

**DEPARTMENT OPERATIONS MANUAL**  
*Emergency Service District #11*

**Splendor Volunteer Fire Department**

**STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINES  
AND  
DEPARTMENTAL POLICIES**

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**OPERATIONS MANUAL / P&P**  
**EFFECTIVE DATE: OCTOBER 1, 2006**

**1-1 WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS**

Welcome to the *Splendora Volunteer Fire Department*. You have joined a department that puts a lot of emphasis on pride, professionalism, and safety. Our department is proud of the opportunity we have to serve our community, and we have set our goals high in order to provide the best fire/rescue service for the citizens of the Splendora fire District. We are happy that you have chosen to be a part of this team, and we expect that you will have a rewarding experience with this fire department. This booklet you have been given contains our Policies and Procedures as well as our Standard Operating Guidelines. It contains all of the information that makes our fire department run smoothly. As a member of the department you will be expected to know this booklet well. Everything that we do (Administrative Duties, Fires, Medical Calls, and Fire Prevention) comes from this booklet, and each member is responsible to know the information here to ensure successful operations with the fire department. You could be a danger to yourself and others if you do not learn the information presented here. As a new member, your first few months will be a great time to learn this booklet as well as visiting the station to learn the location of equipment on the fire apparatus. This will show your desire to learn and become proficient in firefighting activities, and your value to the department will quickly grow. This booklet has been developed over a period of many years. It is revised often to keep up with changes in the fire service and our department. Our Standard Operating Guidelines (SOG's) are developed by the chief officers, previous SOG's, and SOG's from other fire departments. Each SOG is then reviewed and approved by the Fire Chief. The remainder of this document will help you learn about the Fire Department. Armed with this knowledge, frequent training, a desire to learn, and a positive attitude, you will become a valuable member of this fire department. Feel free at any time to ask questions of those around you. Every member of this department is ready and willing to help. If you are wondering what to expect from membership with the fire department, the next section will show you. Remember the tips in the following pages and you will have a successful fire service career.

## **1-2 EXPECTATIONS: WELCOME TO THE FIRE SERVICE**

As you learn about the fire service, you will discover that it has changed dramatically since the days of the horse drawn steamer and bucket brigades. A modern fire department is at the forefront of technology. The modern fire department develops and uses the most up to date and state of the art equipment and methods available. It therefore demands much from those who are members of the department. The fire service also offers a life of rewarding public safety service to the community and opportunities for advancement.

The citizens of Montgomery County expect and deserve the best possible service from the fire department. The county expects members of its fire department to be neat, courteous, honest, and of good conduct. You are expected to conduct yourself according to these guidelines as long as you remain a member of the department. The actions of one member often reflect upon the entire department. Immediately upon starting your membership with the department you will notice the fellowship that is traditional in the fire service. The pride and partnership of members doing a great job under dangerous conditions will be sensed right away. You can share and become a part of this fellowship in a relatively short time provided that you demonstrate a willingness to cooperate and to learn. With the right attitude you will find that other members will accept you willingly and they will help you as much as possible and will make you feel that you “belong”. If, on the other hand, you have a “know - it-all” or “why not do it a different way” attitude, you will find it difficult to influence or win fire service friends. The wise probationary firefighter says little, but asks and learns much. The fire station boaster says much, but asks and learns little, and this leads to a distinctly lonely existence. Don't be afraid to ask questions... your desire to learn will show others your desire to be a part of the team .

Firefighting companies are considered teams whose effectiveness depends on a high degree of teamwork and cooperation on the part of each member. As a member of this team, you can be most useful by quickly and competently performing the duties assigned. Your job as a member of this department is to constantly provide the maximum protection possible for the lives and property of the people of Montgomery County. Firefighters must perform various duties both at emergency incidents and at the fire station. Some tasks can be readily performed by the new firefighter, while others must be done by more experienced personnel. You should not become discouraged at the prospect of performing the many small and seemingly unimportant jobs that fall to the rookie. You should perform your assigned tasks willingly and well, keeping in mind the fact that you are constantly preparing yourself for the more responsible duties. These will be assigned to you as you demonstrate your capability to perform them. The new firefighter must also quickly become familiar with the location of fire fighting equipment and appliances carried on the various fire apparatus to which they are assigned. Although the ability to use this equipment may need further developing, valuable time will be saved at emergencies if it is known where needed equipment is located on the apparatus.

You will be required to demonstrate your knowledge of equipment and its location. Firefighters obviously cannot wait until fires or other emergencies occur to secure this necessary practical knowledge or the experience that they so vitally need. You can and will learn a lot at actual emergencies, but your success as a firefighter also depends upon how quickly and how well you assimilate the experiences of other firefighters through study and training. The people of Montgomery County have confidence in their fire department. They are rightfully proud of it, because it provides efficient public safety services for its citizens, their homes, and their business establishments. This efficiency is the result of constant training and study by all department members in such diverse areas as fire prevention and protection, fire fighting procedures, rescue, emergency medicine, and the associated services that is necessary to successfully protect people and property and to maintain competent department operation.

As a firefighter, your honesty and trustworthiness must be beyond question because you will frequently enter homes and businesses under emergency conditions, with or without knowledge of the owner. It is imperative that people of this city have complete faith in the integrity of fire department personnel. It is the duty of every member of the fire department to take special precautions with valuables. You are expected to devote yourself to the task of becoming a good firefighter. The knowledge and training you must secure in order to pass each training phase is freely supplied to you, but you must make yourself available to it and make additional efforts as necessary to be sure that you will succeed in your attempts to reach that expected level of expertise. This information and training, while extensive, is not at all difficult to secure, provided that you make a conscientious and diligent effort to obtain it.

The forms of assistance you may take will vary widely. For example, you will be assisted by:

1. Personal Instruction and training while on duty, by officers and members of the fire dept.
2. Use of fire fighting and emergency equipment.
3. Opportunities to learn from actual fire fighting experiences and from observing the work of your fellow firefighters in action.
4. Opportunities for private study and training

You should be aware of the fact that although you will be given extensive instruction and adequate preparation time, your own desire and initiative to improve your knowledge and ability as a member of this department is your greatest strength and asset. If you are enterprising, proud of your department, and diligent in your efforts to master the knowledge that is available, you will become a credit to the department.

### 1.3 FIRE DEPARTMENT INFORMATION

One man had a vision, to start a fire department in a small town in southeast Texas whose only fire protection was from a town 15 minutes away. Paul Turaska (born 3-12-1914) moved to Splendora from Amarillo and decided he would do something himself. In 1963 he talked to the County Commissioner, Doug Alley, and was given a 1953 International truck which the county had used as a dump truck. He then found an old 1000-gallon round tank, which he bought for one dollar of his own money. Mr. Turaska's wife held a barbecue to raise money and a pump was bought for the truck. Some friends donated pipes and valves and along with the \$1.00 tank Mr. Turaska welded together a red fire truck, this truck had no license or tags, but using a red line the truck would shoot water for 100 feet. Splendora Volunteer Fire Department had begun.

The Splendora V.F.D. consisted of 7 original members: Paul Turaska (who was the Fire Chief), Vernon Coleman, Richard Daw, Dick Johnson, Doug Simon, W.T. Turner (who was also the Splendora Fire Marshall), and Bob Tullos. Each member paid a \$ 5.00 membership fee plus \$1.00 monthly dues. The first fire station was at Paul Turaska's Shell gas station at the corner of 2090 E. and Old Highway 59 where the truck was parked outside the gas station. A small metal building was built beside the gas station to house the fire truck and this became the first Splendora Fire Station. There was no 911 system, so a few of the members had fire phones in their homes. All of the members had CB radios, so when a call came into a home, that member would call the other members and they would use the CB radios to communicate while en route. There was no funding from the County or from the City at that time, so the firemen had no gear or operating money. Money for gas, Ethel gas, came from the Fire Chief for years. No water towers or fire hydrants were in town at that time, so all the water for the fire truck had to be drafted from ponds or nearby rivers, however most of the water came from Hayden's pond on 2090.

Mrs. Turaska along with 4 or 5 other ladies formed the Ladies Auxiliary, and holding barbecues and rummage sales to keep the Fire Department operational and the membership of the Fire Department grew along with the equipment. Soon everyone had fire boots, coats and helmets. Another truck was bought, a 1946 Ford and a 750- gallon tank was mounted. The Ladies Auxiliary decided to have dances at the fire station with live bands every Saturday night for the teenagers in the area. Admission was \$1.00 per person and soft drinks were sold. In 1973 the Fire Department moved the metal building behind city hall on 2090 E, added an office, and also put a down payment on a 1969 2-1/2 ton white Dodge truck. Total cost of this truck was \$3500.00. Bo Coleman from the sawmill donated sheet metal and members Ben McKee, Jr. McKee, Richard Daw and Buster Clark started building a 2000- gallon tank for this truck. These members worked every night for two years to complete the tank. Former members have stated this truck was so heavy, that the front end would rear up when someone started out.

Paul Turaska said during his time with the Fire Department, not one life was lost due to fire. One man had a vision, and out of that vision came today's Fire Department with a new station an engine, a tanker, a booster truck, a rescue truck, a water rescue boat and over 40 members And Thanks to Paul Turaska, Hopefully many more lives and property will be saved.

\* Since the writing of this history; the SVFD has continued to grow tremendously. The SVFD currently runs out of two stations (Station 161 & Station 162) with: two (2) Engines, one (1) Tanker, two (2) Boosters, one (1) Rescue, two (2) Utility Vehicles, and one (1) Water Craft. All members have been issued VHF level communications devices to be notified of emergencies and NFPA approved fire gear. Scott Brand Air Packs are available for every seat on Engines and Tanker. Thanks again to Former Fire Chief Paul Turaska for starting this department and allowing it to be the department that it has become today.

**POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**  
**EFFECTIVE DATE: OCTOBER 1, 2006**

**2-1 FIRE DEPARTMENT CHAIN-OF-COMMAND**

The Chain of Command is used as the basis for the incident command structure and must be followed strictly. This incident command system is used in all normal operations. Any exceptions to this system should be caused by unusual circumstances and will be dealt with at an appropriate time. The Fire Chief will be employed by the MCESD #11 and will be responsible for appointment of the entire chain of command. Election based officers may constitute internally, however it is at the Chief's discretion that they will be allowed to operate as such rank.

The Splendor Volunteer Fire Department's Chain of Command is as follows:

Fire Chief	(#16)
Assistant Fire Chief	(#1601)
District Chief	(#1602)
Captains	(#166?)
Lieutenants	(#167?)
Engine Operator/ Driver	
Most Experienced Firefighter	

Note: The generic number 1680 is a generic number issued for all personnel that are not in the ranks of Lieutenant or above. This number is not to be used unless it used in emergency reporting instances only. No personnel under the rank of Captain will be allowed to use POV radios on Fire tone calls using the number of 1680. This includes arriving on scene, and establishing command. Members with radios that make the scene prior to fire department apparatus or a Captain or above may radio to other personnel enroute to the scene with a size up, but will not communicate with Fire Comm.

All members are expected to follow the chain of command. Any deviations from the chain of command will require a detailed and reasonable explanation at a later time. All firefighters and officers should recognize each other's rank, not by individual personal names.

**POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**  
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**2-2 DEFINITIONS**

This booklet contains the Policies and Procedures manual as well as the Operations Manual and Operating Guidelines. Because of the differences between them, the following definitions are presented to eliminate confusion. The top left corner of each section will display if the section is a policy or a guideline.

**Policy:** a written directive, which should not be deviated from.

**Operations Manual:** The detailed operations manual is intended to provide direction to operations personnel. The guidelines *take into account that there are occasions when the situation is not in black and white and that decisions will need to be made based on the knowledge and experience of the personnel involved.* Personnel are expected to use these guidelines as a minimum standard for action and decision- making. Personnel will be held accountable for deviations from established operating guidelines, and will be required to explain their deviation. All members are encouraged to become involved in the development, implementation, and revision of the department operations manual and Standard Operating Guidelines (SOG's).

**Miscellaneous Directives:** Miscellaneous Directives will be specific in nature and will be used to address a specific situation or circumstance. Directives will be developed by the Fire Chief, and can be derived from the input of any member of the fire department. Full compliance with distributed directives is required and expected. When a directive is issued, it will be posted at the fire station for at least 10 days, and will also be kept in the department policy manual located in the fire station. This policy manual is to remain in the fire station at all times.

**POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**  
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**2-3 MEMBERSHIP REQUIREMENTS**

***A. Classifications***

- 1. Active Member (Firefighter)** - Attends 50% of training drills and 20% emergency calls. All active firefighters are considered to be active members.
- 2. Reserve Member** - Attends less than 15% of training drills and emergency calls.
- 3. Associate Employee-** these are personnel that do not meet the residence requirements to be a member of the SVFD; however, they have met training requirements. These personnel will work a minimum of 24hrs/month on shift work for free to remain active.
- 4. Trainee** - New members who have not passed their skills check-off sheets. These are Probationary firefighters.
- 5. Lifetime Member** – Any member who has dedicated an accumulated 5 years or more active duty with the Splendora Fire Department.

***B. Requirements***

**1. Active Member**

- Minimum of 18 years of age.
- Must reside within the jurisdiction of M C ESD #11, or one of the ESD #11's stations is the closest station to his/her residence.
- Must have successfully completed the firefighter skills check-off sheet
- Must be in acceptable physical condition

**2. Lifetime Member**

- Must have given an accumulated 5 years of active duty to the Splendora Fire Department.

**3. Trainee**

- Must successfully pass a background check and physical as required by the Fire Dept.
- New members must attend several consecutive training sessions to be considered.
- Trainees must check off on all skill requirements before being promoted to firefighter (active member) status. A badge and blue traditional style helmet will be issued at this time. This will take approx. 1 year, but can proceed faster or slower depending on the individual.
- A fire department pager will be issued to the trainee when the trainee has passed a pager assignment check-off sheet. Trainees are encouraged to respond to emergency calls at this point and use the skills they know. Firefighting gear will be issued and kept at the fire station. Trainees must have a working knowledge of their personal protective equipment, SCBA, equipment location and the radio system before being issued a pager and responding to calls.
- Trainees responding to incidents will be required to respond to the station first. DO NOT respond in a personal vehicle unless otherwise specified by an officer at or en-route to the scene.

## **POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

### **EFFECTIVE DATE: OCTOBER 1, 2006**

#### **2-4 TRAINING**

The most important job of the firefighter is consistent and quality training. The Splendora Fire Department is trying to provide the highest level of service to the community as possible. Attendance and participation in training activities helps to accomplish this. A firefighter needs to know exactly what his or her role is before responding to an emergency call. There is absolutely no place on the fire ground or any other emergency scene for someone who is not trained to handle the situation and accomplish his or her job.

