

# **ASPINWALL VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINES**

## **INTRODUCTION**

It is the intent of the Aspinwall Volunteer Fire Department to establish a list of safety guidelines to prevent injury to its firefighters. The firefighter frequently encounters many different environments where potentially life-threatening situations occur. It is necessary therefore that these safety guidelines be followed in order to prevent injuries or at the very least, to reduce the severity of an injury.

While the incident commander is responsible for the safety of the firefighters on the fire ground, the incident commander no way releases the individual fire fighter from his or her responsibility. Fore their own safety and the safety of their fellow firefighters.

It would be impossible to establish a comprehensive list of safety guidelines, one that would cover every situation that is likely to occur. When situations arise which are not covered by these safety guidelines, the best rule of thumb for the Aspinwall Fire Department is to use common sense.

These safety guidelines shall coincide with the Aspinwall Volunteer Fire Department by-laws and should be reviewed yearly by February's monthly meeting.

# **ASPINWALL VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINES**

## **GENERAL REQUIREMENTS**

- All members will know and understand the Standard Operating Guidelines (SOG) set forth by this department.
- No alcohol will be permitted on fire department property.
- No members will speak to television, radio, or newspaper reporters at the scene of an emergency, fire, or accident. All questions will be handled by the Chief or Officer in Charge (OIC), unless authorized by the OIC.
- The privacy of the citizens we serve will be respected at all times. No comments about any alarm we receive will be discussed outside of the fire department.
- No member shall respond to any call while under the influence of drugs or alcohol.
- All members are expected to conduct themselves as professionals on all calls and while at the station.
- All firefighters should always respond to an alarm by a safe and direct means to the fire station.
- While responding in any of Aspinwall Volunteer Fire Department vehicles seat belts should be worn until the equipment comes to a complete stop.

# QUALIFICATIONS FOR INTERIOR STRUCTURAL FIRE FIGHTER

## PURPOSE:

To insure that all Aspinwall Fire Department Interior Structural Fire Fighters are trained to a proficient manner in accordance with recognized standards.

## SCOPE:

Any Aspinwall Fire Fighter who wishes to engage in interior structural fire fighting activities.

## GUIDELINE:

- It shall be the responsibility of all interior structural fire fighters to attend a minimum of 24 hours of in-house training annually. We currently train an average of 6 hours a month, 2 times a month with each training session lasting approximately 3 hours. If for any reason a fire fighter can not attend these training sessions they must make arrangements with a line officer for other training times and options.
- In addition to the in-house training it is recommended that all interior fire fighters annually attend at least 16 hours of additional fire fighter training provided by an approved fire academy or by a certified state instructor.
- All interior fire fighters must pass an S.C.B.A. competency test annually.

Any fire fighter who do not meet these minimum standards may have their status reduced to a support role, or risk having their turnout gear pulled and being placed on in-active status.

MOVED TO ACTIVE NON-INTERIOR

If a fire fighter is ~~placed on support~~, or inactive status and they wish to be placed back on the roles as an active interior fire fighter must attend a minimum of 12 hours of training (in House) in the 2 months following their change in status, and they must apply to the chief of the department for reinstatement as a active interior fire fighter.

ACTIVE NON-INTERIOR

## QUALIFICATIONS FOR SUPPORT FIRE FIGHTER

PURPOSE:

To insure that all Aspinwall Fire Department Support Fire Fighters are trained to a proficient manner in accordance with recognized standards.

SCOPE:

Any Aspinwall Fire Fighter who wishes to engage in exterior/support fire fighting activities.

GUIDELINE:

- It shall be the responsibility of all exterior support fire fighters to attend a minimum of 12 hours of in-house training annually. We currently train an average of 6 hours a month, 2 times a month with each training session lasting approximately 3 hours. If for any reason a fire fighter can not attend these training sessions they must make arrangements with a line officer for other training times and options.
- In addition to the in-house training it is recommended that all interior fire fighters annually attend at least 8 hours of additional fire fighter training provided by an approved fire academy or by a certified state instructor.
- All exterior support fire fighters must pass an S.C.B.A. competency test annually.

Any fire fighter who do not meet these minimum standards may have their status reduced to a support role, or risk having their turnout gear pulled and being placed on in-active status.

If a fire fighter is <sup>MOVED TO ACTIVE NON-INTERIOR</sup> ~~placed on support~~, or inactive status and they wish to be placed back on the roles as an active exterior fire fighter they must attend a minimum of 8 hours of <sup>IN HOUSE</sup> training in the 2 months following their change in status, and they must apply to the chief of the department for reinstatement as a active interior fire fighter.

# QUALIFICATIONS FOR R.I.T. FIRE FIGHTER

## PURPOSE:

To insure that any Aspinwall Fire Fighter that wishes to engage in R.I.T. responses are trained to a proficient manner in accordance with recognized standards.

## SCOPE:

Any Aspinwall Fire Fighter who wishes to engage in R.I.T. fire fighting activities.

## GUIDELINE:

- Any fire fighter who wishes to engage in R.I.T. fire fighting activities must first meet all of the requirements of an interior structural fire fighter. They must also attend at minimum 2 of the yearly in-house R.I.T. training drills that will be held at least quarterly.
- In addition before any fire fighter can be considered R.I.T. certified they must attend at least 16 hours of additional R.I.T. training provided by an approved fire academy or by a certified state instructor.

