



**UNIFIED FIRE AUTHORITY  
OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES AND GUIDELINES**

**Affiliation: Command Guidelines**

**Subject: Building/Structural Collapse Operations**

**Number: 450-26**

**Approved: 10/13/2021 By: AC Stephen Higgs**

**Last Reviewed: 12/08/2025 By: Capt. Chad Green**

**PURPOSE:**

To establish a standard operating guideline for conducting building/structural collapse operations.

- 1.0 First arriving company officer will establish Command and begin an immediate size-up of the situation.
- 2.0 Spotting Apparatus.
  - 2.1 The first-in company should spot the apparatus in a position that it will not be affected by a secondary collapse of the structure.
  - 2.2 Consideration should also be given to traffic conditions and if they will be affected or to block the scene.
- 3.0 Size up building construction.
  - 3.1 Officers must identify the type of structure or structures involved
- 4.0 Assess the need for additional resources.
  - 4.1 Command should immediately begin to assess the need for additional resources. If additional resources are necessary, Command should put in an early call for them (Example: Heavy Rescue, HAZMAT, Public Works, excavator, crane, Building Inspector/Structural Engineer, USAR, MCI Trailer, K9, etc.).
- 5.0 Staging.
  - 5.1 Command may institute staging procedures. The management of emergency and civilian traffic is critical from the onset of structural collapse operations.
- 6.0 Assess the Hazards.
  - 6.1 Complete an immediate hazard assessment or delegate that responsibility to a designated Safety Officer. Some hazards associated with structural collapse are:
    - potential for secondary collapse,
    - explosion with fire due to broken gas and electrical lines,
    - falling debris,
    - toxic atmosphere, etc.



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- 6.2 Hot, Warm and Cold zones may need to be established and communicated.
- 7.0 Secure all hazards as soon as possible. This will include shutting off the utilities (i.e., gas, electrical, water).
- 7.1 If it is not possible to secure all hazards, Command should notify all rescue personnel operating on scene of the hazards present.
- 8.0 Consider initiating an Mass Casualty Incident (MCI) according to SOP/SOG if incident is large enough.
- removing surface victims to a secure location
  - triage
  - treatment
  - transfer
  - transport.