##### **1. Scheduled Training**

- Weekly training will be scheduled for Monday nights beginning after the weekly meeting. These will start at approximately 19:30. Scheduled rookie training will begin at 18:30 Tuesday nights and some Saturdays. Others will be scheduled with at least one week of notification.
- EMS Continuing Education (CE) CE is scheduled on the 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday of each month at 7:00 P.M. These training sessions are directed towards EMT's for continuing education in emergency medicine. All EMS personnel should attend CE, and all members are encouraged to attend as well. Learning about EMS can help the firefighter perform more tasks at a medical scene, and will help those who decide to enroll in EMT school. All members are encouraged to become EMT's if they wish to do so.
- Special-training drills may be scheduled at other times during the month for special events such as training at/with another fire department. Notification will be provided at fire station, via email or documented on the board.

##### **2. Unscheduled Training**

- Unscheduled Training Drills may be held for new members, or for active members wishing to participate in additional training. These drills are scheduled when convenient for the members participating in the drill. This is extremely encouraged especially for new members who need to learn "the basics" or more advanced skills that might not be taught during regular training sessions.

##### **3. Training Reports**

- Training reports must be filled out for scheduled or unscheduled training. The training reports will be located in the office of the fire station. Each member will sign his or her name, the type of training, and the hours earned. These reports will then be put in the Training Coordinator's box for entry into the computer.

**POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**  
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**2-5 TRAINING REQUIREMENTS**

Training sessions include classroom and practical drill exercises with an emphasis on safety. The fire department has several joint training exercises throughout the year with other fire Departments. In addition, the department visits Training Field for practice in search and rescue, ventilation, and firefighting tactics. Basic training as first responders for EM S incidents is also available. These classes are taught by EM T 's (Emergency Medical Technicians) and Paramedics. Additional certification courses where firefighters can attain Basic Volunteer with the State of Texas are available through local community colleges (North Harris/Montgomery County). Neighboring fire departments also offers these courses throughout the year. These opportunities are highly recommended, and all new firefighters who have the time should attend these classes. It will help to speed the process towards becoming a firefighter. Members are also required to attend 50% of the scheduled training sessions with the fire department unless excusable absence is hinders this. The department will then make it available for all personnel to make up the missed training. The preference for every emergency response is to have a fully trained crew capable of independent action. Training with the fire department is based on IFSTA training material. The Essentials of Firefighting book by IFSTA is available to use as a study guide. Instruction is provided by the membership and outside sources. Attendance at training is im perative for the firefighter's safety and ability to perform different tasks. As a member of the Splendora Fire Dept. you are **required** to become familiar with:

- The Policies and Procedures / Department Operations Manual
- Incident Guidelines Booklet
- Essentials of Firefighting Book (IFSTA Text)
- Streets in the fire district / nearby mutual aid districts
- Equipment Locations on Fire Apparatus as well as correct use of equipment
- Maintenance of equipment
- Fire Station maintenance – all members should take part –

\*Members who operate motorized fire apparatus will be required to understand all functions of each apparatus before driving to an emergency scene.

**POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**  
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**2-6 UNIFORMS AND PROTECTIVE CLOTHING**

UNIFORMS: Professionalism is important in the fire service, and all personnel must be able to identify themselves as fire department members when on emergency calls, training drills, or any other events representing the fire department. On the same token, whenever wearing any clothing or emblems with the fire department logo, you should conduct yourself in an appropriate manner. The protective clothing and uniforms policy outlines what you must wear on emergency calls. This policy is for your protection and safety and must be followed.

**Splendor Volunteer Fire Department Protective Clothing Policy:**

Each member of the Splendor Volunteer Fire Department required to perform fire, rescue, and EMS activities will be issued a complete set of structural firefighting clothing that meets or exceeds the following National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) standards:

- NFPA 1971 Protective Clothing for Structural Firefighters NFPA 1971 includes protective coat, pants, gloves, boots, helmet, and interface components (hood, and wristlets). Damage or contamination of equipment by chemical or biohazards will be reported immediately to an officer of the fire department, or to the fire chief. This equipment will be placed out of service until such time that the equipment can be repaired, cleaned, or replaced. Personnel will wear full protective clothing when working around existing, or potentially existing thermal, chemical, or mechanical hazards. Full protective clothing with eye protection will be worn when operating power or hydraulic tools or when in the area of anyone operating such equipment. Personnel will wear a minimum of a helmet and a bunker coat or reflective vest when working in or near vehicle traffic. If a rescue is in progress, those involved in the rescue or on hose lines will wear full protective clothing. Personnel will make every effort to don the appropriate level of protective clothing prior to arrival on scene.

**Accountability of Protective Clothing**

All personnel are accountable for the proper use and maintenance of all protective clothing issued to them. In addition to each individual, the Incident Safety Officer, when assigned will monitor the proper use of protective clothing by firefighters during hazardous or potentially hazardous operations. On those incidents where a safety officer is not assigned, the officer in charge will remain accountable for monitoring the use of protective clothing by fire personnel. Any fire personnel who are not adequately protected against the existing or potentially existing hazards will leave the hazard area.

**Protective Clothing Procedures**

The level of protective clothing depends on the type of emergency call and is defined below. Each member of the fire department is required to know the different levels of protective clothing required for each incident. Turnout gear (bunker gear) is issued by the department, while it is expected that each member purchases at minimum one or more of the following: t-shirts, uniform shirts, and jumpsuits. Drivers may dispense with the wearing of gear while driving apparatus, however they shall have all protective clothing

with them at all times. In addition, upon arrival at the scene, and prior to participation in any operations, the driver shall don the appropriate level of protective clothing. Remember... when in doubt, take the extra precautions and wear full protective clothing and SCBA.

### **Protective Clothing -- Medical Emergencies / EMS Calls**

Acceptable clothing for Emergency Medical Calls is as follows:

T-shirt/Polo shirt with Splendora Volunteer Fire Dept. Logo

DGES (***MUST HAVE and MUST INCLUDE EMS CERT***)

Must follow M.C.H.D protocols

**Medical Gloves – Mandatory for anyone who will have patient contact. This includes carrying the stretcher.** Gloves are recommended for other personnel on scene unless you are well away from the patient (directing traffic, etc.) **DO NOT USE LATEX GLOVES IF YOU HAVE A LATEX ALLERGY!!**

**Eye Protection** – Depending on the type of emergency, other protective equipment may be needed such as eye protection or masks.

### **Personal Protective Clothing that is worn on a structure fire will also be worn on all calls dispatched as:**

- Fire Alarms
- Fires with no description
- Hazardous Materials Incidents (HAZMAT)
- Fires of unknown type
- Gas Leaks
- Smoke Investigations in a building
- Vehicle Fires
- Carbon Monoxide Alarms
- Odor Investigations

### **Full protective clothing will also be worn whenever the officer in charge deems it necessary to be worn.**

When in doubt, take the extra precautions and wear full protective clothing and SCBA. Acceptable clothing for these incidents is as follows:

- Full Protective Clothing – Coat, Pants, Helmet, Gloves, Hood, and Footwear
- Self Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA) – Mask and Air-pack

### **Protective Clothing -- Grass/Trash/Brush Fires**

Personal Protective Clothing for grass and brush fires may also be worn on controlled burns, illegal burns, or small trash fires. **For larger trash fires such as a dumpster fire, full protective clothing and SCBA is required.** Acceptable clothing for these incidents is as follows:

- Full Protective Clothing – not recommended in hot weather; mandatory on dumpster fires and large trash fires.
- Grass/wood fire Gear – consisting of jumpsuit brush pants, brush shirt, gloves, and brush helmet.

The recommendation for grass fires:

Combination of both – Example: Bunker Pants, Brush Shirt, and Brush Helmet. Brush pants may not be available, so you may have to use the combination method.

If the grass fire is involving a structure, be dressed for a structure fire. If it is threatening a structure, be prepared to change clothes midstream!

### **Protective Clothing -- Major Accidents / Motor Vehicle Collisions**

A Major Accident is any car accident with known or unknown injuries. Firefighters should wear full protective clothing when on these scenes due to the fire danger, vehicle fluids, rescue procedures, and sharp edges or broken glass from damaged vehicles. The appropriate level of protective clothing is as follows:

Full Bunker Gear – SCBA will also be worn if there is a fire, **or if you are tasked to a hose line.**

Medical Personnel – Bunker gear will be worn during extrication/rescue operations. EMS clothing may be worn during patient care.

### **Protective Clothing -- Dressing Down**

The incident commander will have the responsibility of deciding when and how much gear can be taken off. For example, the air quality may be checked prior to SCBA being removed at a fire. On some fires, you may take off gear during overhaul operations. During rehab, you should take your gear off to cool your body down. Use common sense in the use of protective clothing, and when in doubt, wear full protective gear! Officers and personnel in the role of incident commander will be held responsible for their decisions on when it is ok to gear down.

### **Uniform**

Upon completion of the basic class and chief approval and as budget allows members will be issued the following:

1. Uniform Shirt Long Sleeve and Short Sleeve
2. Badge
3. Name tag
4. Collar brass
5. 2 FD logo T-Shirts
6. 1 FD logo Polo Shirt

### **Rank and uniforms will be worn as follows:**

1. Fire Chief (5 bugles –gold)
2. Asst. fire chief (4 bugles- gold)
3. District chief (3 bugles- gold)
4. Caption (2 bugles – gold)
5. Lieutenant (1 bugle –gold)
6. Firefighter (silver FD)

**Collar Brass:** shall be worn approximately 1” down and parallel to top of collar

**Badge:** Badge shall be worn above the left pocket in the pre sewn seam.

**Name Tag:** Nametag shall be worn above the right pocket parallel to and not overlapping the pocket

**Three classes of uniform will be used in the Splendora Volunteer Fire Dept.**

**Class A**

- A. Uniform Shirt Long Sleeve
- B. Collar brass/badge
- C. Name Tag
- D. Tie (issued during special events to returned immediately after)
- E. Navy blue pants (no jeans, and the member is responsible for purchasing)
- F. Black Shoes/socks or black boots (member is responsible for purchasing)
- G. Black belt (member is responsible for purchasing)

This uniform will be worn by members when addressing the public in a formal capacity (i.e. funerals, etc.).

**Class B**

- A. Uniform Shirt Short Sleeve
- B. Collar brass
- C. Name tag
- D. Navy blue pants (no jeans, members are responsible for purchasing)
- E. Black shoes/socks or black boots that are polished. (Members are responsible for purchasing)
- F. Black belt (members are responsible for purchasing)

Members when addressing the public in a formal capacity will wear this uniform. (Fire prevention activities, inspections etc)

**Class C**

- A. SPLENDORA VOLUNTEER T-shirt/ Polo Shirt (will be specified by officer in charge)
- B. Navy blue pants/shorts, blue jeans are permissible for station where.
- C. Black shoes/socks or Black boots (members are responsible for purchasing)
- D. Black belt (members are responsible for purchasing)

**POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**  
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**2-7 SELF CONTAINED BREATHING APPARATUS (SCBA)**

The dept. will purchase, provide, and maintain a complete S.C.B.A for each on duty fire protection personnel who engage in operations where IDHL atmospheres may be encountered, where the atmosphere is unknown or would be exposed to hazardous atmospheres from fire or other emergencies. The dept. will ensure that all S.C.B.A provided complies with the minimum standards of NFPA identified in NFPA1981, standard on S.C.B.A at the time the unit is placed in service.

**CHECK AND MAINTENANCE:**

- A. All in-service S.C.B.A.'s will be checked weekly at all times and daily as personnel are at the station committing available time including (This will be enforced strongly):
  - a. Air cylinder and harness assembly operation
    - i. Bell functioning properly
    - ii. Any air leaks
  - b. Air cylinder reading
  - c. Visual inspection for any torn or frayed straps
  - d. P.A.S.S. device working properly. Change batteries as needed.
  - e. Facemask shall be checked for proper operation while checking the S.C.B.A
  - f. Air supply shall be pressurized between 2,000 P.S.I and 2,216 P.S.I. the minimum air supply shall be 2000 P.S.I.
  - g. The delegates of officer over SCBA shall supply Officer in charge of SCBA with the monthly inspection form on the 1<sup>st</sup> of every month of all in-service S.C.B.A.s. Batteries in P.A.S.S. are to be changed twice a year.
- B. All departments S.C.B.A. s and mask shall be flow tested once a year.
- C. On duty personal will ensure that an S.C.B.A that is **not** assigned to an apparatus will be inspected once a week. All members will be required to become proficient with the use and maintenance of SCBA. SCBA will be worn at the following types of incidents, in any hazardous atmosphere, and whenever the officer in charge deems it necessary:
  - 1. Structure Fires
  - 2. Fire Alarm Calls
  - 3. Vehicle Fires
  - 4. Hazardous Materials Incidents (HAZMAT)
  - 5. Fires of Unknown Type
  - 6. Fires with no description
  - 7. Gas Leaks
  - 8. Smoke Investigations in a building
  - 9. Carbon Monoxide Alarms
  - 10. Odor Investigations
  - 11. Confined Space Rescues
  - 12. Dumpster Fires

- D. Resist the tendency to prematurely remove breathing apparatus during routine fire situations. It is generally true that carbon monoxide levels increase during overhaul, due to the incomplete combustion of smoldering materials.
- E. When working in breathing apparatus, work in pairs.
- F. Never remove the facemask or regulator to talk when in hazardous atmospheres.

**\*When in doubt wear your SCBA.**

**FIREFIGHTER RESPONSIBILITY:**

- A. The Fire Chief has the overall responsibility for providing a proper respiratory protection system within the Department
- B. The Training division is responsible for insuring that Fire Department minimum training standards are met by all personnel relating to the use of S.C.B.A.'s, and that there is adequate, regular and standardized S.C.B.A. training provided to each Fire Department member.
- C. Officers/ Incident Commanders are responsible for:
  - 1. Insuring that the personnel under their command carry out the proper use, maintenance and training relative to S.C.B.A.
  - 2. Insuring that proper respiratory protection is both provided to and utilized by Fire Department personnel during emergency incidents.
- D. Those trained in the proper maintenance of S.C.B.A. are responsible for insuring that S.C.B.A.s are properly maintained and repaired to the extent of their training. That
- E. S.C.B.A.s that cannot be repaired by on site personnel shall be sent to a reputable repair facility.
- F. Each Fire Department member shall be responsible for his or her facemask once assigned by the Fire Department as part of membership's issued PPE.
- G. All Fire Department members are directly responsible for their personal safety and shall utilize and maintain self-contained breathing apparatus in accordance with this policy.

**CLEANING AND RETURNING TO SERVICE:**

- A. S.C.B.A. and the facemask shall be cleaned after each use, except when impractical under tactical conditions.
- B. The facemask assembly shall be washed with mild soap and water and thoroughly rinsed with clean warm water. They shall be allowed to air dry. The air cylinder shall be properly recharged or replaced as well as cleaned and inspected for damages when returning the S.C.B.A. to service.

**POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**  
**EFFECTIVE DATE: OCTOBER 1, 2006**

**2-8 DRUGS AND ALCOHOL POLICY**

At no time will any Splendor Volunteer Fire Department member be under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs while on duty or responding to a call. A member may never drive or operate any fire department equipment while under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs. Also, members may not be on fire department grounds while under the influence of alcohol or drugs. If a member is found to be using illegal drugs, or is under the influence of alcohol or drugs while on duty, that member will be suspended until an investigation into the incident is completed. While on suspension from the Splendor Volunteer Fire Department, the member must return all equipment to the department and will not be allowed at either fire station unless it is at the discretion of the Fire Chief. If after an internal investigation is complete; and the member is found to be non-compliant with this policy, the member will be immediately terminated from the Splendor Volunteer Fire Department. The Splendor Volunteer Fire Department along with the MCESD #11 will at their discretion provide random drug screens that will be open to the entirety of the membership.

**POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**  
**EFFECTIVE DATE: OCTOBER 1, 2006**

**2-9 PERSONAL VEHICLES**

During a response, all personnel will proceed to the fire station in their personal vehicles to respond with fire apparatus to the scene. For fire calls, officers will be allowed to respond directly to the scene if it is justifiably in the best interest of the departments' response. The fire Chief will also respond directly to the scene at his discretion. On EMS calls, officers and medical first responders will be allowed to respond directly to the scene. These personnel carry radios with them at all times and are able to stay in communication with other members. All other members will still respond to the station and bring the necessary fire dept. vehicles to the incident. Members can go to the scene after the appropriate truck(s) has/have pulled or they have to pass the scene. **Members on scene need to park no less than 100 feet from call and on the same side as all other members.**

**PERSONAL VEHICLE POLICY – STATE LAW AND DEPARTMENT POLICY**

The state transportation code authorizes volunteer firefighters to use their vehicles as “authorized emergency vehicles” when responding on fire calls.

**The policy of the Splendor Volunteer Fire Dept. is supplemented for state law according to the Transportation code.** The Texas Transportation Code can be found here: <http://www.capitol.state.tx.us/statutes/tntoc.html>

**PERSONAL VEHICLES – DEPARTMENT POLICY:**

**Departmental policy supplements the policy of The State of Texas as written in the State Transportation Code (546.003).** It is the policy of the Splendor Volunteer Fire Department that members wishing to use audible or visual warning devices on their personal vehicles must have the following:

- Minimum of 1 Year of current Service with the Splendor Volunteer Fire Dept.
- Must have passed all skills on the firefighter skills check-off sheet
- **Devices must have approval of the fire chief**
- **Firefighters may not use audible or visual warning signals outside of the Splendor Fire District. Use within the district is subject to discretion of the fire chief. Probationary members will not be permitted to use warning lights to enhance their response times.**
- **All members driving their personal vehicles or department apparatus must Comply with the emergency driving policy of the Splendor Volunteer Fire dept, which can be found in the operations section of this booklet.**
- **Members are required to provide fire department with proof of valid automobile insurance listed as an authorized emergency vehicle.**

**POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**  
**EFFECTIVE DATE: OCTOBER 1, 2006**

**2-10 CONDUCT AND STATION RULES**

All personnel are representatives of the Splendora Volunteer Fire Department and shall conduct themselves accordingly, in a professional manner, both on and off duty.

**PERSONNEL SHALL:**

- Answer the telephone in a professional manner, (**FIRE DEPT**).
- Be aware of and sensitive to the presence or the potential unannounced presence of any member of the public when viewing television programs, using the computer, holding conversations in the fire station, and during other activities.
- Keep the building and surrounding area as clean as possible at all times.
- Keep all apparatus as clean as possible at all times. Upon returning to the station, all apparatus and equipment shall be checked, cleaned, and made response ready as necessary and / or as requested by the officer in charge. **CHECK AND FILL ALL FUEL TANKS, (fuel tanks will not be left at the station at ¾ of a tank or less).** During inclement weather the apparatus may be rinsed off.
- Attend to the needs of the public professionally and expediently, and handle a request, or see to it personally that the request is passed to the proper department member
- Solve problems between themselves and another member in a one-to-one discussion. If this is not possible, the persons involved shall meet with their officers to solve the problem by following the chain of command starting with their respective captains.
- Respect the property of others and not indulge or participate in the theft, abuse, hiding or malicious treatment there of. Unauthorized entry into any locked area will be construed as theft, whether items are removed or not.
- No smoking in the fire stations. **Smoking is permitted outside in:** the apparatus bays. Cigarette butts may be disposed of in a bucket outside the bays. The use of tobacco, in any form, shall not be used at the scene of an incident while performing duties. The use of tobacco, of any form, is discouraged but not prohibited, especially in public view (i.e., on or in Fire Dept. apparatus).

**PERSONNEL SHALL NOT:**

- Posses, or allow to be possessed, any form of intoxicating drug or any sexually explicit, or pornographic material in any form on the property of the fire department.
- Unjustly cause, or allow to be caused, damage in any form, to any equipment, apparatus or other property of the ESD
- Loan, or allow to be loaned, any equipment or other apparatus belonging to the Fire Department without permission of the Fire Chief.

**POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**  
**EFFECTIVE DATE: OCTOBER 1, 2006**

**2-11 STATION STAFFING**

Station staffing is accomplished on a voluntary or mandatory basis. Some members prefer to staff the station during bad weather to monitor the situation. This is strictly a voluntary effort. Fire Comm may page out for members to respond to the station for “Weather Watch.” It is up to each individual to decide to either stay at home to monitor the weather, or to monitor from the fire station. Members may staff the station at any time by calling other personnel by phone. DO NOT have fire alarm page the department to staff the station unless requested by the Fire Chief or an Officer. Any officer making this request will have the approval of the Fire Chief or highest Chief Officer that can be contacted at that time.

**POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**  
**EFFECTIVE DATE: OCTOBER 1, 2006**

**2-12 RECORDS AND REPORTS**

Incident Reports for EMS, fire calls, training reports, and any other records / reports are to be made out on the date of their happening. Officer in charge is responsible for report being completed.

**PERSONNEL SHALL:**

File the proper reports for personal injury, vehicle accident or damage, equipment or building damage, training classes attended, or information regarding duty time such as the station log book, apparatus log book, EMS supplies used to restock the appropriate apparatus etc., on the date of the event-taking place.

Notify the Officer in Charge, or Fire Chief immediately of any injury to personnel, vehicle accident or damage thereto, or damage to the property of an individual or the property of the ESD #11.

When removing any blank report from out of the form supply shall check to ensure that it is not the last form available. If it is, that person shall make arrangements immediately for copies to be made or that the reorder of the forms is initiated.

Receive reimbursement for Department expenditures according to these guidelines.

Approved and authorized departmental business only.

Proper receipt is provided to the Fire Chief.

**POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**  
**EFFECTIVE DATE: OCTOBER 1, 2006**

**2-13 Uniform Policy**

Professionalism is important in the fire service, and all personnel must be able to identify themselves as fire department members when on emergency calls, training drills, or any other events representing the fire department. Whenever wearing any clothing or emblems with the fire department logo, you should conduct yourself in an appropriate manner. The protective clothing and uniforms policy in the standard operating guidelines outlines what you must wear on emergency calls. The department will issue proper uniforms to all paid employees. Uniforms must be clean and presentable at all times.

**Three classes of uniform will be used in the Splendora Fire Dept:**

**Class A**

- A. Uniform Shirt
- B. Collar brass/badge
- C. Name Tag
- D. Tie (issued during special events to returned immediately after)
- E. Navy blue pants (no jeans)
- F. Black Shoes/socks or black boots
- G. Black belt

*Uniforms are to be worn by members when addressing the public in a formal capacity (i.e. funerals, etc.).*

**Class B**

- A. Uniform Shirt
- B. Collar brass
- C. Name tag
- D. Navy blue pants (no jeans)
- E. Black shoes/socks or black boots
- F. Black belt

*Members when addressing the public in a formal capacity will wear this uniform. (Fire prevention activities, inspections etc).*

**Class C**

- A. Fire Department T-shirt
- B. Navy blue/black pants/shorts (no jeans)
- C. Black shoes/socks or Black boots
- D. Black belt

*This uniform will be worn by firefighters when reporting for duty and performing activities around the stations.*

Department issued uniforms will not be allowed to be worn while off duty but may be worn to and from work. Damage to department uniforms will be repaired and/or replaced accordingly. Lost uniforms will be replaced at the expense of the member. Uniforms or t-shirts from other departments are not allowed to be worn by on duty personnel. Paid employees are not to wear hats when on duty.

**POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**  
**EFFECTIVE DATE: OCTOBER 1, 2006**

**2-14 Sexual Harassment Policy**

**SEXUAL HARRASSMENT POLICY**

The Splendora Fire Department (SFD) prohibits harassment of any employee by a supervisor, another employee, or vendor. The purpose of this policy is not to regulate a member's personal morality. Rather, it is to ensure that in the work place, no member harasses another. Each Officer of the Department is responsible for creating an atmosphere free of discrimination and harassment, sexual or otherwise. Members are responsible for respecting the rights of their coworkers. The SFD specifically prohibits sexual harassment.

***DEFINITIONS AND GUIDELINES***

While it is not easy to define precisely what is meant by "sexual harassment", it certainly includes unwelcome sexual advances (either verbal or physical), request for sexual favors and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when:

Submission to such conduct is either an explicit or implicit term or condition of membership (e.g. promotion, training, job assignment, etc.); or

Submission to or rejection of the conduct is used as a basis for making membership decisions; or

The conduct has the purpose or effect of interfering with a member's work performance, or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment.

Sexual harassment may include: explicitly sexual propositions, sexual innuendo, flirtations or suggestive comments, sexual oriented "kidding" or teasing," "practical jokes," graphic comments about an individual's body, foul or obscene language or gestures, display in the workplace of sexually suggestive objects and pictures, and physical contact such as patting, pinching, or brushing against another's body.

***COMPLAINT PROCEDURE***

**• MEMBER**

If you experience or witness any job-related harassment, promptly report the incident to your immediate Officer or the Chief of the Department. If the alleged harasser is the member's Officer, the member should feel free to bypass the Officer and take the complaint directly to next Officer in the chain of command or the Chief of the Department.

**• OFFICER**

After notification of a member's complaint, the supervisor will immediately complete a disciplinary action report and contact the Chief of the Department.

**• INVESTIGATION**

After notification of a member's complaint, the Chief of the Department will immediately initiate a confidential investigation by the appointment of a disciplinary action committee to gather all facts about the complaint. To the fullest extent possible, the investigation and the facts it uncovers will be treated confidentially. Members violating the confidentiality

of the investigation will be subject to disciplinary action. After the investigation has been completed, the disciplinary action committee will make a recommendation to the Chief of the Department regarding the resolution of the case. If warranted, prompt disciplinary action will be taken up to and including termination of membership in the Department.

***NON-RETALIATION***

The SFD prohibits retaliation against any member for making a sexual harassment complaint or assisting in a sexual harassment investigation. Any member who violates this policy will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination of membership in the Department.

**OPERATING GUIDELINES**  
**EFFECTIVE DATE: OCTOBER 1, 2006**

**3-0 TERMS AND ABBREVIATIONS**

**3-0 FIRE GROUND TERMS AND ABBREVIATIONS**

Below are a few definitions for some fire ground terms and abbreviations. These are important to know because they will be used in fire ground communications not only in our district, but in mutual aid districts as well:

**All Clear:** An "All Clear" will be transmitted when the primary search and secondary Search of the entire structure has been completed. If a search of the entire structure cannot be completed due to fire conditions, an "All Clear" will not be given and command needs to be made aware that primary and secondary searches are not possible at this time.

**Booster:** A ground vehicle providing hose, water, tools, and personnel for grass and brush fire responses.

**Command Post:** That location at which primary Command functions are executed. The CP location will be broadcast during the size-up if taking command by a sector location.

**Company Officer:** The individual responsible for command of a Company. This designation is not specific to any particular fire department rank (may be a Captain, Driver, Firefighter, or Chief Officer). The Company Officer will be responsible for his/her decisions and actions while supervising his/her crew and must be able to justify all actions.

**Company:** A ground vehicle providing specified equipment and personnel capabilities (Engine Company, Truck Company, booster Company, Rescue Company, etc.). A company consists of two or more firefighters.

**Division (1, 2, and 3):** A Division is a grouping of resources operating in a geographic area within a structure, or on a specific floor level of a building. For example, Incident Command may designate an engine company operating on the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor of a building division 3.

**Engine Company:** A ground vehicle providing specified levels of pumping, water, hose Capacity, and personnel.

**Incident Commander:** The individual responsible for the management of all incident Operations.

**Interior:** The Interior Company is the Engine Company operating as the interior fire crew. This company is usually engaged in firefighting operations on the inside of the structure.

**PAR:** Personnel Accountability Report – A PAR is an accountability report of all companies on the scene. This is a **visual** confirmation that each crewmember in a

company is safe. The Company Officer is responsible for maintaining visual, physical, or verbal contact with his crew, and will report a PAR at the appropriate times. Incident Command will request a PAR if:

- There is a report of a missing or trapped firefighter
- There is a change from an offensive fire attack to a defensive fire attack
- There is any sudden event (flashover, back draft, collapse, etc.)
- The fire is reported under control
- An emergency button has been activated, or emergency traffic received
- At 20 minutes elapsed time not under-control PAR has been transmitted

**PPN:** Progress, Position, and Needs – A PPN Report is a quick and easy way to ask companies what their situation is on the fire ground. Each company is able to report their progress toward stopping the fire, their position on the fire ground, and what they need to accomplish their tasks. This report helps Command decide how to best utilize other companies. Ex. – *“Ruby St. Command to Interior, what is your PPN?”* The interior company might respond, *“We have a fire in the living room that we are trying to knock down at this time, we need ventilation, a crew to pull ceiling, and a water supply established.”* The Incident Commander could then assign crews to complete these tasks.

**Quint:** A Quint is a fire apparatus with an aerial ladder, pump, hose, water tank, and ground ladders, along with other special equipment capability and personnel.

**Rescue Company:** A ground vehicle providing specified rescue equipment, capability, and personnel.

**Safety Officer:** Member of the Command Staff responsible for monitoring and assessing safety hazards, unsafe conditions, and developing measures for ensuring personnel safety.

**Sector:** A grouping of resources with either a geographic or functional assignment. Buildings are divided into four sectors corresponding with the outside walls of the building. A residence facing the street would start with Sector A in front, Sector B to the left, Sector C in the rear, and Sector D to the right. (See Structure Fire SOG for info).

**Staging:** The initial arriving engine company goes directly to the scene and takes a standard position, assumes or passes command, and begins operations. The next arriving unit stages at the nearest hydrant for water supply if available and needed. Remaining units stage about one block from the scene until ordered into action (or released) by the Incident Commander. For large, complex, or lengthy operations, additional resources are staged together in a specific location under a Staging Officer. This geographic location is called a “Staging Area”.

**Tanker:** A water tanker or tender is a ground vehicle providing a large storage tank for water (1000 gallons or more). This is useful in areas without hydrants.

**Truck Company:** A ground vehicle providing an aerial ladder or other aerial device and Specified ground ladders and equipment capability and personnel.

**7-1:** A “7-1” will be transmitted when the forward progress of the fire has been stopped and no more personnel are needed.