Any fire fighter who does not meet these minimum standards will not be considered R.I.T. deployable at any R.I.T. call we may respond to.

Any fire fighter that responds to a R.I.T. call that is not R.I.T. certified will be placed into a support role.

## SELF-CONTAINED BREATHING APPARATUS

It is the intent of the Aspinwall Fire Department that all personnel expected, or likely to respond to, and function in, areas of atmospheric contamination, shall be equipped with, and trained in, the proper use and maintenance of the self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA). Company officers are responsible for the maintenance of SCBA assigned to their apparatus. If an SCBA is found to be functioning improperly, it shall be taken out of service, tagged, and reported to the chief as soon as possible.

All firefighters who operate on the fire ground will undergo annual in-house recertification in the use of SCBA.

The department captain shall be responsible to have all repairs done to any SCBA and maintain the replacement parts and scheduled yearly maintenance.

All personnel shall use SCBA when encountering the following emergencies:

1. Above ground level fire
2. Below ground level fire
3. Contaminated atmosphere
4. Situation where the atmosphere is likely to be contaminated

Resist the tendency to prematurely remove breathing apparatus during routine fire situations. We all must be aware of the respiratory hazards, which exist in ordinary as well as the extraordinary fire situations. It is generally true that carbon monoxide levels increase during overhaul, due to incomplete combustion of smoldering materials. No firefighter should remove their SCBA until the atmosphere has been metered and determined to be safe to operate in.

**For the purposes of these guidelines SCBA must be worn in any atmosphere that contains more than 35 PPM of CO. For atmosphere with 34 PPM or less of CO the Incident Commander will make the decision as to the removal of SCBA.**

***Remember either use your SCBA or change the atmosphere.***

Ordinarily a firefighter should use no more than two successive cylinders of air during the course of a structure fire. However, a third cylinder may be used if the firefighter shows any of the following symptoms:

1. Light-headed or dizziness
2. Disorientation
3. Rapid ~~breathing~~ <sup>BREATHING</sup> for which there is no apparent reason
4. Flushed Skin
5. Incoherently however slight

The rehab officer can reserve the right to have a firefighter checked by emergency medical personnel.

No member of the Fire Department, with a beard or mustache, that would impede the seal of the face piece is authorized to use SCBA.

## PROTECTIVE CLOTHING

The following are the Aspinwall Fire Department guidelines for wearing protective clothing. These policies apply to all members.

DEFINITION-Full protective clothing: helmet with face shield or goggles, bunker coat, bunker pants, firefighting boots, gloves and nomex hood.

Members purchasing their own turnout gear should ensure that it meets or exceeds the current NFPA Standards and be approved by the Chief.

- Any personal protective equipment that is found to be damaged shall be reported to the Chief and be presented at the next ~~Fireboard~~<sup>BoP</sup> meeting. At that time, the Board shall determine what action to take to have the gear repaired or replaced.
- Any equipment that is damaged at an incident shall be reported immediately to the Company Officer in Charge and noted on the fire report and taken out of services until repaired.

**All firefighting personnel shall wear full protective clothing on the fire ground.**

It is the intent of these guidelines that no member shall cause a delay in any firefighting operation by not being fully prepared to engage in firefighting activities in a safe manner.

- No member shall ride the tailboard of any apparatus at any time. All occupants of any fire department vehicle must ride in a seat and must wear a seat belt.
- All members shall wear full protective clothing to afford complete protection while operating at EMS incidents.
- When operating forcible entry equipment and tools, full protective clothing shall be worn.
- Helmets shall be worn when operating near moving vehicles, such as EMS incidents in the street.
- Where the potential exist for a firefighter to be ~~struck~~<sup>STRUCK</sup> by a vehicle any firefighters not involved in fire suppression must wear a traffic safety vest.

The commander may use his discretion to regulate this in those situations where exemptions to the above policy appear necessary, such as when the use of protective clothing may compromise patient care, or when it is necessary to operate in close quarters where full protective clothing cannot be worn.

The face shield or goggles shall be used at any time the need for eye protection seems apparent, such as during overhaul, when operating, hand or power tools, or any where the SCBA is not being worn and eye protection is needed.

## **PROTECTIVE CLOTHING**

Gloves shall be worn when engaged in firefighting, overhaul, training with hose or ladders, when using power or hand tools, and any other situation where injuries to the hand are likely to occur.

In specific situations for which no guidelines have been provided, the proper protective clothing to protect against all unforeseeable hazards shall be worn.



## DRIVING SAFETY

When responding to emergency calls with red lights and siren, Fire Department vehicles will not exceed 35 MPH, and will be regulated AT ALL TIMES by existing road and traffic conditions. The only exception to the 35 MPH rule is when the apparatus is responding to a mutual aid call outside the Borough, which will necessitate the use of a major highway. At that time the apparatus will observe the posted speed limit, unless conditions warrant a lower speed.

Under wet, foggy, snow, ice, sleet, or any other hazardous weather or road conditions, Fire Department apparatus should react pessimistically to the conditions encountered, and in no case exceeded the 35 MPH limit.

Unless all lanes can be accounted for the driver during an emergency response, Fire Department apparatus shall slow down and proceed with EXTREME CAUTION at all red light intersections and negative right-of-way situations. Rule of thumb: "IF YOU CAN'T SEE, STOP."

