our lives a Little, in a calculated manner, to save SAVABLE property.
- We Will Not risk our lives at all for lives or property that are already Lost.

This risk management profile will be applied to all emergency incidents and will be continuously re-assessed throughout the incident operation.

When considering the SURVIVAL profile of any victims, members must consider the conditions present in the “compartment” or area of fire conditions or other conditions affecting survival.

Rescuers should consider notification time, dispatch processing time, response time, and time on-scene as part of the calculation.

Actions in a calculated manner require:

- Incident Command established (where applicable)
- Proper personal protective equipment
- Accountability system established.
- Safety procedures in place.
- Continuous risk assessment by all members

D. IDLH Structure Fires and IDLH Atmosphere Operations

1. If companies arrive on the scene of a “working structure fire” with less than four (4) persons, (excluding the incident commander and first in pump operator), the companies must, by law, wait until four (4) persons are assembled prior to initiating an interior attack or entry into the IDLH atmosphere.
2. Prior to assembling the four persons exterior operations shall commence immediately in accordance with the Standard Fireground Operating Guidelines of the South Portland Fire Department. These may include, but are not limited to; establishment of a water supply, hose line advancement outside the IDLH atmosphere, size up, exterior firefighting, exposure protection, utility control, ventilation, ladder placement, forcible entry, or any other exterior operation as designated by the incident commander.
3. Members operating in IDLH atmosphere shall do so utilizing the “buddy system” and shall remain in constant contact with each members of the team. Team members shall remain in close proximity to each other to provide assistance in case of an emergency.
4. During the initial stages of an operation, at least one (1) team of two persons shall be designated as a rescue team. This team shall be in full protective clothing with SCBA’s donned. They shall stay in ready contact with the incident commander in order to be readily deployable if the need arises.
5. As the incident progresses to an “All Hands” Operation in which more than one interior team has been deployed; an identified Rapid Intervention Crew shall be established and positioned immediately outside the IDLH atmosphere. This team shall be fully outfitted with turnout clothing, SCBA’s hand tools. This team shall replace the rescue (backup) team established previously. This team shall be designated to perform firefighter rescue and shall not be assigned other duties.
6. If the incident is in a mid or high rise structure, large are facility or other with possible multiple IDLH atmospheres, the Incident Commander shall establish the necessary number of Rapid Intervention Crews, so firefighter rescue can be accomplished without a deployment delay.
7. If any Rescue Team or Rapid Intervention Team is required to enter the IDLH atmosphere

to rescue a firefighter, dispatch shall be notified prior to entry. Dispatch shall at that point transmit a toned announcement to all units working and or responding to the incident that a firefighter rescue is in progress and that the new OPS channel is the MAYDAY channel (which is channel 16 on portable radios).

8. Upon activation that a firefighter rescue is in progress, dispatch will make an announcement and all non-essential radio traffic shall on the initial OPS channel will cease immediately. The Incident Commander shall then assign necessary personnel and equipment to assist in the rescue as required. Those personnel not assigned an active function shall immediately report back to their apparatus at which time the officer or person in charge of the company shall take an immediate personnel accountability report and forward it to command by messenger, not radio.
9. All personnel operating in or potentially in any IDLH atmosphere (interior or exterior) shall wear full protective clothing and utilize self-contained breathing apparatus.
10. In the event that the Incident Commander orders the evacuation of a structure or area, it shall be complied with. The Incident Command shall conduct an accountability of all crews after an evacuation.

Exceptions for Imminent Life Hazards

1. If upon arrival the Incident Commander finds an imminent or potentially imminent life threatening situation where the immediate action is required to prevent the loss of life or serious injury, such action shall be permitted to commence with less than four (4) persons on the scene, when the probability of a rescue is made in accordance with normal size-up indicators. An imminent life-threatening situation is defined as one in which there are direct reports of persons inside, or signs of persons inside in accordance with normal size-up indicators.
2. If actions are initiated that involve entering a structure with less than four (4) persons on scene due to an imminent life threatening situation to rescue trapped occupants, dispatch shall be immediately notified of said action. Dispatch shall re-transmit said action to all responding units that the first in companies have deployed to a rescue mode. The next arriving company shall insure the initiation of a rescue team unless otherwise directed by command.
3. In the event that a decision is made to enter a hazardous IDLH atmosphere prior to assembling four (4) persons on scene, the person making the decision shall forward a written report of his or her actions to the Chief of Department. Said report shall fully describe the condition(s) that warranted such action and shall be forwarded to the Chief of Department within twenty –four (24) hours of said incident.

3. REFERENCES:

- None

By Order Of:



Phil Selberg
Fire Chief