**OPERATING GUIDELINES**  
**EFFECTIVE DATE: OCTOBER 1, 2006**

**3-1 COMMAND PROCEDURES**

**Command Procedures are designed to:**

Fix the responsibility for Command on a specific individual through a standard identification system, depending on the arrival sequence of members, companies, and chief officers.

Ensure that a strong, direct, and visible Command will be established from the onset of the incident.

Establish an effective incident organization defining the activities and responsibilities assigned to the Incident Commander and to other individuals operating within the Incident Management System.

Provide a system to process information to support incident management, planning, and decision-making.

Provide a system for orderly transfer of Command to subsequent arriving officers.

**Responsibilities of Command:**

The Incident Commander is responsible for the completion of the tactical priorities. The tactical priorities are:

Rescue – Remove endangered occupants and treat the injured.

Incident Control – Stabilize the incident and provide for life safety.

Property Conservation – Conserve property and prevent loss. In addition to the tactical priorities, Command is also responsible for the following:

To provide for the safety, accountability, and welfare of personnel. This is ongoing throughout the incident.

“Benchm arks” are achievem ent signals that tell C om m and when one tactical priority is completed and the operation can go on to the next priority. The following benchmarks will be used:

“A ll C lear” – The primary search and secondary search has been completed and the structure cleared of savable occupants. The message “N o A ll C lear or Search not Possible” is to be used w hen no search w ill be perform ed .

“U nder C ontro l” – The forward progress of the incident has been controlled or stopped.

“Loss S topped” – Property conservation is complete. No further damage to the structure or environment is anticipated

**Functions of Command –**

Assume and announce Command and establish an effective operating position (Command Post).

Rapidly evaluate the situation (size up).

Initiate, maintain, and control the communications process.

Identify the overall strategy, develop an incident action plan, and assign companies and personnel consistent with plans and Operating Guidelines.

Develop an effective Incident Management System.

Provide tactical objectives.

Review, evaluate, and revise (as needed) the incident action plan.  
Provide for the continuity, transfer, and termination of Command.

The Incident Commander is responsible for all of the above functions. As Command is transferred, so is the responsibility for these functions. The first five (5) functions must be addressed immediately from the initial assumption of Command (first- in company officer until transferred to higher-ranking officer).

## **Establishing Command**

The first officer to arrive at the scene of a multiple fire unit response shall assume or pass Command of the incident as indicated by the emergency conditions found. If Command is assumed, the initial Incident Commander (I.C.) shall remain in Command until Command is transferred or the incident is stabilized and terminated. The first arriving fire department officer will give an initial radio report. The radio report will include:

Unit designation and confirmation of arriving on the scene.

A brief description of the incident situation (i.e. building size, occupancy, HAZMAT release, multi-vehicle accident, etc.)

Obvious conditions (working fire, HAZMAT spill, multiple patients, etc.)

Declaration of strategy (this applies to structure fires).

Any obvious safety concerns.

Assumption, identification, and location of Command, or passage of Command to next arriving unit. (NOTE: The first arriving officer may make initial task assignments to subsequently arriving units before passing command).

Request or release resources as required.

**EXAMPLES: These are not black and white. Each incident will vary depending on when your next arriving company will arrive and your manpower status.**

• **For an offensive structure fire:** *“Engine 161 is on the scene of a large two-story school with a working fire on the second floor. Engine 161 is laying a supply line. This is an offensive fire attack. Engine 161 passes command (or “Engine 161 will be High School Command”). Fire ground on Tac 4”*

• **For a defensive structure fire:** *“Engine 161 is on the scene of a small one-story residence fully involved with exposures to the east. This is a defensive fire. Engine 161 will be Morgan Dr. Command, fire ground on Tac 4”*

• **For an EMS Incident:** *“Rescue 161 is on the scene of a multi-vehicle accident. There appears to be one person trapped in an overturned vehicle. . Rescue 161 will be FM 2090 Command. Fire ground on Tac 4.”*

• **For a single company incident:** *“Engine 161 is on the scene of a dumpster fire with no exposures. Engine 161 is Fostoria Rd command fire ground on tack 3.*

When a chief officer arrives at the scene at the same time as the initial arriving company, the Chief Officer should assume Command of the incident.

**Radio Designation:** The radio designation “**Command**” will be used along with the geographical location of the incident. (e.g. “Hwy 59 Command,” “Long Lake Command”). This designation of Command will remain with the officer currently in Command of the incident throughout the event.

### **Command Options:**

The responsibility of the first arriving officer to assume Command of the incident presents several options, depending on the situation. If a Chief Officer, member, or unit without tactical capabilities (e.g. personal vehicle, no equipment, etc.) initiates Command, the establishment of a Command Post should be a top priority. At most incidents, the initial I.C. will be a Company Officer. The following Command options define the Company Officer’s direct involvement in tactical activities and the modes of Command that may be utilized:

### **Nothing Showing Mode**

These situations generally require investigation by the initially arriving company while other units remain in a staged mode. The officer should go with the company to investigate while utilizing a portable radio to Command the incident. When arriving on scene, and after giving a size-up, the company officer would advise “*Engine 161 will be investigate, all other units stage outside... Engine 161 will be Ward Rd Command.*” *fire ground on tack 4*

### **Fast Attack Mode**

Situations that require immediate action to stabilize the incident, and that require the Company Officer’s assistance and direct involvement in the attack. In these situations the Company Officer goes with the crew to provide the appropriate level of supervision.

Examples of these situations include:

- Offensive fire attacks (especially in marginal situations, e.g. low manpower)
- Critical life safety situations (rescue), which must be achieved in a compressed time frame.
- Any incident where the safety and welfare of firefighters is a major concern.
- Obvious working incidents that require further investigation by the Company Officer.

Where fast intervention is critical, the Company Officer shall advise the next arriving unit of the situation and passage of command. The Fast Attack mode should last for more than a few minutes and will end with one of the following:

- The situation is stabilized
- The situation is not stabilized and the Company Officer must withdraw to the exterior and establish a Command Post (if not already established).

At some point the Company Officer must decide whether or not to withdraw the crew, based on the crew’s capabilities and experience, safety issues, and the ability to communicate with the crew. No crew will remain in a hazardous area without radio communication capabilities.

Command is transferred to another higher-ranking officer. When a Chief Officer is assuming Command, the Chief Officer may opt to return the Company Officer to his crew, or assign him to a subordinate position.

### **Command Mode**

Certain incidents, by virtue of their size, complexity, or potential for rapid expansion, require immediate strong, direct, overall Command. In such cases, the Company Officer will initially assume an exterior, safe, and effective Command position and maintain that position until relieved by a higher-ranking officer. A Tactical Worksheet will be initiated and utilized to assist in managing this type of incident. If the Company Officer selects the Command Mode, the following options are available regarding the assignment of the remaining crewmembers:

The officer may “move up” within the company and place the company into action with two or more members. One of the crewmembers will serve as the acting Company Officer and will be provided with a portable radio. The collective and individual capabilities and experience of the crew will regulate this action.

The officer may assign the crew members to work under the supervision of another Company Officer. In such cases, the Officer assuming Command must communicate with the other Officer of the other company and indicate the assignment of those personnel.

The officer may elect to assign the crew members to perform staff functions to assist Command. A Company Officer assuming Command has a choice of modes of operation and degree of personal involvement in the tactical activities, but, once Command is assumed, continues to be fully responsible for the Command functions. The initiative and judgment of the Officer are of great importance. The modes identified are guidelines to assist the Officer in planning appropriate actions. The actions initiated should conform to one of the above-described modes of operation.

### **Passing Command**

As previously indicated, in certain situations it may be advantageous for a first arriving Company Officer to pass Command to the next arriving company. This is indicated when the initial commitment of the first arriving company requires a full crew and significant personal involvement by the Company Officer (Fast Attack Mode, immediate rescue situation, etc.)

Passing Command does not relieve the first arriving Company Officer from giving a complete initial radio report, or from implementing those portions of the Incident Management System required to effectively manage the initial stages of the incident (announce overall strategy, assign initial tasks, etc.)

### **Transfer of Command**

Command is transferred to improve the quality of the Command organization. The following procedure outlines the transfer of Command process.

1. The first department officer arriving on the scene will automatically assume Command unless his level of personal involvement in tactical operations necessitates passing command.
2. The first department officer arriving on the scene following a passing of Command will assume Command of the incident.
3. The first arriving Chief Officer may assume Command of the incident following transfer of Command procedures.
4. The second arriving Chief Officer should report to the Command Post for assignment.

5. Later arriving, high-ranking Chief Officers may choose to assume Command, or assume advisor positions.

The Officer assuming Command will communicate with the person being relieved by radio or face-to-face. Face-to-face is the preferred method to transfer command. The person being relieved will brief the officer assuming Command indicating at least the following:

- Incident Conditions (fire location and extend, HAZMAT spill or release, number of patients, etc.)

- Incident Action Plan

- Progress toward completion of the tactical objectives

- Safety Considerations

- Deployment and assignment of operating companies and personnel.

- Appraisal of need for additional resources.

The person being relieved of Command should review the Tactical Worksheet with the Officer assuming Command. This sheet provides the most effective framework for Command transfer as it outlines the location and status of personnel and resources in a standard form that should be well known to all members.

The person being relieved of Command will be assigned to gain the best advantage by the Officer assuming Command. Should a situation occur where a later arriving officer cannot locate or communicate with Command (after several radio attempts), they will assume and announce their assumption of Command and initiate whatever actions are necessary to confirm the safety of the missing crew.

## **Incident Command – General Incident Guidelines**

*Because this SOG is not a teaching document for tactics of Incident Command, the following is a general guideline for Incident Command. Used with the above information, all members will have a good working knowledge of the Incident Command System and Command Procedures.*

All incidents must have a recognized and established incident command. Even a small incident should establish IC. Larger incidents require planning and organization to monitor all activities. The incident command structure of a small residential structure fire may look like the chart on the following page. The first-in company officer assumes command, and by assigning tasks to achieve the tactical priorities

He/She develops the ensuing organization. By using a command worksheet, the officer can keep a record of assignments, track accountability, utilities, events etc.

All Splendor apparatus contain command worksheets. All members and especially officers should be familiar with their use. Practice using the command sheets on smaller scenes, and they'll be more familiar on the occasional big one.

**I.C. PLACEMENT:** Ideally the IC should set-up with views of multiple sides. The officer's seat of an apparatus works well for smaller incidents, providing mobile radio and phones, adequate space for tracking the incident and visibility. Larger incidents with a unified command structure may require a larger space. Once command is established communicate where command is located (Sector A, B, C, or D). As vests are available – use them to provide visibility. Once IC is established, only the sector/group officers should need to communicate with the IC. Keep traffic in and around the command post to a minimum.

## **OPERATING GUIDELINES**

### **EFFECTIVE DATE: OCTOBER 1, 2006**

#### **3-2 ACCOUNTABILITY**

##### **Purpose:**

To establish a system to account for firefighters and other emergency workers operating within the hazard zone of an incident at any given time. Use of the system will provide enhanced safety for individual emergency workers and will provide the command staff a structured means to track and account for all personnel at any moment during the course of the incident.

##### **General Principles:**

Personnel accountability requires a personal commitment to safety by all members of the Department.

Personnel accountability at the emergency scene is an essential element of the Incident Management System.

##### 1) Command Responsibilities:

- A. Command will always maintain an accurate tracking and awareness of where resources are committed at an incident.
- B. Command will always be responsible for including accountability as a major element in strategy and attack planning.
- C. Command must consider and react to any barriers to effective accountability.

##### 2. Company Responsibilities

- A. All companies will be accountable to Command or to a sector. There will be no free-lance operations.
- B. Companies arriving on the scene of an emergency shall remain intact unless individual company members are given specific orders by Command to attach themselves to other companies or sectors.
- C. A minimum company size will be considered to be three (3) personnel.
- D. Assign a task group of two (2) personnel minimally.
- E. An officer or other designated supervisor will supervise each company member entering a hazard zone.
- F. Each company / group entering a hazard zone will have an operating portable radio set on the assigned tactical channel. If the radio fails when in the hazard zone, the company will exit unless there is another working radio with the company, or available in that work area with another company.

##### **Accountability tag**

To enhance accountability and to improve tracking of emergency personnel in a hazard zone, the "tag's" system will be used. The accountability system involves a plastic card with the members' names and dept # affixed that is turned into the Accountability Officer. The Accountability Officer may be an Apparatus Operator, a Sector Officer, a designated accountability Officer, or the Incident Commander, depending on the nature, type, size, and complexity of the incident.

Upon boarding the apparatus for any reason (emergency response, riding around, etc.), members will be responsible for immediately placing their tag on the truck board.

It is the responsibility of the unit officer or the occupant of the right seat to assure that the board is correct.

Each firefighter will be issued two (2) individual accountability tags

Officers/drivers will be responsible for ensuring that the board always reflects only personnel on trucks and that all members have turn in tags.

### **Tactical Benchmarks**

- A. Several accountability benchmarks are included in tactical operations. The Personal Accountability Report (or "PAR") involves a roll call of personnel assigned to an incident.
1. For the company officer, a "PAR" is a confirmation that all company members are visually accounted for. EXAMPLE: "Engine 122 to Command, I have a PAR." (All company members are accounted for.)
  2. Personnel accountability should be conducted on a face-to-face basis within the company or within the sector whenever possible.
  3. When a "PAR" cannot be given, the term "Negative PAR" shall be used.
- B. Personal accountability report will be required for the following situations:
1. When a report of a missing or trapped firefighter is received (Command initiates a "PAR" for all companies on the scene.)

An absent member of any company will **automatically be assumed lost or trapped in the hazard zone** until otherwise determined to be safe. Company officers will **immediately** report any absent member to the Sector Officer or to Command.

For any reports of missing firefighters, Command **must** request the next greater assignment of alarm (i.e. first alarm goes to second alarm). Command will initiate an immediate roll call (PAR) of all companies assigned to duty in the hazard zone.

Command will send a Rapid Intervention Crew (RIC) to the last reported working area of the lost firefighter to begin a search.

Command will adjust on-scene strategies to a priority search and rescue effort.
  2. When the mode of attack changes from offensive to defensive.
  3. Any time a sudden hazardous event occurs during the incident (flashover, backdraft, collapse, etc.)
  4. By any company(s) reporting an "All Clear", Company officers of companies responsible for search and rescue will ensure they have a "PAR" for their company(s) at the time they report an "All Clear".
  5. At thirty (30) minutes elapsed time (If no "Under Control" has been received).
  6. When the "Under Control" report is received.
  7. A "PAR" will be initiated by Command at the suspension of Passport use.
  8. A roll call "PAR" will be initiated at the discretion of the Incident Commander

### **Summary of Accountability Responsibilities**

Accountability will work only with a strong personal commitment by **all members** to the safety system. This commitment will involve the following responsibilities.