Avoid backing where possible, where backing is unavoidable, use <sup>PERSONNEL</sup> personal to get out walk to the rear as guides; where guides are unavailable, dismount and walk completely around the apparatus before backing.

Members must ride in seats and use seat belts where they are provided. During an emergency response, apparatus should avoid passing other emergency vehicles. If this is unavoidable, the passing arrangement should be conducted through radio communications.

Members must respond and react according to the conditions encountered: neither poor road conditions, nor inclement weather, nor the actions of other<sup>s</sup> relieves the driver in the slightest degree of his responsibility to drive safely. These are situations likely to be encountered at any time and we must drive accordingly. The unique hazards or driving on or adjacent to the fire ground requires the driver to use extreme caution and alertness, and also requires that he utilize a prudent speed for the conditions encountered, in order that he may react to the unexpected. When driving apparatus on the fire ground, drivers must resist the tendency to drive hastily or imprudent. This tendency is mostly due to the urgent nature of fire ground operations. Drivers must consider the danger their moving vehicle poses to fire ground personnel and spectators who may be preoccupied with the emergency, and inadvertently step in front of or behind a moving vehicle.

Before any apparatus moves, the Driver shall sound an audible alarm to signal his intent. All drivers should use extreme caution at all railroad crossings. Drivers must also be aware of the potential that exists for vehicle accidents on or near the fire ground due to the distractions caused by the emergency.

Company officers may designate spots at which their apparatus will stop to pick up firefighters. Firefighters to be picked up will wait until the apparatus has come to a

## DRIVING SAFETY

complete stop before boarding and will then personally signal the driver when they are in a safe position to ride the apparatus.

The highest-ranking company officer shall ride in the officer's seat of the apparatus. Officers should resist driving the apparatus to alarms unless there are no other drivers. If no officers are present, a senior firefighter should ride in the officer's seat.

The driver is responsible for driving the apparatus to the alarm using defensive driving, and signaling lane changes and turns being made. Officers or senior firefighters should operate the radio. Drivers should resist the urge to operating everything while driving.

ACTIVE INTERIOR / ACTIVE NON-INTERIOR  
Members are only allowed to respond to the scene of an emergency in their privately owned vehicles (POV) if all apparatus has already left the station, or they are ordered to respond by the OIC. Such members are subject to the same safety requirements as drivers of fire apparatus. IN NO CASE is a member responding to an emergency in his POV authorized to violate any traffic law or regulation. All members must ~~fire~~ respond to the station.

Members responding to the scene of an emergency in their POV's will park in such a manner that their vehicle will not interfere with the initial response of emergency vehicles or with future response of such apparatus. If Fire Police are on duty at the scene, members will park their vehicles in accordance with their instructions. Fire Police should attempt to allow parking of POV's as close to the scene as practical. Such parking will be regulated by a desire to keep open avenues of response for emergency vehicles including ambulances transporting patients to the hospital.

## **RESPONDING TO THE STATION IN YOUR PERSONAL VEHICLE**

When responding to alarms all fire firefighters must exercise care. Responding as a firefighter does not relieve the driver from the duty to drive with due regard to the safety of all persons, nor does it exempt the driver from complying with all PA state vehicle codes.

The use of emergency lighting (BLUE LIGHTS) is optional. However if the firefighter elects to use emergency lighting, it shall meet the following guidelines as per M.V.Code#173

1. The use of flashing or revolving blue lights only, with the exception of chief, assistant chief
2. No more than 2 (Two) lights per vehicle.
3. Lights must be used only en route to or at the scene of an emergency.
4. Use of an audible warning devices are prohibited on private vehicles except by the chief or assistant chief.
5. This is a courtesy light only. Please be patient with other motorists

## **RESPONSE CODES**

Emergency Response: With emergency warning signals (Lights & Siren).

Non emergency Response: Without emergency warning signals, including lights, sirens or horns.

## **OPERATING POWER EQUIPMENT**

When operating power equipment under emergency conditions, accident potential is high due to adverse operational conditions. A slight miscalculation or sudden unplanned move can result in a serious accident. Performance skill and proper instruction by a company officer, coupled with the use of common sense and the strict adherence to safety guidelines can prevent accidents.

### **PERSONNEL PROTECTION**

Full protective clothing shall be worn by those members operating, and by those members in close proximity to the operation of power saws.

Face shield or goggles, will be in position to provide eye protection.

To prevent accidents caused by moving belts, gears, chains, blades, etc., it is imperative that the operator and the guide have their clothing completely buttoned up and close fitting.

### **OPERATING GUIDELINES**

Carry the rescue saw with the engine stopped, the blade frontward, and the muffler away from your body.

Always carry the chain saw with the engine stopped, the guide bar and saw chain to the rear and the muffler away from your body.

Keep both hands on the control handles when operating the saw. Use a firm grip with thumbs and fingers encircling the saw handles.

Make sure of your footing before operating the saw.

There shall always be a team of two to perform cutting operations. The person operating the saw(operator) will be assisted and/or guided by the second person(guide).

The saw will always be shut down when unattended.

Have a plan of action before putting the saw into operation; Your plan should include:

- Location and sequence of cuts and openings.
- Wind direction. Consider its effect on exposure and personnel.
- Preplanned escape routes. You should provide for at least two (2) means of egress.

Whenever possible, an officer should be present to supervise cutting operations and to assure compliance with safety guidelines.

