

VIRTUA FIRE & RESCUE STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE

FIREGROUND SAFETY

PURPOSE

To establish safe operating procedures for fireground operations.

PROCEDURE

1. Tactical Positioning

- A. The intent is for personnel to utilize safe positioning where possible, in an effort to safeguard against sudden hazardous developments such as backdraft explosion, structural collapse, roof collapse, BLEVE (boiling liquid expansion vapor explosion), etc.
- B. When operating in a defensive mode, your operating position should be as far from the involved area as possible and still remain effective. Position and operate from behind barriers if available (fences, walls, etc.).
- C. In situations where personnel must operate from opposing or conflicting positions, such as front vs. rear attack streams, interior vs. exterior streams, roof vs. interior, etc., utilize radio or face-to-face communications to coordinate your actions with those of the opposing team in an effort to prevent needless injuries.
- D. Do not operate exterior streams, whether hand lines, master streams, ladder pipes, etc., into an area where interior personnel 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 personnel.
- E. When operating either above or below ground level, establish at least two separate escape routes when possible, such as stairways, ladders, exits, etc., preferably at opposite ends of the building or separated by considerable distance.
- F. When roof ventilation is required, do not allow firefighters to remain on a roof that is sagging, spongy, or otherwise unsafe.

2. Establishing a Perimeter

- A. Control of the perimeter and the area within it are the responsibility of the Incident Commander.
- B. No unauthorized personnel will be allowed within the perimeter. All non-fire personnel allowed to enter will be required to wear personal protective equipment (PPE) suitable for the situation and area to be entered.
- C. All personnel entering the emergency incident perimeter will
 - i. Be tracked by the accountability system.
 - ii. Be authorized by the Incident Commander.
 - iii. Wear PPE appropriate for the incident.
 - iv. Have group/team intact.
 - v. Be assigned.

ALL OTHERS, STAY OUTSIDE

3. Firefighter Team Safety

- A. Group supervisors and team leaders will
 - i. Be able to account for the whereabouts and welfare of all teams/team members under their assignment.
 - ii. Ensure that all team members are operating within their assigned area only.
 - iii. Keep their manager informed of changing conditions within their assigned area, and particularly those changing conditions which may affect the safety of personnel.
- B. In an effort to regulate the amount of fatigue suffered by fireground personnel during sustained field operations, supervisors and leads should frequently assess the physical condition of all teams assigned to them.
- C. Buildings will be constantly evaluated for tenable interior operations and collapse potential. These evaluations should be a major consideration toward determining the tactical mode (e.g., offensive/defensive).
- D. It is the Incident Commander's responsibility to determine if the current strategy and tactics are safe and fit within a continual risk/benefit assessment. This on-going evaluation requires the input of the assigned supervisor(s) and lead(s).

KEY CONSIDERATIONS

- The safety of firefighting personnel represents the major reason for an effective and well-timed offensive/defensive decision.
- Interior firefighting operations should be abandoned when the extent of the fire prohibits or the structure becomes unsafe to operate within. When conditions become untenable, withdraw or abandon the structure.
- Ensure Rehab is established for any continuing fireground operations.