- A. Firefighter Responsibilities – Responsible for staying with his/her company at all times and ensuring that his/her nametag is on the board at all times.
- B. Apparatus Operator Responsibilities – The Apparatus Operator of the first arriving engine to each geographic side (sector) of the incident becomes the initial accountability officer. The Apparatus Operator will receive boards from companies and apparatus assigned to his side of the incident (sector) and will manage accountability until relieved by a sector officer, accountability officer, or Command.
- C. Company Officer Responsibilities – Responsible for keeping his company intact at all times and for insuring that accountability is current and accurate.
- D. Command Responsibilities – Responsible for tracking the location of all companies. Must advise later assigned companies as to who is serving as accountability (i.e. Command, Sector, Accountability Officer, etc.). The Safety Officer when assigned does not function as an accountability officer.

**OPERATING GUIDELINES**  
**EFFECTIVE DATE: OCTOBER 1, 2006**

**3-3 EMERGENCY DRIVING**

**Purpose:**

To provide all members of the Splendora Volunteer Fire Department with general driving and safety guidelines and procedures for operating emergency vehicles.

To reduce injuries and property damage by establishing procedures for avoiding vehicle accidents.

To incorporate the general driving rules and regulations of the State of Texas Department of Public Safety. This Operating Guideline applies to members driving fire apparatus and their personal vehicles. Volunteer Firefighter's personal vehicles are considered to be emergency vehicles under Texas State Law and are considered a part of this operating guideline.

**Definitions:**

Apparatus Operator / Engineer: A firefighter who meets the requirements of this policy, and is qualified to fully operate an emergency vehicle. This includes driving and pumping the apparatus

Emergency Driving: Priority 1 Driving – Responding to a high priority emergency using lights and sirens. The fire department responds Priority 1 to all reported building fires, hazardous conditions, motor vehicle accidents, and medical emergencies. Driver may run Priority 1 based on info reduction of code to Priority 3 (Normal driving, no lights or siren), is at the discretion of the Officer in Charge based on information gained en-route or upon arrival on the scene. Drivers will drive no more than 10 MPH over the posted speed limit while responding Priority 1. Drivers will also adjust their speed to traffic and weather conditions. If driving in an on-coming lane, speed will not exceed 20 MPH.

Normal Driving: Priority 3 Driving – Proceeding through traffic without the use of lights or sirens. Apparatus may respond Priority 3 to controlled or illegal burns if they are not posing any threat to life or property. If this information cannot be obtained, apparatus will respond Priority 1.

**Driving Policies for All Members**

Drivers and Apparatus Operators will at all time:

Apply the principles of defensive driving at all times

O bey traffic law s... even if responding Priority 1

Pass vehicles on the left

Adjust driving habits to weather, road, or traffic conditions

Drive with **Due Regard**.

When driving emergency traffic (Priority 1) you **DO NOT** have the right of way, you are only requesting it.

**Stop and look at all red lights and stop signs**, any unprotected railroad crossing, any school bus that is stopped for loading or unloading, any intersection while driving in the on-coming lane, when directed to stop by the police department, and any situation where the driver cannot see all lanes of traffic.

Report any vehicle problems immediately to an officer, or the fire chiefs.

Use a ground guide (backer) while backing fire apparatus when personnel allow for this.

Check behind and around apparatus before backing to assure that the vehicle can be backed in a safe manner.

Perform a walk around of the apparatus to check for loose equipment, open doors, and other potential problems prior to moving any apparatus.

Always yield the right-of-way to pedestrians.

Account for each person on the apparatus and verbally or visually communicate with each person to assure their readiness prior to moving the apparatus.

Always wear a seatbelt and assure that others in the vehicle are wearing their seat belts.

Remember that you don't always have the right-of-way when running Priority 1; you are simply requesting permission from other drivers to pass, proceed through intersections, etc.

**Drivers and Apparatus Operators will at no time:**

Exceed the posted speed limit by 10 MPH, or exceed 80 MPH (maximum speed during Priority 1 response)

Exceed 20 MPH when driving in an on-coming lane

Under any circumstances exceed posted schoolzone speed limits... even if driving Priority 1.

Pass a stopped school bus loading or unloading, or that has its warning lights displayed, until signaled by the bus driver.

Operate or knowingly permit a vehicle to be operated in an unsafe manner

Operate or knowingly permit a vehicle to be operated while under the influence of illegal drugs or alcohol.

Pass other emergency vehicles without communicating with the lead vehicle

Move apparatus until all personnel on the vehicle are seated in their riding positions and secured with seat belts, except while loading supply hose.

**OPERATING GUIDELINES**  
**EFFECTIVE DATE: OCTOBER 1, 2006**

**3-4 COMMUNICATIONS**

Communications are vital to Fire Department Operations. The guidelines used by the Splendora Volunteer Fire Department are in conjunction to the radio procedures provided by the Montgomery County Fire Chiefs Association. The Fire Chief can provide copies of the MCFCA procedures. Members are encouraged to review. The Accountability and Command Procedures Sections of this SOG have strong ties to the Communications SOG and each should be understood fully. All personnel should have knowledge of proper radio communications procedures and operation of radio equipment. Everyone should adhere to the following:

**Use plain English in all radio communications.** CB (Citizens Band) Communications have no place in fire department communications. Be professional and have a professional attitude while using the radios. Communications that include "Comeback", or "10-4 Good buddy," are not acceptable.

**DO NOT Use 10-Codes during Transmissions.** Again we use plain English for communications purposes. Instead of 10-4, use the word "received, or affirmative." Be professional!

**DO NOT use any foul language or insulting commentary on the radio system.** Be especially watchful of your microphone or radio being accidentally "keyed up." Situations have been known to arise where "private" transmissions were broadcast to the world because someone was sitting on a microphone, or a bunker coat was lying on the transmit button.

**Only Fire Department Officers / First responders take home portable radios unless authorized by the Fire Chief. A request must be made through the Fire Chief and Communications officer to be assigned a radio.**

Our Pagers and VHF High-Band (Radios in each apparatus operate on a VHF our dispatch frequency is 155.400 MHz.

**Channel 1(COUNTY 1)** is reserved for Fire Dispatch. All communications between the Splendora Volunteer Fire Department and Fire-Comm dispatchers will take place here.

**Channel 2 – OUT OF SERVICE**

**Channel 3 (Splendora/Tac 3)** this is Splendora's back channel.

**Channel 4 (State wide/Tac 4)**

**Channel 5 (Tac 5)**

**Channel 6 (Tac 6)**

**Channel 7 (Tac7)**

**Channel 8 (Fire 2)**

• **Radio Identification** – All communications use a call sign. The type of communication taking place will dictate what call sign is to be used. When communicating from a fire apparatus, the apparatus call sign will be used. If communicating as a company, your company designation will be used as the call sign. When communicating as an individual,

your individual unit number will be used as the radio call sign. **If using the Fire Station Base Radio, the Call Sign to be used is Station 161**

- **Apparatus Call Signs** – Used when communicating from the apparatus.

**Engine 161:** Radio Call Sign – Engine 161

**Rescue:** Radio Call Sign – Rescue 161

- **Company Call Signs** – Used when operating as a company. At an incident, you will be assigned to a company. A company consists of at least two firefighters, with one being a Company Officer, or Acting Company Officer. If arriving on the scene in a personal vehicle you will be assigned to a company already working at the scene, made into a new company, or assigned in a command assistance position. Each company will have at least one portable radio with them at all times.

• **Company Call Signs are the Apparatus Call Sign, with Company Operations** – When operating as a company, the only person communicating via radio should be the Officer in Charge or the Acting Officer in Charge. If no Officer is available in the company, the most experienced firefighter will be the Acting Officer in Charge. Other members of a company should only transmit in the case of an emergency where the Officer is unable to transmit the message. Each company will remain together and within physical, visual, and/or voice contact. At least one company member will have a portable radio with them at all times. In the case of multiple radios within the company, each member may use the radio to listen to the incident and remain aware of what is happening around them.

**POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**  
**EFFECTIVE DATE: OCTOBER 1, 2006**

**3-5 INCIDENT RESPONSE GUIDELINE**

**Purpose:**

These guidelines and procedures are for responding to an incident for the members of the Splendora Volunteer Fire Department. Using the box cards provided by the fire department, dispatchers will initiate which apparatus is used for the emergency calls. If a different apparatus is utilized the engine operator should return the apparatus not used back in service with the dispatcher. There are dispatched calls for service which does not threaten life or property. The fire department responds to these incidents non-emergency. Officers may change the manner of response based on the information received from the dispatchers or other sources.

**ALL MEMBERS MUST REPORT TO COMMAND NATURE CODE:**

1. **Aircraft Emergency:** This includes any aircraft accident or in-flight emergency.  
*Priority 1 - Emergency Response*
2. **Assist Law Enforcement:** If the dispatcher can determine what is needed, dispatch it immediately. Notify the duty officer, or chief officer, from the department involved.  
*Priority 2 - Officer Makes The Choice*
3. **Automatic Alarm:** Any third party (monitoring service) report of alarm activation.  
*Priority 1 - Emergency Response*
4. **Automatic Alarm (Pull Station/ Water Flow Alarm):** Includes any manual pull station activation or report of fire sprinkler system activation.  
*Priority 1 - Emergency Response*
5. **Bomb Threat:** Fire department does not respond to bomb threats unless specifically requested by law enforcement. Always notify a Chief Officer and the Fire Chief.  
*Priority 3 - Stage At Station For An Officers Orders*
6. **Child Locked In Vehicle:** Any person locked in a vehicle.  
*Priority 2 - Officer Makes the Choice Based off of Patient Status. If unknown, Emergency Response.*
7. **Commercial Fire:** Any business, manufacturing, storage facility, nursing home, health care, offices, schools, churches, apartments, etc. The dispatcher will notify responding units of the type of building involved in incident.  
*Priority 1 - Emergency Response*
8. **Controlled Burn:** Unknown or illegal burning of materials in the woodlands either attended or unattended fire in the county for agriculture or other purposes  
*Priority 2 - Non-Emergency Response*
9. **Dumpster/ Trash Fire:** Self-explanatory  
*Priority 2 - Officer Makes The Choice*
10. **Extinguished Fire:** The caller states they had a fire but believe it has been extinguished. An engine company will always be dispatched to this type of call.  
*Priority 2 - Officer Makes The Choice*
11. **Gas/ Smoke In Area:** This includes the smell of gas outside, a broken gas meter, broken small residential lines, or a non-specific smoke in the area call.  
*Priority 2 - Emergency Response*
12. **Gas/ Smoke In Building:** Any call for gas or smoke in any type of building.  
*Priority 1 - Emergency Response (ensure that a full box is dispatched if inside)*

13. **Grass/ Woods Fire:** Any ground cover fire.  
*Priority 2 – Emergency Response*
14. **Hazardous Material:** A hazardous chemical, flammable material leak or gas cloud formation other than a wash down.  
*Priority 1 – Emergency Response (utilize appropriate mutual aid)*
15. **Illegal Burn:** This nature code is used for the County Fire Marshals' office to document any reports of burning during a burn ban.  
*Priority 2 – Non-Emergency Response*
16. **Jaws/ Entrapment:** Any report of an entrapped person other than those specified under rescue.  
*Priority 1 – Emergency Response*
17. **Medical Helicopter Stand-By:** Used whenever a medical helicopter lands in a non-dedicated landing zone.  
*Priority 1 – Emergency Response (full PPE including SCBA)*
18. **Live Wires/ Transformer:** If the electrical malfunction involves a building, upgrade to a residential/commercial fire response.  
*Priority 2 – Emergency Response Unless Officer Deems Appropriate for Non-Emergency*
19. **Medical Response:** Assist EMS on medical calls.  
*Priority 1 – Emergency Response Unless Requested Non-Emergency by EMS*
20. **Motor Vehicle Accidents:** Assist EMS, check for fire/ leaks, no persons entrapped  
*Priority 1 – Emergency Response*
21. **Out Of County Response:** Department does not respond emergency to back in assignments. *Requested Apparatus Only Unless Officer Deems Necessary to Differ*  
*Priority 1 – Emergency Response*
22. **Rescue/ Trench:** A below grade rescue of a person(s), which may require use of shoring, heavy digging equipment, and or self-contained breathing equipment.  
*Priority 1 – Emergency Response (utilize appropriate mutual aid)*
23. **Rescue/ Water:** Whenever a person is in need of help on a navigable waterway or pond.  
*Priority 1 – Emergency Response (utilize appropriate mutual aid)*
24. **Residential Fire:** Any fire involving a building that is not classified as a commercial property. The dispatcher will notify responding units of the type of building involved.  
*Priority 1 – Emergency Response*
25. **Train Accident:** Any incident where a train engine or railcar has been de-railed, is on fire, or is leaking known or unknown chemicals. Members may not POV to these incidents.  
*Priority 2 – Officer Makes The Call*
26. **Unknown Nature:** To be used only when the dispatcher cannot extract information from the caller as to why the fire department is needed. Use caution as this type of a call may be a prelude to an unstable scene.  
*Priority 2 – Officer Make the Call*
27. **Vehicle Fire:** Depending on the nature of the product involved, the dispatcher should consider upgrading to a Hazmat Response.  
*Priority 1 – Emergency Response*
28. **Wash Down:** Mitigating a fuel spill at a vehicle accident or other incidents.  
*Priority 1 – Emergency Response*

**POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**  
**EFFECTIVE DATE: OCTOBER 1, 2006**

**3-6 APPARATUS MINIMUM STAFFING**

Apparatus staffing is difficult in the volunteer fire service. You never quite know who is able to respond. The preference for all calls is for a fully trained crew capable of independent action. Because of this, a minimum staffing level is required to meet the needs of specific incidents. This minimum staffing level should be followed unless circumstances dictate otherwise. Sometimes not enough people are available to respond to calls. **The most important thing is that ample time (3 minutes from dispatch) is given for personnel to respond to the station before an apparatus is en-route to a call below minimum staffing. Building fire in your district the first out truck can pull one man. If at all possible, wait for additional personnel until minimum staffing on the apparatus for that incident is achieved.**

All non-officers should report to the station on all calls (even if you have bunker gear with you). Deviations will be made for first responders on medical calls, MVA's when closer to scene than station, and all members when justifiable. All members may be subject to justification by any officer at any time. If it is deemed inappropriate it will be reported to the fire chief through the chain of command. Communicate with responding units and use good judgment when deciding whether or not to respond under minimum staffing.

**Important:** Our minimum staffing levels account for active members only. Probationary members and trainees are not counted as part of minimum staffing unless that member has been cleared by the Fire Chief. Care must be given when deciding to respond with trainees or probationary members below minimum staffing levels.