## OPERATING POWER EQUIPEMENT

Always place the safety guard in the proper position to provide protection for the use intended before operating the saw.

Power saw operations are safest when cutting on horizontal surfaces near ground level or vertical surfaces at waist level or below.

Operating a power saw above the chest height is extremely hazardous and should not be attempted as a normal course of action. This type of operation shall be conducted only under the direct supervision of an experienced officer and at his direct order. The officer ordering this operation shall weigh heavily the value gained against the extreme hazard to personnel.

The use of a power saw from ladders is not recommended if there are alternatives.

When operating close to highly combustible or flammable materials there shall always be a fire suppression device in close proximity of the situation.

Do not operate saws in suspected flammable/explosive atmospheres!

Side pressure or twisting of the blade when operating a rescue saw should be avoided. The saw should never be forced. If too much pressure is applied to the blade, the hazard of blade breakage (carbide tipped) or blade shattering is increased. A blade, which breaks or shatters during cutting operations may cause serious injury to the operator, or to others in the area.

The saw cut should be only 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. This is particularly important in the use of a chain saw.

If conditions permit, scrape gravel and debris from the path to be cut, in order to reduce the danger of injury from flying chips and loose materials.

When using the rescue saw to open metal buildings, doors, etc., where conditions permit, utilize methods to eliminate the hazards of sharp edges. Consider making the cut in either an X design or a triangular design with the points bent inward.

# FIREGROUND SAFETY

## TACTICAL POSITIONING

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

1. Above the fire (Floors/Roofs)
2. Where fire can move in behind them.
3. When involved with opposing fire streams.
4. Combining interior and exterior attack.
5. Where a sector officer cannot control position or retreat.
6. With limited access; one-way in/out
7. Operating under involved roof structures.
8. In areas containing hazardous materials.
9. Below ground fires (Basements, Manholes, ETC.)
10. In areas where a back draft 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 the IC. When the rescue of savable victims has been completed, the IC must ask himself: "Is the risk to my personnel worth the property I can save?" When operating in a defensive mode, your operating position should be as far from the involved areas as possible and still remain effectible. Position and operate from behind barriers if available (fences, walls, etc.)

The intent is for personnel to utilize safe positioning where possible or available, in an effort to safeguard against sudden hazardous devolvement such as back draft explosion, structural collapse, etc. When operating in an offensive mode, be aggressively offensive. An effective interior attack operation directed toward knocking down the fire eliminates most eventual safety problems.

Due to the inherent hazards of the immediate fire or incident scene, efforts will be made by the IC to limit the number of personnel on the fire ground to those assigned to a necessary function.

All personnel shall either:

1. Be positioned in staging.
2. Be assigned to a task or a sector.
3. Having completed an assignment and no other assignment is available within that sector-teams should be assigned to a resource, staging, or rehabilitation until such time as they can be either reassigned to a task, operating sector or released to quarters.

The intent of this guideline is to minimize fire ground confusion/congestion and limit the number of personnel exposed to fire ground hazards to only those necessary to successfully control the operation. Individuals or teams shall be restricted from wandering about the fire ground or congregating in non-functional groups. If you have

## FIREGROUND SAFETY

not been assigned to a task or you do not have a necessary staff function to perform, report back to staging.

In any hazardous material situation, the IC will engage only an absolute minimum number of properly trained personnel within the fire ground perimeter. Self-standing master streams will be utilized wherever possible. In situation where teams are operating from opposing or conflicting positions, such as front vs. rear attack streams, interior vs. exterior streams, roof teams vs. interior teams, etc., use radio or face to face communications to coordinate your actions with those of the opposing crew in an effort to prevent needless injury.

Ground teams and interior teams must be notified before ladder pipes go into operation.

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

When laddering a roof, the ladder section shall be one that will extend 2 to 3 rungs above the roofline. This shall 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 firewalls as these areas are generally more stable in the event of structural collapse.

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

Many safety principals revolve around action that takes place on the fire ground.

For the purpose of Aspinwall Fire Department operations, the fire ground is defined as:

**Any area inside an imaginary boundary that has been determined by safety considerations to be dangerous according to the foreseeable hazards of the particular incident.**

The boundary line of any fire ground can be altered by various safety factors. The boundary may include but is not limited to:

1. The center of the street
2. 30' to 50' from a building

## **FIREGROUND SAFETY**

3. The area of possible explosion
4. The area of structural collapse (1-1/2 times the building height)
5. The area of smoke

All personnel entering the fire ground perimeter shall:

- Wear full protective clothing
- Notify the accountability officer
- Have team integrity
- Be assigned to a duty or task

**All others will stay outside the fire ground perimeter.**

### **EVACUATION**

Interior firefighting operations should be abandoned when the extent of the fire prohibits effective operations or the structure becomes unsafe to operate within. When conditions are such that interior firefighting positions become untenable, firefighters must regroup, re-communicate, and redeploy. Our primary concern when a hazard, which may affect the safety of fire personnel, becomes apparent is the welfare of those personnel. In an effort to protect personnel which may suffer the adverse effects of such hazard such as structural collapse, explosion, back draft, etc., a structured method of area evacuation must be used, one which will provide for the rapid/effective notification of those personnel involved, and one which will be able to accurately account for those personnel.

The method of evacuation selected will vary depending on the following circumstances:

1. Imminence of the hazard
2. Type and extent of the hazard
3. Perception of the area affected by the hazard

Three steady blasts of the air horns as well as a radio communication should be used when a total and immediate evacuation of the structure or areas is required.