**Apparatus Minimum Staffing Levels:**

Structure Fire Response –

Engine Company: 3 Firefighters Minimum (Company Officer or Acting Company Officer, Driver, and Firefighter)

Booster: 1 Firefighter Minimum

Rescue Company: 2 Firefighter Minimum

Tankers 2 Firefighters Minimum (for water supply),

Mutual Aid Response – 2 Minimum for Man Power or Initial Response, 1 Minimum for Water Supply

**OPERATING GUIDELINES**  
**EFFECTIVE DATE: OCTOBER 1, 2006**

**3-7 GENERAL RESPONSES AND ON-SCENE GUIDELINE**

All Emergency Responses

**All non-officers and non-medical personnel will respond to the station for staffing of the appropriate apparatus . Do not respond to the scene in a personal vehicle unless all apparatus are already out of the station, or a specific request is made for you to do so. This adds to vehicles already at the scene, and makes it difficult for other emergency vehicles to enter or leave the scene. Justification for actions deviating from this guideline may be required and will be tolerated if allowed in 3-6.**

If all apparatus are out of the station, contact command via the Station Radio for instructions. Proper communications are imperative. All responding units will advise Fire Comm Dispatch that they are en-route via apparatus radio. Be sure to advise fire comm again when you arrive on scene. Communications SOG (3-4) for detailed information on responses.

**First Arriving Unit Responsibilities:**

1. Scene Size-Up
2. Assume or Pass Command
3. Take Control of the Hazardous Area (Tactical Priorities)

**Scene Size -Up**

The first arriving unit gives a size-up report over the radio. A size-up is a short radio transmission that includes:

- Building Size (small, medium, large)
- Number of Stories
- Construction Type (Wood Frame, Steel, Tin, Brick Veneer, Concrete, etc.)
- Roof Construction (Composition Shingles, Wood Shingles, Flat Roof, etc.)
- Building Occupancy (Residence, Commercial, School, Church, Apartments)
- Smoke or Fire Conditions
- Action Being Taken
- Offensive or Defensive Attack
- Assumption or Passing of Command
- Number of Vehicles Involved (if an MVA)
- Significant Events

Size-Up Example: *“Engine 161 is on-scene with a two story brick residence, composition roof; we’ve got heavy smoke showing from the garage. Engine 161 will be Interior; Next incoming unit lay a supply line, we will pass Command to the next unit.”*

**Assumption or Passing of Command**

The second responsibility of the first arriving unit is to pass or assume command. By passing command, you give command to the next arriving unit. By assuming command, you will be in command until a member of higher rank arrives and assumes command. Command at every incident will be named by a geographic location in order to simplify

operations. For example, an incident on Dogwood St. would be named “Dogwood Street Command”.

### **Control of the Hazardous Area**

The first arriving unit must also take control of the hazardous area. Any civilians or bystanders who do not need to be in the area should be asked to leave.

#### **Remember the tactical priorities:**

1. Life Safety – (Rescue any trapped or endangered victims)
2. Property Conservation [Exposures] – (Prevent fire spread, or spread of the incident)
3. Incident Stabilization – (Stabilize the situation, control the fire)
- 4.

#### **A good acronym for remembering the tactical priorities is R.E.C.E.O.**

- R – Rescue
- E – Exposures
- C – Confinement
- E – Extinguishment
- O – Overhaul

### **Subsequent Arriving Unit Responsibilities:**

The second arriving unit and any other subsequently arriving companies to any emergency call will stage in the area and wait for instructions from Command. **The Second Arriving Engine Company on any fire call should find and stage at a fire hydrant in the event a supply line is needed. Companies that stage should advise so on fire one and tack channel command is on.** Staging should be reported by cardinal direction from the scene. For example: “*Engine 161 is on-scene, staged east at a hydrant.*” Staged units will receive instructions from Command on tack channel to perform fire ground related tasks.

If hydrant supply is not feasible, then the second unit should continue to the scene and set up for and establish a water supply operation.

All Personnel will be responsible for establishing a RIT team on all incidents that require “Interior” operations or when deemed necessary by the Incident Commander. If there is **Absolutely** no chance for rescue operations, then there will be a RIT team in place prior to making entry if there is a confirmed working fire. If you can not rule out chance for life rescue, then permission for entry can be given if all members of the crew agree that it is in the best interest. All members will comply to NFPA 1720 as it applies to 2in and 2out.

### **On-Scene Guideline**

Once on-scene, remain professional. Companies will remain together with their company officer at all times. Each Company will receive its orders from Command. Each individual must remain calm and listen to the orders they are given. This on-scene professionalism will help even the most out of control incidents run smoother. Company officers will be responsible for the integrity of their company.

**Companies will remain together throughout the incident.** Command will coordinate fire ground tasks, resting and rotating crews, and clearing companies from the scene.

**FOLLOW THE CHAIN OF COMMAND FOR ALL OPERATIONS**

*“No Freelancing”*

**OPERATING GUIDELINES**  
**EFFECTIVE DATE: OCTOBER 1,2006**

**3-8 EMERGENCY PROCEDURES AND SCENE SAFETY**

The golden rule at any emergency scene is to first protect your-self. We are no good to victims if we are injured or killed at the scene. Approach any scene with caution, and follow the orders of your company officer. The words **EMERGENCY TRAFFIC** are high-priority. These words can be used over the radio to report an immediately perilous situation (i.e. impending structural collapse). This phrase is also used if an interior crew finds a victim. Whenever **EMERGENCY TRAFFIC** is transmitted, all other communications must cease until the emergency report is transmitted. The Incident Commander is the only person on the fire ground allowed to talk on the radio at this time. Command will then decide when emergency traffic can cease, and normal radio traffic may begin again. As a warning of danger (building collapse, evacuation, etc.), or if changing fire attack mode from offensive to defensive, Command will transmit an evacuation order over the radio system. The transmission shall be:

*“E vacu ate, E vacu ate, and E vacu ate!”* In addition, anyone near a fire apparatus should activate the air horn 3 long blasts for one minute when Command issues an evacuation order. This signals any crews inside that may have lost radio contact to immediately leave the structure. A PAR should be taken after any of the above conditions. Medical Scenes can be just as dangerous as fire scenes. Keep in mind that your safety and that of your partner is first, and then, your patient’s safety. **If a medical scene is unsafe due to weapons or impending conflict or violence, call for police assistance and do not enter the scene. Any medical emergencies dispatched as the result of fights, gunshots, knives, domestic violence, car accidents, drug use, overdoses, or alcohol emergencies require that the police department also be dispatched.** Apparatus and personnel should stage at a distance away from these scenes, until police can secure the scene.

**Always be aware of your surroundings at any emergency scene and be on the lookout for dangers: (power lines down, gas leaks, distraught or violent bystanders, etc.) Be prepared for any hazards.**

**OPERATING GUIDELINES**  
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**3-9 Basic Structural Tactical Initiatives**

This guideline outlines standard approaches to the typical priorities faced at structural fires.

**Response:**

Apparatus Response for Structure Fires is as shown in the Incident Response Guide (3-5). Follow Splendora Volunteer fire dept response and mutual aid responses shown in that guideline.

**Notification:**

The Montgomery County Fire Marshal will be notified and requested if:

- An injury of considerable degree or death occurs in the incident
- The incident is a “working fire”
- Property loss is substantial and / or extraordinary
- The incident reaches or exceeds any working one-alarm fire
- Requested by the officer in charge
- Criminal actions are suspected or prosecution is possible utilities (Gas, Water, and Electric) should be notified if there is a working fire.

**Initial Water Supply**

The first arriving unit will either establish its own hydrant water supply, or use tank water depending on conditions at the scene and the distance of later arriving companies. The second arriving engine will find and stage at a fire hydrant and will forward lay (from hydrant to fire), into position with a 5” hose if hydrant is readily available and requested by Command or the first arriving company. The pump operator shall call for water via radio when ready to charge the supply line. First in tanker will be the supply engine. If no hydrant is readily available, second in truck will establish water supply via shuttle method.

**Commercial Properties with Automatic Systems**

It shall be of the highest priority (after rescue) to boost the water supply to fixed fire protection systems using 3” hose to a Fire Department Connection (FDC). Consideration should be given to hand laying to the FDC so as to position the engine in the safest and most strategic location possible (outside the collapse zone which is 1 ½ the buildings height).

**Structure Fire Response Tasks:**

- The first arriving unit’s Company Officer should determine and communicate:
  - Size-Up
  - Assumption or Passing of Command
  - Control of the Hazard Areas
  - Time of Day: Will occupants most likely be at work? Sleeping? Upstairs? Downstairs?

### Offensive or Defensive Attack

All Clear in the Building (ask occupants if standing outside), Still perform a primary and secondary search of the building

Rescue needed? Exposures?

Where is the fire?

Water Supply (Tank / Hydrant / Tanker)

**Offensive Attack** - The Company Officer should perform a quick walk-around of the structure noting the location of the fire, building conditions, and exits from the building. Try to picture the layout of the building during the walk-around. During this time, the firefighter should also pull a hose line that is appropriate for the amount of fire and length of hose needed. The firefighter should stretch the hose to the point of entry. The driver's responsibility is to secure a water supply and charge the hose line. The driver will perform no additional tasks until a constant water supply is established. At this time, the driver will be stationed at the pump panel, but may carry tools to the entry point, establish scene lighting (if needed), or set a PPV (Positive Pressure Ventilation) fan staying within the safe zone. The driver will not enter the hot zone unless in full PPE. After the line is stretched, charged and PPV is in place, the firefighter and officer will enter the building for fire attack. A Rapid Intervention Crew (RIC) should be set up as soon as practical after providing for other fire ground tasks. Salvage operations should also be initiated as soon as practical. The second arriving engine should stage at the hydrant unless advised otherwise. If a supply line is needed, this engine may perform a forward lay to the scene of the fire. If a second engine is not available, the first engine may reverse lay to a hydrant. All other subsequent units should stage and await further instructions. Engine Companies work as TEAMS, so stay together as a unit until assigned. **The above situation considered a three-person company. The Company officer may assign more tasks if more personnel are available.**

**Defensive Attack** – A water supply should be secured as soon as possible due to the amounts of water that will be used for a defensive attack. The portable monitor and/or deck gun should be utilized for maximum fire suppression. Hand lines should be pulled and used through windows or other openings. Protection of exposures with hand lines is high-priority. **NEVER USE DEFENSIVE TACTICS WHILE OFFENSIVE OPERATIONS ARE TAKING PLACE!**

### General Guidelines for Structure Fire Responses:

#### Company Actions –

Each Company shall stay together when on an emergency scene.

Each Company shall maintain radio contact at all times through the use of portable radios during fire ground assignments. The Company Officer should be the only member of the company to talk on the radio unless there is an emergency. All companies will work under the direction of Command. **Freelancing will not be tolerated.** All companies should consider placement of their apparatus as well as incoming apparatus as they park.

Every Company shall consist of a minimum of two assignable firefighters. One of these firefighters is either an officer or acting company officer and will carry a

portable radio. If this number changes, Command should be notified so assignments can be made considering the weaker or stronger capabilities of each company. Driver / Engineers shall operate and monitor their respective apparatus unless ordered otherwise by the Company Officer. When an entire company, including the Driver is assigned to a task, the engine shall be placed out of the way without blocking access in or out of the scene.

Each member of a company will take a different tool with them into the structure. This will allow different tools to be available with each member for different tasks to be performed.

Fire Investigation – Each member is responsible for the preservation of evidence for investigations personnel. DO NOT remove any suspected piece of evidence until investigators give the OK.

**Rescue** – The foremost action of the Splendora Volunteer fire dept is to save lives from any threat it can deal with. All structures involved in fire will be searched as a priority fire ground objective.

Upon completion of the primary search, Command shall be notified of a “Primary Search Completed” status.

After the secondary search is complete; an “All Clear” shall be transmitted. The secondary search is more thorough than the primary and should be done with a different crew.

In situations where the extent of involvement is so great that no search is possible, Command will be notified of this fact. No search possible

**OPERATING GUIDELINES**  
**REVISED: OCTOBER 1, 2006**

**3-10 RAPID INTERVENTION TEAMS (RIC/RIT)**

This guideline increases firefighter safety at emergency incidents by providing for firefighter rescue at the outset of an event before a team enters an unknown atmosphere, potential or actual IDLH (Immediately Dangerous to Life and Health). This guideline identifies the requirements and operation of Rapid Intervention Teams (RIT) (or RIC, Rapid Intervention Crews).

**Required Use of RIC 's**

This guideline shall be implemented at all incidents where fire department members are subject to hazards that would be IDLH, and / or in the event of a sudden change of conditions, equipment failure, or mishap.

**GUIDELINES:**

**2.01 IRIT – First Arriving Company Officer (IC):**

- A. Determine if the incident involves an IDLH atmosphere.
- B. If the IDLH atmosphere does not exist, 2 or more firefighters can take action to mitigate the situation without establishing an IRIT.
- C. Examples of when an IRIT/ RIT shall be established include:
  - 1. Offensive Fire Operations with IDLH present.
  - 2. Haz-Mat incidents.
  - 3. Trench Rescue
  - 4. Any other incident having a significant risk to firefighters.
- D. If the presence of an IDLH atmosphere has been determined, 2 firefighters may begin operating within the IDLH atmosphere only after 2 properly equipped and trained Firefighters are available to form an IRIT. If additional personnel are available the formal RIT may be formed.
- E. Upon arrival at the emergency scene and before entering the IDLH, the officer shall give one of the following radio reports to the incoming Chief Officer concerning the status of the crew.
  - 1. Entering the structure IRIT or RIT is in place.
  - 2. Emergency rescue, IRIT not in place.
  - 3. Unable to enter, waiting on IRIT. (The company officer has decided the risk to personnel does not justify entry until IRIT can be established.)
- F. After entering the IDLH atmosphere:
  - 1. The attack team shall remain together as a team at all times.
  - 2. Radios and tag lines shall not be used as primary communication between attack team members.
  - 3. All teams will carry radios for communication with the Incident Commander/ Sector Officer and other companies on scene.
- G. At least 2 firefighters will be located outside the IDLH atmosphere when functioning as an IRIT. One firefighter will have no other task than monitoring the team inside.

1. The primary member of the IRIT shall be positioned near the point of entry to account for the companies operating in the IDLH atmosphere and at all times shall monitor their radio. This member will wear full protective clothing and S.C.B.A.
  2. The second member of the IRIT may be assigned other functions such as Incident Commander, Safety Officer, or Engineer/ Operator so long as those functions can be abandoned, without placing any personnel at additional risk, if rescue or assistance is needed. This member will monitor the attack team's radio channel.
  3. The Engineer/ Operator of the first-arriving engine may be counted as the second member of the IRIT. When the E/O is finished setting the pump and checking the hose line, the E/O should begin donning all their gear.
- H. If firefighters entered IDLH atmosphere without an IRIT in place, the Incident Commander will document with an exception report in the comment section of the Splendora Fire Department run record. This exception report will be a narrative that includes the reasons, rationale, justification, end result, and a comprehensive understanding of these actions.
- I. Firefighters shall not enter any IDLH atmosphere without an IRIT or RIT in place. Except in the following imminent life threatening situations:
1. Residential structures that indicate possible victims inside. Consider possible indicators such as cars in driveway, toys in the yard and the time of day, etc.
  2. Vacant structures with a known life hazard.
  3. Commercial structures during normal business hours that indicate possible victims inside.
  4. Commercial structures after business hours that have a known life hazard.

## 2.02 RIT – Incident Command

- A. Assignment of a RIT Company or additional members to the IRIT to form a RIT as soon as possible and practical.
- B. The early establishment of the RIT is a critical function of the IC due to recent studies indicating high percentages of firefighters being injured or killed during the initial stages of structural firefighting.
- C. When the IC assigns a company RIT responsibility, that company shall assume the RIT designation. Example: IC: "Command calling E161 assume RIT duties". E161: "E161 received, assuming RIT duties as RIT".
- D. Primary task of RIT is to respond to the report of firefighters in distress. This distress can fall into one or all of the following categories:
  1. Trapped
  2. Disoriented or lost
  3. Injured

## 2.03 Activities of the RIT upon arrival at the incident include:

- A. Don appropriate full protective clothing and S.C.B.A. (Exception: On extended incidents, the Company Officer may allow the RIT Team to wear their bunker gear pants and firefighting boots and be able to don the remainder of their full PPE and S.C.B.A. immediately if necessary.

- B. Gather the following equipment:
  - Flathead Axe
  - Halligan Tool
  - Hand Light
  - Portable Radio
  - Thermal Imaging Device (if available)
  - Any other equipment deemed necessary
- C. Gather the RIT Kit. The RIT Kit will consist of:
  - 1- Search rope bag that is a minimum of 100' in length and 3/8" diameter and a one hour SCBA bottle in bag with full tank
  - 2 - Straps of nylon webbing (each of 30ft minimum)
  - 1 - Pair wire cutters
  - 1 - pair tin snips
  - 1 - Pair Robogrips
  - 1 - Phillips head screwdriver
  - 1 - Flat Head screwdriver
  - 4 - Sprinkler wedges (Door Stops, etc)
  - 4 - Rubber door straps
- D. The RIT officer will report to the Command Post and confer with IC on the location of the RIT staging site considering access, potential hazards, and environmental conditions.
- E. Develop a tactical worksheet/ drawing of the structure or incident site. Detail the entry points and locations of companies operating in the Hot Zone. This information can be obtained from IC and should be continually updated as conditions change.
- F. Report to RIT staging area after its location has been determined, with all required equipment, and ensure that a back-up landline has been deployed and is accessible on the fire ground.
- G. Each staged RIT shall consist of 3 members (preferably 4).
- H. During extended operations or inclement weather, the RIT Captain may consider selecting a sheltered area for the RIT staging area after conferring with the I.C.

2.04 RIT Size-Up: After the RIT staging area is operational, a rapid size-up of the hazard Area shall occur. This size-up should include but is not limited to:

- A. A 360-degree site survey around the incident, to identify means of entry and egress at windows, door, etc.
- B. Identify locations that may be used for escape ladders and consider placing ladders at
- C. Those locations (laddering the building as possible escape routes for distressed firefighters).
- D. Note construction features and potential hazards.

2.05 Activation of the Rapid Intervention Team (RIT):

- A. When a firefighter is reported trapped or missing, firefighting positions must not be abandoned and the company and sector officers must control freelancing. IC will initiate a rescue effort by:

1. Request an additional alarm from dispatch.
  2. Requesting a PAR check of the personnel on the scene.
  3. Determining how many personnel are trapped or lost.
  4. Ascertaining what happened (collapse, explosion, etc.).
  5. Attempting to determine the location and problem.
  6. Determining structural stability and environmental conditions.
  7. Continuing essential operations and reinforce other tactical positions.
- B. After gaining as much information as possible about the trapped or missing Firefighter(s), the IC should review a plan of action and develop a rescue plan.
- C. If possible the IC shall brief the RIT on:
1. The number of missing firefighters.
  2. Their last known location.
  3. The entrance used by the firefighters.
  4. Their path into the fire area.
  5. Building hazards.

2.06 RIT Operations: Although the team's primary mission is to rescue a trapped or lost Firefighter, team members must remember their personal safety is the top priority and Proper communications are essential to safe operations.

- A. RIT members must remain in constant communication with the IC and provide Frequent progress reports on:
1. Hazards encountered
  2. Barriers/ obstructions
  3. Victim location and condition
  4. Any needs
- B. Each RIT shall consist of 3 members who respond to the last known location of the trapped or missing firefighters, in full PPE, with the following equipment from the RIT staging area.
1. RIT Kit
  2. Portable radios
  3. Hand lights

Any other rescue equipment the team determines necessary

- C. RIT members should consider the following:
1. Visible sighting of firefighters such as arms and legs.
  2. Knowledge of their last known location.
  3. The sound of PASS devices audible tones.
  4. Tapping noises, etc.
  5. Sounds of portable radio emitting from the collapse area.
  6. SCBA low air vibra-alert.
  7. Tracing hose lines into the collapse area.
  8. Building features or locations that were describe by missing firefighters.
  9. Flashlight beams.
  10. Location of ladders, fans, lights, or other equipment used by firefighters.
  11. Open or unlock all doors to aide in escape of lost/ trapped firefighters.
  12. Search the immediate doorway first.
  13. Search exterior walls (interior sides) before searching interior open spaces.
  14. Search large interior spaces in a detailed grid pattern.

15. Ensure that all areas are searched.
- D. When RIT initially gain access to a victim, the first priority shall be:
  1. To protect and preserve the immediate area and alleviate any immediate life threatening conditions that may exist.
  2. Provide the endangered with fresh air by way of an extra SCBA.
  3. If time and conditions permit they should perform a rapid assessment and consider immobilization before removal.
- E. The following methods maybe used to get out of a structure or fire area:
  1. Follow a hose line or tagline out
  2. Escape through windows
  3. Forcible exit through doors
  4. Breaching walls
- F. In some situations/ conditions, the primary tactic of the RIT will be to access the Firefighters, provide a SCBA, and protect the member's environment with the hand line until additional help arrives.

## 2.07 Essential Safety Communications

- A. The radio transmission "May-Day" will be used by a lost or trapped firefighter to report their status as having an emergency and in need of an urgent rescue.
  1. The term "May-Day" will be reserved only to report lost or trapped firefighters.
  2. Any member may use the "May-Day" transmission to report a lost or trapped firefighter.
  3. This report should occur as soon as a firefighter perceives that a situation is rapidly developing, which is a direct threat to their life or the life of another firefighter. Upon receiving this report the IC shall notify the dispatcher that he has received a "May-Day" report and request the next higher alarm.
  4. When the IC does not acknowledge a "May-Day" transmission, anyone on the incident scene may alert the dispatcher of the report. Upon receiving a "May-Day" report of a trapped firefighter the dispatcher will attempt to confirm the report with the IC and then dispatch the next higher alarm.
- B. The radio transmission "Emergency" will be used to report all other emergencies.
- C. The use of either term, "Emergency" or "May-Day" will mandate that all other radio transmissions cease. This allows the firefighter, making the report, adequate airtime to complete their transmissions without interference, which will allow the needed help to be activated immediately.
- D. PAR shall be conducted every 20 minutes and whenever a sudden hazardous event occurs (backdraft, collapse, etc.). The IC will contact each sector and/ or company to confirm the safety of all members. When a member is reported missing, the IC will request the next greater alarm and immediately assign a search of the last known area of the firefighter.
- E. Emergency Evacuation: The immediate removal of persons from hazardous area, usually due to changing conditions (e.g., possible collapse, structural collapse, moving from an offensive to a defensive mode, unaccounted firefighters, etc.)
  1. When an emergency evacuation is required, the IC will notify the dispatcher.

2. The dispatcher will tone-alert frequencies simultaneously for 5 seconds and advise all companies on-scene of the emergency evacuation notice.
3. All on-scene apparatus will sound their air horns continuously for 5 seconds.
4. An immediate PAR will be called for at this time. It is imperative that all companies take immediate steps to evacuate the area, account for all their members, and provide a personnel report to the IC or their sector officer.

#### 2.08 Firefighter Safety and Survival:

Firefighters are at risk of being lost or trapped when operating in a hazardous area. Thirty percent of firefighter deaths and injuries occur when firefighters get lost or trapped in structures. The ability to survive may depend on their own actions, the actions of the IC, and RIT.

- A. When firefighters are trapped or lost, they shall call for help in the following manner:
  1. Immediately use the term “May-Day” by radio
  2. If the firefighter gets no response on the assigned (tactical channel), use the term “May-Day” on the primary fire frequency.
  3. Report the location and the situation encountered.
- B. Trapped or Lost Firefighters
  1. Concentrate on controlling breathing rate and depth and reducing physical activity to extend the availability air supply.
  2. Activate the PASS device.
  3. If a hose line is available, follow it out.
  4. Attempt to exit by any means possible.
  5. If unable to exit the structure try to retreat to an area of safe refuge or try to remain near a wall or door, if it appears that unconsciousness is imminent. This will increase the chances of being rescued early, as search teams are most likely to search these areas first.
  6. Firefighters should try to remain in a horizontal position on the floor to maximize the effectiveness of the PASS device and to be in the safest environment possible in regards to heat and breathable air.
  7. Firefighters should also consider covering their face piece if imminent heat danger is present and concerns of damage to face piece and causing a failure in air supply.
  8. To increase the chances of being rescued, the firefighter should shine a hand light toward the ceiling and make noise to attract rescuers.
- C. Companies must stay together as a team. Members that separate from each other make it difficult for rescuers to find and account for all firefighters. When companies stay intact, it increases their chances for all being rescued and allows easier, more efficient extrication.
- D. Basic Concepts to Remember:
  1. Stay low
  2. Stay calm
  3. Stay oriented
  4. Communicate
  5. Pre-positioning ground ladders to allow for emergency egress and rescue

6. Closest location of rescue tools that could be needed
7. Flashlights
8. Appropriate hand tools (pick or flathead axe, Halligan tool, Pike Pole, Rope)
9. Extra air pack for rescue purposes
10. Thermal Imaging Camera (if available)

**“M A Y -D A Y” R a d i o M e s s a g e**

The radio message “m ay day” w ill be used to report a lost or trapped firefighter. A ny m em ber m ay use “m ay day” to report a lost or trapped firefighter. A **“M ay D ay” report will receive priority radio traffic and the only people on the fire ground allowed to talk will be Command and the RIC Team.** The term “M ay D ay” w ill O N L Y be used to report trapped or m issing firefighters. The term “em ergency traffic” w ill be used to report other emergencies. U pon report of a lost or trapped firefighter (“M ay D ay”), C om m and should deploy the RIC Team to the last reported location of the lost / trapped firefighter(s). When the RIC Team has been deployed, Command must replace that RIC with another RIC Team to back up rescuers.

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**3-11 GRASS / BRUSH FIRES**

**Response:**

Apparatus Response for Grass and Brush Fires is as shown in the Incident Response Guide (3-5). Follow Splendora Volunteer Fire Dept. response and mutual aid responses shown in that guideline.

**On-Scene**

The following are tasks that should be performed at all grass / brush fire responses. The first arriving unit's officer should determine and communicate.

Size-Up

Assumption or Passing of Command

Prioritize: Life Safety, Exposures (structures, etc.) and the grass fire itself

Wind direction and fire movement

Fuel height and thickness (light, medium, or heavy fuels)

Rate of spread (slow, medium, or fast)

Mutual Aid Required?

Initial Attack: Place all equipment and personnel in the burned area (black area). Attack the head of the fire first, unless exposures need to be protected, and then work back on the flanks. Booster truck should use short lengths of hose and remain mobile. Position all other apparatus not involved in fire suppression where needed (i.e. ready to protect exposures, water supply operations, etc.)

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**3-12 REKINDLE PREVENTION**

**Purpose:** To establish guidelines on the recheck of structures, which have a potential for, rekindle.

**Rekindle Prevention Inspections**

Rekindles are preventable and are an embarrassment to the department. If necessary, companies should be posted at the scene for whatever time is necessary to insure that rekindles do not occur. Extensive overhaul operations should be utilized to prevent rekindles. Also **if possible**, personnel should inspect the scene every few hours for any possible rekindles on any structure fire with significant involvement. Other situations that present a serious threat should the incident destabilize will also be checked accordingly.

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**3-13 MOTOR VEHICLE ACCIDENTS**

**Response:**

Apparatus Response for Motor Vehicle Accidents is as shown in the Incident Response guide (3-5). Follow Splendor Volunteer Fire Department response and mutual aid responses shown in that guideline.

**Motor Vehicle Accidents – Response Guideline**

The first arriving unit should determine and communicate:

Size-Up

Assumption or Passing of Command

Positioning of Apparatus with respect to traffic hazards, fire hazards, etc.

Number of patients

Determine hazards: Hose line required? Potential for Fire? Electrocution hazard due to downed power lines? Fuel Spills?

Number of Vehicles involved and condition – Heavy damage, moderate damage, rollover, and car upright or upside down, on its side?

Extrication required?

Mutual Aid?

Remember to restock and clean any used EMS equipment, retrieve any equipment from the hospital, and remove all medical trash from the scene for disposal. Replace Oxygen cylinders!

**FOLLOW THE CHAIN OF COMMAND FOR ALL OPERATIONS**

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**3-14 Medical Emergencies**

**SEE: M.C.H.D. STANDING DELIGATED ORDERS**

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**3-15 HAZMAT INCIDENTS**

**Response:**

Apparatus Response for HAZMAT is as shown in the Incident Response Guide (3-5). Follow Splendora Volunteer Fire Dept response and mutual aid responses shown in that guideline.

**HAZMAT Incidents – Response Guideline**

The first en-route unit should request and communicate the following to other units while en-route:

Material Involved (Quantity, Condition of Material)

Wind Speed and Direction

Find the Material in the Orange DOT (Dept. of Transportation) Guidebook – Follow DOT Recommendations the first arriving unit's officer should determine and communicate:

1. Size-Up
2. Assumption or Passing of Command
3. Take Control of the Hazard Area
4. Preservation of Life – Our Highest Priority – DO NOT LET ANYONE ENTER THE HAZARD AREA
5. If a spill is found, contact Chem-Trec from a mobile phone, or have dispatch contact them.

Follow DOT Guidebook Recommendations

Maintain Control of the Scene

Call owner of the product and cleanup crews

Before termination of the incident, determine personnel and / or equipment contamination and take appropriate steps to decontaminate. Use of water on equipment / personnel will normally satisfy decontamination unless the DOT guidebook states otherwise. **SOME MATERIALS WILL REACT VIOLENTLY WITH WATER – USE CAUTION AND READ THE DOT GUIDEBOOK**

Fully document all aspects of the incident: note times, product name, container, carrier, and any damage done to property including fire dept. property.

**General Guide for HAZMAT Incidents:**

Our initial plan for HAZMAT Incidents is to identify the product and determine the severity of the incident. No steps will be taken to clean up the product by our department. If there is a potential problem, call for assistance and initiate evacuation. Evacuation should start downwind and in the immediate area of the incident. Use the Police to aid in evacuation if possible. Remember to not endanger the lives of personnel in the evacuation process. Once the area is secure, pull all personnel together and make an evaluation. Remember that sometimes no action is the best strategy. If a HAZMAT Team is needed, call the HAZMAT Team. They will respond with equipment and personnel. Splendora Volunteer Fire Department's job is to support HAZMAT with resources and personnel until the problem is solved.