### **MAYDAY**

The term "Mayday" will be used by any firefighter encountering an immediately perilous situation, including but not limited to firefighters that are lost, trapped, have an air emergency or are in need of immediate help. This radio transmission will receive the highest communications priority from dispatch and all operating units.

When a mayday is called all radio traffic will be moved to another channel. The mayday, which consists of the firefighter or firefighters calling the mayday and the R.I.T. team, will stay on the original channel. They will be the only units on this channel until the Mayday is cleared.



# **FIREGROUND SAFETY**

Any member has the authority to use the Mayday announcement when it is felt that they are in need of help.

## **How to call a Mayday:**

1. Stay calm, stay with your team, call "Mayday, Mayday, Mayday" on the radio. Command or dispatch will answer your call.
2. Identify yourself, what your emergency is, where you are at, and what your need is.
3. Activate your P.A.S.S.
4. Turn off P.A.S.S. to monitor the radio or update Command/Go Team then rearm your P.A.S.S.
5. Attempt to locate an exit or seek an area of refuge.
6. Use your flashlight, tools, or debris to alert rescuers.
7. Move toward visible light, listen for audible sounds, search walls for doors or windows, or for a hose line.

## **EMERGENCY TRAFFIC**

The term "Emergency Traffic" will be used by any unit encountering an immediately perilous situation and will receive the highest communications priority from base stations and all operating units.

When a unit has critical message they will establish contact with the I.C. THE AIR ABSOLUTELY BELONGS TO ANY UNIT GIVING THE "EMERGENCY TRAFFIC" CALL. The emergency traffic announcement is designed to provide immediate notification for all fire ground personnel of a notable hazard that is either about to occur or has occurred.

The use of "Emergency Traffic" should be initiated only when the hazard appears imminent.

Any member has the authority to use the "Emergency Traffic" announcement when it is felt that a notable danger to personnel is apparent; HOWEVER, considerable discretion should be applied to its use since it will become ineffective if over used.

When an imminent hazard has been realized, the emergency traffic process should be initiated. Usually either a company or sector officer will be the initiator. The initiator should describe the apparent hazard and order a positive response, usually to evacuate particular area or section, according to the scope of the hazard. If possible, the sector officers of those areas to be evacuated should request an acknowledgement of the emergency traffic dispatch from those crews to be evacuated.

## **FIREGROUND SAFETY**

Upon receipt of the emergency traffic evacuating order, team leaders shall assemble their crews and promptly exit to a safe location where the team leaders will again account for all crewmembers. Shortly after the evacuation order, sector officers shall begin the process of accounting for all evacuated crews. When all affected crews and crew members are accounted for, the evacuation process is complete. At this time a more specific determination as to the extent of the hazard can be made and efforts initiated to redeploy/redirect attack forces.

It is a principal IC 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 respective sectors and of sectors advising the IC of the conditions in their local area of operation.

Structures of other than fire resistive/heavy timber construction are not designed to withstand the effects of fire and can be expected to fail after approximately twenty minutes of heavy fire involvement.

If after 10-15 minutes of interior operations heavy fire conditions still exist, the IC should initiate a careful evaluation of structural conditions and should be fully prepared to withdraw interior crews and resort to a defensive position. Crews retreating from interior operations often require hose line protection. The personnel protective afforded to firefighting personnel in such situations represents a major function of such back-up lines.

### **SEARCH AND RESCUE**

Search and rescue should be performed according to an efficient, well-planned guideline that includes the safety of search crew personnel.

It is a standard operating guideline of the Aspinwall Fire Department to conduct a primary search in all involved and exposed occupancies that can be entered. First arriving units must structure initial operations around the completion of the primary search. Primary search means firefighters have quickly gone through all affected area(s) and verified the removal and/or safety of all occupants.

The object of the search effort is to locate possible victims, not create additional ones by neglecting the safety of the search crew.

## **STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINE**

### **Aspinwall Fire Department**

The purpose of this text is to establish guidelines for all department personnel within the Aspinwall Fire Department. This is not meant to replace departmental by-laws but rather to be used as a reference for any questions concerning departmental guidelines, fire ground operations, regulations or expected behavior as a member of the fire department.

It must be stressed that common sense is the most important rule of conduct. Because the situation circumstances are so varied in the fire service, one finds that certain rules and regulations cannot be followed in the strictest sense but the standard operational guideline will inform members of the direction their decisions and actions should follow.

Keep in mind that every member's actions reflect on the department as a whole. One selfish act can destroy the fire department's positive image, one that we have strived to attain.

It is sincerely felt this will enable our department to work as a team, towards our goal - *the preservation of life and property.*

# STRUCTURAL FIRE RESPONSE

## PURPOSE

To insure that initial fire ground operations will be handled by arriving apparatus on the scene as quickly and efficiently as possible.

## SCOPE

All Fire Department personnel

## RESPONSIBILITIES

All fire ground officers should be alert to conditions that reduce the response capability to lower numbers. The officer shall see that a vacant position is covered by another individual to insure completion of the task.

First arriving apparatus shall decide whether they are to perform truck company duties or engine company operations. This decision will be based on initial size-up or rescue requirements.

## ENGINE COMPAY DUTIES

Full protective clothing and SCBA are required as noted in the safety guideline.

Unless otherwise directed, a supply line will be laid from the nearest water supply. This is required on report of smoke condition or visible fire. If the length of the supply is prohibitive, then the layout should begin from the nearest intersection enabling the second engine or truck to pick up the supply line. This supply line shall be the largest line available.

On arrival at the scene and after spotting the apparatus, the engineer shall begin water flow preparations including connecting the supply line to the pump.

The officer shall see that the first suitable line (pre-connected) shall be stretched to the building. The line should not be smaller than 1-3/4" dependant on manpower the officer may need to assist in this operation.

The hydrant man shall return to the engine once the water flow is established to set up accountability.

At fires in large structures, or when it is called for. The apartment pack and leader line will be stretched to the reported fire building, or fire floor. It shall not be charged until ordered by the line officer. The intent of this evolution is to proved a sufficient water supply to the attack lines.

## ADDITIONAL APPARATUS OR PERSONNEL

If it is determined that additional apparatus or personal will be required than a staging area will be established for personal by the appointed staging officer.

## **STRUCTURAL FIRE RESPONSE**

All incoming apparatus will report via radio while in route for instructions from command.

### **ALLEGHENY COUNTY FIRE MARSHALL**

In any larger than a contained room and contents fire or in a situation where it is overly apparent as the origin of the fire, or in any case where the OIC has concerns or is unsure the OIC will have

County Fire Dispatch notify the Allegheny County Fire Marshal Officer to investigate the origin and cause of the fire.

### **UTILITIES**

The OIC will notify all utilities needed to be called such as gas, electric, etc.

# PERSONNEL ACCOUNTABILITY SYSTEM AND TEAM TAGS

## PURPOSE

To have all personal accounted for at the scene of all emergencies.

## SCOPE

All Fire Department personnel.

## RESPONSIBILITIES

It will be the responsibility of all firefighters to be accounted for when working in or around the boundary of the fire ground.

## GUIDELINE

The Personnel Accountability System that is to be used in the Aspinwall Fire Department is outlined below.

Firefighters will give their personal accountability tag to the officer or senior firefighths that they have been teamed with, that person will be known as the "team leader". The team leader will then clip all of their teams members tags on to a team tag that wthey will then pass to the accountability officer when they have been assigned to a task.

For first arriving personnel the accountability officer may not yet be set up. In this case the team leader will clip the team tag onto the engine or give them to the OIC.

For small incidents such as: car and trash fires, CO calls, wires down, ect. the team accountability board does not need to be used. For those incidents the officer or senior firefighter of that unit will appoint an accountability person. They may use the clipboard with an attendance sheet or full size board, but the accountability system must be used.

Once the accountability board has been set up the accountability officer will notify command via radio and let them know that they area set up and their location. They will then chart all teams operating on the fire ground, if needed they will call for a P.A.R. to ascertain team status and location. Once accountability has been set up, all other team leaders will bring their team tags to accountability, and inform the accountability officer of their task and where they will be going.

When exiting the fire ground the team leader **only** will go to accountability to collect their team tag. Once a team has been established it should remain intact for the duration of the incident unless directed otherwise from command.

Lost tags shall be reported to the accountability officer of OIC on scene, so new tags can be issued.

# **FIRE GROUND FACTORS FOR STRUCTURE FIRES**

## **PURPOSE**

To have a strategy to be employed at all structure fires, for overall safety within the risk management plan.

**WE MAY RISK A LOT TO SAVE OR PROTECT SAVEABLE LIVES.**

**WE MAY RISK A LITTLE TO PROTECT SAVABLE PROPERTY**

**WE MAY RISK NOTHING TO SAVE WHAT IS ALREADY LOST.**

## **SCOPE**

All Fire Department Personnel

## **RESPONSIBILITY**

It will be the responsibility of all incident commanders as well as firefighters to determine the risk factors and the appropriate fire ground safety

## **GUIDELINE**

Offensive fire attack should be employed when a structure is determined to be safe to enter with all best known information at the time and will be reevaluated as the incident goes on to minimize risk to firefighters. This should be used to protect or rescue savable lives and property. This strategy may also change with conditions or because of certain benchmarks (i.e. "ALL CLEAR") are obtained. Command must establish an attack plan that overpowers the fire with actual water application, either from offensive or defensive positions.

### **Command must consider:**

The level of risk to firefighters.

Being able to write off whatever is already lost.

Must get a report as to all seven sides of the fire building: front, rear, both sides, top, bottom, and interior for good decision making.

Defensive fire attack should be used when the risk to firefighters outweighs what you **MAY** gain: property or lives that are already lost.

**REMEMBER** match appropriate strategy to the conditions of the structure, minimizing risk to firefighters.

# **BRUSH FIRE RESPONSE**

## **PURPOSE**

To insure that initial fire ground operations will be handled by arriving apparatus on the scene as quickly and efficiently as possible.

## **SCOPE**

All Fire Department Personnel

## **RESPONSIBILITIES**

All fire ground officers should be alert to conditions that reduce the response capability to lower numbers. The officer shall see that a vacant position is covered by another individual to insure completion of the task.

## **FIRST ARRIVING APPARATUS**

1. Full protective clothing is required as noted in the safety guidelines.
2. Apparatus placement should be on the road if possible, before the engine goes off road the use of a spotter is mandatory. This spotter should be out in front of the apparatus to look for unseen hazards and obstructions.
3. Unless otherwise directed an attack line no smaller than 1-3/4" shall be stretched to the fire this should always be done from the burned side of the fire. Dependant on the manpower available, the line officer may need to assist in the attack.
4. Unless otherwise directed teams should bring hand tools such as shovels, brooms, and rakes.



# **TRASH FIRE RESPONSE**

## **PURPOSE**

To insure that initial fire ground operations will be handled by arriving apparatus on the scene as quickly and efficiently as possible.

## **SCOPE**

All Fire Department personnel.

## **RESPONSIBILITIES**

All fire ground officers should be alerted to conditions that reduce the response capability to lower numbers. The officer shall see that a vacant position is covered by another individual to insure completion of the task.

## **FIRST DUE APPARATUS**

1. Full protective clothing and SCBA are required as noted in the safety guideline
2. Apparatus placement shall be no closer than 50 feet.
3. Unless otherwise directed an attack line no smaller than 1-3/4" shall be stretched to the fire. Dependant on the manpower available, the line officer may need to assist in the attack.

## **SECOND DUE APPARATUS**

1. Second arriving apparatus shall assist the engine as directed by command.

## **VEHICLE FIRE**

### **PURPOSE**

To insure that initial fire ground operations will be handled by arriving apparatus on the scene as quickly and efficiently as possible.

### **SCOPE**

All Fire Department personnel.

### **RESPONSIBILITIES**

Upon arrival at a vehicle fire, a brief report shall be given via radio including number of vehicles involved, exposures, etc. Incident command procedure shall be established.

All responding apparatus shall park no closer than 75' feet from the vehicle, 100' feet from a pick up truck and in the event of a tractor trailer apparatus should be placed no closer than 120' feet, all along checking for placards or indications that hazardous materials are being involved.

Full protective clothing including SCBA is required.

Two (2) 1 3/4 lines will be used for fire extinguishment, one line will attack the fire while the other lines covers the attack crew.

The attack shall be made from the side of the vehicle if possible. Attack from the bumper ends of the vehicle should be avoided.

# **FIRST RESPONDER GUIDELINE**

## **PURPOSE**

To insure that properly trained personal respond as quickly as possible to provide BLS care until ALS support arrives.

## **SCOPE**

All First Responder qualified Fire Department personnel.

## **RESPONSIBILITIES**

The Aspinwall Fire Department's First Responders shall, at all times, abide by the most current standards and protocols set forth and governed by The Pennsylvania Department of Health.

First Responder/Firefighters, at all times, are accountable for their actions or lack thereof, having stated that, First Responders may have to face a Quality Assurance/Quality Improvement Board of inquiry, should it be found necessary.

At no time is it acceptable for any Responder to act outside of their scope of training. Should any victim refuse medical care, the First Responders should ask the victim to wait until more advanced help arrives and allow them to complete and accept the refusal form. They should also notify the Paramedics, through dispatch, so as to make the Paramedics aware of the situation and allow them to make an emergency, non-emergency response decision, or even disregard the incident, if they so choose.

### **Response to Medical/Trauma Emergencies**

With the exception of Driver/Operators, of our various apparatus, only qualified First Responders shall respond to these emergencies.

A responding apparatus to a dispatched medical/trauma emergency, should at a minimum, have a driver and three First Responder/Firefighters. This will insure that the apparatus is properly crewed, should another incident arise at the conclusion, or upon the proper release from the First Responder detail.

First Responders/Firefighters shall have their full turnout gear with them on a responding fire unit.

Firefighters who wish to respond and otherwise cover the station at the time of a First Responder dispatched detail, may come to the station in a non-emergency manner. This means no lights or warning devices need to be used while responding to the station. They shall report to dispatch as to how many teams are standing by for station coverage.

After any First Responder detail, it is imperative that equipment is replaced, properly cleaned or decontaminated, or properly disposed of. If equipment cannot be replaced at that time, a notification shall be made to the Officer in Charge and/or Supply Officer.

# CARBON MONOXIDE ALARMS

The following procedures will be followed at all times when responding to alarms for a residence with a carbon monoxide alarm activated. All carbon monoxide will be a non-emergency response unless there is a confirmed patient condition existing inside the structure.

## RESPONSE FOR CARBON MONOXIDE ALARMS

1. The use of SCBA will be dictated by the OIC of the scene if he/she deems the practice necessary after assessing the situation for potential hazards or existing patient conditions.
2. Prior to testing the structure with a four gas meter from the Engine or other CO meter, the meters will need to be zeroed in fresh outside air. A sample shall then be taken at the entrance of the structure and the level of CO noted by the meter operator.
3. The meter operator will need to continue to sample the structure's atmosphere at various heights upon entering the structure. Again, the level of CO will be noted by the operator.
4. Samples will need to be taken near the location of the CO alarm and appliances that use or can cause combustion. The following will need to be checked and cleared of CO production:
  5.
    - Stoves                                -Chimney
    - Furnaces                              -Fire Places
    - Hot Water Heaters                -Cooking Appliances
    - Gas Dryers
    - Space Heaters
6. The following location will need to be sampled in the above appliances:
  - Heat exchanger exhaust ports of furnaces
  - Under draft diverter of gas fired water heaters
  - Warm air register of home HVAC systems
7. The following PPM will be used as a guideline in determining further actions during CO alarms:
  - 0 PPM                                No CO condition exists in the structure
  - 1-9 PPM                              Maximum acceptable level of CO in a structure
  - 10-30 PPM                          Possible problem exists, determine origin of CO
  - 30+ PPM                             County Fire Dispatch notify Utilities
8. At any time the OIC can have the utility company notified from county, or at the request of the homeowner.
9. If a PPM reading is near or over 30 PPM, the proper utilities will need to be notified and the possible origin of the CO will need to be identified. The interior crews will don SCBA or supplied air respirators. The homeowner will need to be

## **RESPONSE FOR CARBON MONOXIDE ALARMS**

advised that a possible CO problem exists in the structure. All occupants shall remain outside the structure until the source is located or the utility company clears the structure.

# NATURAL GAS EMERGENCIES

## PURPOSE

To insure that initial fire ground operations will be handled by arriving apparatus on the scene as quickly and efficiently as possible.

## SCOPE

All Fire Department personnel

## RESPONSIBILITIES

All fire ground officer should be alert to conditions that reduce the response capability to lower numbers. The officer shall see that a vacant position is covered by another individual to insure completion of the task.

## FIRST ARRIVING APPARATUS

1. Full protective clothing including SCBA is required as noted in the safety guidelines.
2. Insure that the apparatus is staged a safe distance away from the structure involved, a minimum of 100' feet short of the structure, preferably at the nearest hydrant further that 100' feet away.
3. If all occupants have not already evacuated the structure insure that they are removed.
4. One team of two firefighters should then start to meter the structure. Metering should always begin on the outside of the structure. If any LEL reading for natural gas is detected the gas company should be notified immediately. If there is a reading on the outside of the structure **DO NOT** enter unless it is to perform a rescue.
5. If any LEL gas reading is detected immediately evacuate the exposures that are within 100' feet of the structure.
6. Secure the scene and wait for the arrival of the gas company representative.

## SECOND DUE APPARATUS

All second due apparatus should stage a minimum of 100' feet from the structure and hold all manpower with their apparatus until given instruction from the OIC.

# HAZARD MATERIAL RESPONSE

## PURPOSE

To insure that initial fire ground operations will be handled by arriving apparatus on the scene as quickly and efficiently as possible.

## SCOPE

All Fire Department personnel

## RESPONSIBILITIES

All fire ground officer should be alert to conditions that reduce the response capability to lower numbers. The officer shall see that a vacant position is covered by another individual to insure completion of the task.

## GUIDELINE

1. Full protective clothing and SCBA are required as noted in the safety guideline
2. Responding apparatus shall try to determine type of hazardous material involved, quantity involved and exposures. Apparatus shall be no closer than absolutely necessary determined by the contents involved.
3. Defensive operations, i.e. diking, unmanned master streams, channeling, containment, may be completed as allowed by our personnel protective equipment and training.
4. Command may notify dispatch to call out county hazmat team.

# RESPONSE TO KNOWN HOSTILE INCIDENTS

## PURPOSE

To insure that initial fire ground operations will be handled by arriving apparatus on the scene as quickly and effately as possible.

## SCOPE

All Fire Department personnel.

## RESPONSIBILITIES

All fire ground officer should be alert to conditions that reduce the response capability to lower numbers. The officer shall see that a vacant position is covered by another individual to insure completion of the task.

## ALL ARRIVING APPARATUS

1. When requested to respond to such incident the highest ranking officer should respond to the scene and all other personal should respond to the station and standby until given specific instructions from the OIC. The OIC should operate under a unified command structure along with the Police and EMS OIC.
2. Unless ordered otherwise by the OIC all apparatus should respond non emergency.
3. As soon as possible safety zones should be established and reviewed during the entire incident. These zones shall be:

Hot Zone - The immediate area of the incident and the area that is in a direction of the fire.

Warm Zone - The area that is in a potential or realistic line of fire.

Cold Zone - The area that is out of the potential line of fire.

4. All fire department personal must stay clear of the Hot and Warm zones.
5. If hose streams are requested, only unmanned streams (i.e. Blitz Fires or Ground monitors) will be used.
6. Under no circumstances will any firefighter operate inside of the hot zone of an incident while either the actor, or scene is unsecured
7. If the actor sets the structure on fire the Allegheny County Fire Marshall's Office will be notified. Keep in mind that this is considered a **crime scene** and the area
8. should be treated as such. Care should be taken not to unnecessarily remove anything from the structure involved.
9. After the actor has been secured if fire suppression activates are required serious consideration must be given to the use of defensive tactics only. All firefighters should be aware of the potential of possible explosives or other traps lefts in the structure by the actor.



# **RESPONSE TO UNKNOWN HOSTILE INCIDENTS**

## **PURPOSE**

To insure that initial fire ground operations will be handled by arriving apparatus on the scene as quickly and efficiently as possible.

## **SCOPE**

All Fire Department personnel

## **RESPONSIBILITIES**

All fire ground officers should be alert to conditions that reduce the response capability to lower numbers. The officer shall see that a vacant position is covered by another individual to insure completion of the task.

## **ALL ARRIVING APPARATUS**

1. Once it has been determined that a hostile situation exists the OIC should immediately remove all fire department personal from the area immediately surrounding the structure involved and notify dispatch to have the police respond if they are not already on scene.
2. Once it has been determined that the incident is indeed a hostile situation follow all SOG's that pertain to a known Hostile Incident.