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**3-16 CARBON MONOXIDE (CO) RESPONSE**

**Response:**

Apparatus Response for Carbon Monoxide is as shown in the Incident Response Guide (3-5). Follow Splendora Fire Dept response and mutual aid responses shown in that guideline.

**General Response Guideline**

Carbon monoxide (CO) is an odorless, colorless, tasteless gas that is deadly. It is a byproduct of combustion, present whenever fuel is burned. Common home appliances such as gas or oil furnaces, clothes dryers, ranges, ovens, water heaters produce it, or unvented space heaters, fireplaces, charcoal grills, and wood burning stoves. Fumes from automobiles also contain carbon monoxide and can enter a home through walls or doorways if a car is left running in an attached garage. CO poisoning may be difficult to diagnose. Its symptoms are similar to the flu, which may include headache, nausea, fatigue, and dizzy spells.

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) has established a maximum safe working level for CO at 35 parts per million (PPM) over an 8-hour period in the general workplace. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has established that residential levels are not to exceed 9 PPM over an 8-hour average. T-161 has a gas detector. This detector will be used to monitor any suspected atmosphere. If any symptoms are present, have the residents leave the house immediately (small children and the elderly are more susceptible to carbon monoxide; it can be very hazardous to the unborn child). Also have Medic dispatched to the location. At this time, any EMS personnel should attend to the care of the patients and other personnel should investigate the source of the CO. If no one exhibits any symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning, it is not necessary to evacuate or ventilate the premises unless a level of over 9 PPM is detected. The officer in charge shall request that the gas company respond to the scene if:

- A CO level of 9 PPM or greater is detected
- Someone is showing signs of being ill due to CO
- The OIC feels a response by the gas company is needed

**Carbon Monoxide Alarm Investigations (Procedures)**

Zero the monitor in fresh air and comply with all other start-up procedures recommended by the manufacturer of the monitoring equipment.

Survey the premises to determine if there are any amounts above 9 PPM of carbon monoxide present.

All members shall use SCBA in any atmosphere that is in excess of 50 PPM of CO.

**Reading of 9 PPM or less:**

Inform the occupants that our instrument did not detect an elevated level of CO at this time

Recommend occupants check their CO detector per manufacturer recommendations.

Attempt to reset detector.

Inform occupants that if it activates again, call 9-1-1.

**Readings of more than 9 PPM but less than 100 PPM:**

Any reading above 9 PPM will be considered above normal reading

Occupants shall be informed that we have detected a potentially dangerous level of CO.

Recommend that all persons leave the premises and begin ventilation

If determined that an appliance is malfunctioning and is producing CO, it shall be shut down.

Once the premises have been reduced to a safe level of CO, the premises may be occupied at the discretion of the occupant.

Attempts shall be made to reset the detector.

Inform occupants that if it activates again, call 9-1-1.

The occupants shall be informed of the action that has taken place and that the gas company has been requested to respond by the Fire Department if the gas company fuels the appliance.

**Reading of 100 PPM or greater:**

Any reading of 100 PPM or greater – inform the occupants that we have detected a potentially lethal level of CO – perform the above steps

Order the occupants to leave the premises immediately.

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### **3-17 HAZARDOUS CONDITIONS**

#### **Response:**

Apparatus Response for a Hazardous Condition is a Single Company Response, and is as shown in the Incident Response Guide (3-5). Follow Splendora fire dept response and mutual aid responses shown in that guideline.

#### **Electrical Emergencies –**

- Downed Power Lines

- Arcing or Blown Transformers

- Electrical Equipment within a residence or commercial property

#### **Natural Gas and Propane Gas Emergencies**

- Gas leaking from a storage tank

- Gas leaking from the storage tank of a vehicle

- Gas leaking from a severed line outside a residence or commercial property (*if inside a structure, it is a structure fire response*).

- Gas odor, either natural or propane, in any of the above

#### **Handling Gas Emergencies**

If the officer deems it necessary, a minimum of one attack line will be placed on the ground, charged, and manned as a precaution. Secure the area and remove all unnecessary personnel and all citizens from the area and / or structure. Utilize the safest method to stop the flow of the gas by:

- Shutting off the valve at the appliance, meter, or supply tank

- Requesting the gas company and keeping the area secure until their arrival

#### **Small Fuel Spills**

- Fuel leaking from a vehicle

- Fuel leaking from a small storage tank

#### **Handling Fuel Spills**

Secure the area and remove all unnecessary personnel and all citizens from the area. Place a minimum of one attack line on the ground, charged, and manned as a precaution if the Officer in Charge deems it necessary. Notify an Environmental Control Service (if applicable) Use a safe method to slow or stop the leaking fuel:

- Use soap to slow or stop a small leak

- Use a wooden plug to slow the leak

- Never use tools that may cause a spark

- Never allow fuel to enter a sanitary or storm sewer, waterway or water shed run off area. Use available dirt, sand, or other material to control the flow. Request additional sand from the county if needed.

- Cover the fuel with sand or foam; refrain from washing with water

- Use absorbent pads or dispersant when spill is small enough and / or applicable.

**Any material that may cause harm or damage to life, health, or property when transported in commerce is classified as a Hazardous Material and should be treated accordingly. Any material that is unidentified shall be treated as HAZMAT and should be an immediate concern to every firefighter. See the HAZMAT SOG**

### **3-18 LIFE FLIGHT /HELICOPTER OPERATIONS**

Medical Helicopters may be called 24 hours a day. The Splendora Volunteer Fire Department utilizes the Landing Zone SOG's established by the Montgomery County Fire Chiefs Association. The Fire Chief for review may provide a copy of this information.

**The Incident Commander or the highest trained medical personnel on scene may call the helicopter. When a helicopter is called, the I.C. will set up a Landing Zone (LZ) or appoint a sector officer to manage the LZ to ensure a secure LZ.**

#### **LZ Requirements –**

All LZ personnel will wear full protective clothing and SCBA.

LZ Officer should advise Fire Comm to have the helicopter contact LZ on fire channel 4 or HAHERN.

One engine company will be responsible for setting up the LZ

All lights lighting up the LZ will be pointed down at the ground

All personnel and civilians are clear of the LZ

NO ONE will approach the helicopter - The flight crew will exit the helicopter and approach the ambulance, or I.C.

Under no circumstances will anyone approach the tail of the helicopter.

LZ officer should ensure that all debris is cleared from the area

LZ should be a minimum of 100ft. X 100 ft. when possible, and must be clear of power lines, trees, buildings, light standards.

LZ Officer should advise the helicopter crew by radio of power lines, un-level surfaces or conditions, or any obstructions that may cause harm to the helicopter or surrounding personnel before the helicopter lands

The Helicopter pilot has the final say in all LZ Operations.

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### **3-19 SEVERE WEATHER STAND-BY**

During the spring, South Texas is usually pounded by severe thunderstorms that bring heavy rain, high winds, lightning, hail, and tornadoes. This can be a busy time for our fire department, although severe storms can happen any time of the year in Texas. Fire Comm does a good job of keeping county fire departments updated on weather systems that may affect the county. Dispatchers issue weather updates on the VHF High-Band system meaning that you can hear weather updates on your pager. Amateur Radio Storm Spotters also patrol during severe weather to watch the storms and give reports directly to the National Weather Service.

### **Splendora Fire Dept Weather Stand-by Procedures**

The Splendora Fire Department has no policy on Weather Stand-by Requests. Most of our members watch from home with their families, and others prefer to respond to the station and stand-by. If you respond to the station on a weather stand-by, respond in your vehicle non-emergency. There is no hurry since this is only a stand-by request. Cable has a live radar view with NOAA Weather Radio broadcast in the background. This will keep you up to date on the latest weather conditions. Check in at the station on Channel 3. Other members usually monitor our channel from home during weather standby to give reports if needed. If an emergency call is received during a weather stand-by, respond as normal using our SOG's. Be wary however of additional hazards due to weather while responding (wind, rain, hail, slick roads, etc.) Keep the speeds low and drive safely. If necessary for safety, you may respond non-emergency to any and all incidents at the officer's discretion due to weather.

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**3-20 WATER RESCUE**

**SCOPE**

This procedure applies to all members of the Porter Fire Department that are responsible for emergency response.

**PURPOSE**

The purpose of this procedure is to provide a guideline for conducting all water rescue/recovery operations.

**TACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS**

**Phase I arrive on scene:**

Take command. Size up. Secure responsible party or witness. Command should secure a witness as soon as possible after arriving on scene. This will help in identifying and locating the problem. Assess the need for additional resources. Command should immediately begin assessing the need for additional resources. If additional resources are necessary, Command should put in an early call for them. If later, it is determined that they are not necessary, Command can put those units back in service. Assess the hazards. Command should do an immediate assessment of the present hazards. Command may want to assign an individual to be the Safety Sector. Safety Sector will be responsible for identifying the hazards present and to have them secured if possible. If it is not possible to secure hazards, Safety Sector will notify all personnel of the hazards and notify Command so that an action plan can be established. Some hazards associated with water rescue operations would be: volume, velocity and temperature of water, floating debris, unusual drop-offs, hydraulic effects, and depth of water.

**Decide on "Rescue" or "Recovery"**

Based on the conditions present and the hazards to rescuers, Command will have to make the decision to operate in the rescue or recovery mode. If Command determines that the operation will be run in the rescue mode, rescue should begin quickly. Decide on an action plan. Command should establish an action plan as soon as possible. The step-by-step plan should be communicated to all personnel involved in the rescue. Decide on an action plan. Command should establish an action plan as soon as possible. The step-by-step plan should be communicated to all personnel involved in the rescue.

**Phase II Pre-Rescue Operations**

Make the general area safe. Command, or his/her designee, should begin to make the general area safe. On water rescue operations, this would include securing the area and not allowing civilian personnel into the water. In swift-water rescue incidents, Command should assign an Upstream Sector to spot floating debris and notify Command or extrication Sector. Command may also want to assign a helicopter the task of aerial recon for spotting hazards. Make the rescue area safe. Command should secure the immediate rescue area. He/she may want to assign an Accountability Sector to account for all personnel working within the rescue area. Personnel working in the rescue area (waters edge) shall have personal protective equipment (PPE), including personal flotation device (PFD) and water rescue helmet. If at all possible, the hazards in the rescue area should be

secured. If it is not possible, Command, or his/her designee, shall notify all rescuers in the area of the possible hazards. Pre-rescue/Recovery: Depending on the action plan established, Command may want to establish an Extrication Sector. Extrication Sector will be responsible for gathering all equipment and personnel necessary to operate according to the action plan. Extrication Sector will assign rescue personnel to conduct the rescue, and support personnel to support the rescuers, during the actual rescue phase. Extrication Sector should have an alternative action plan that shall be communicated to all personnel operating in the rescue area.

### **Phase III Rescue Operations**

After pre-rescue operations are complete, Extrication Sector shall put forth the action plan for the removal of the victim(s). Rescue operations should be conducted from low risk to high-risk order. Rescues should be conducted with the least amount of risk to the rescuer necessary to rescue the victim. Low risk operations are not always possible by means of a high-risk operation; Extrication Sector shall communicate with Command the risk/benefit of the operation. Command should assign downstream personnel, with throw bags, and an opposite water-side/bank-side sector for incidents involving swift water rescue.

The order of water rescue from low risk to high risk will be:

**TALK:** Talk the victim into self-rescue. If possible, the victim can be talked into swimming to shore or assisting the rescuers with his/her own rescue. If a victim is stranded in the middle of a flash flood, this will not be prudent.

**REACH:** If possible; the rescuer should extend his/her hand or some other object, such as a pike pole, to remove the victim from the water.

**THROW:** If the victim is too far out in the water to reach, rescuer(s) should attempt to throw the victim a throw bag or some piece of positive flotation (i.e., PFD, rescue ring). Downstream personnel should be in position during the actual rescue operation. If the victim is able to grab the throw bag, the rescuer can pendulum belays or hauls the victim to the nearest bank. Care should be taken to assure the victim will be belayed to a safe downstream position. Command should consider re-assigning the Extrication Sector to a company officer.

**ROW:** If it is determined that a boat based operation shall be run, Command should assign a company on the opposite bank to assist Extrication Sector in establishing an anchor for a rope system. The company on the opposite bank will be made aware of the action plan. Extrication Sector will be responsible for seeing that the rope system used for the boat based operation is built safe and proper. A minimum of 2-point tether should be built for swift-water operations. Extrication should consider personal protective equipment (PPE) for victim(s). 4GO if it is not possible to ROW (boat base operation) to the victim, Extrication Sector should consider putting a rescuer in the water to reach the victim. This is a very high-risk operation. Only rescuers with the proper training and equipment should be allowed to enter the water. Prior to the rescuer actually proceeding into the water, he/she shall discuss the action plan, including specific tasks and objectives, hazards and alternate plans. The rescuer shall never be attached to a lifeline

without the benefit of a quick-release mechanism. The rescuer should take PPE of at least a PFD to the victim. Members shall not do a breath-hold surface dive in an attempt to locate a victim beneath the surface of the water.

**HELICOPTER:** At times the use of a helicopter is the most reasonable method of reaching the victim. Helicopter operations over water are considered high-risk operations. Command should consult with Extrication Sector and the pilot to determine the risk/benefit of the use of a Helo. If the pilot says he/she can do the operation, Command should consider it. Extrication should assign rescuers to the helicopter and discuss with the pilot and the rescuers the specific action plan. Extrication Sector or his/her designee should address the weight and balance considerations. Command will have the final say on the use of a helicopter for water rescue operations. The pilot will have the final say on how the helicopter will be used.

**ASSESSING THE VICTIM:** Once the rescuer have reached the victim, they should do an immediate assessment of the victim; a quick assessment of the ABC's and the exact method of entrapment. If the victim is conscious, the rescuer should determine if the victim can assist in his/her own rescue. If the victim is unconscious, the rescue must be quick. If it has been determined to be an underwater or recovery operation, Extrication should proceed with a dive operation and call for M.C.S.O Dive Team operation. If the victim can assist in his/her own rescue, the rescuers should proceed with the rescue action plan. The victim should be brought to shore as soon as possible.

**TREATMENT:** As soon as the victim is brought to safety, MCHD personnel should do an assessment. Treatment shall be administered as per local protocol. If necessary, the victim shall be transported to the appropriate facility. Phase IV Termination Command should begin termination as soon as possible after the victim has been removed from the water. This shall include securing all the equipment used for the rescue and personnel accountability.

This may also include witnesses, photo's, victim's personal affects or equipment used in the rescue .Members should not become part of a towing operation to remove vehicles from the water. One company should stand by for rescue if a tow truck driver insists on retrieving the vehicle.

**PREPARE FOR TERMINATION:** Personnel accountability and .Equipment accountability. If there has been a fatality, Extrication Sector may consider leaving equipment in place for investigative purposes.

- Re-stock vehicles.

- Consider debriefing.

- Secure the scene. Return to service

- Additional Considerations:

  - HEAT. Consider rotation of crews.

  - COLD. Consider the affects of hypothermia on victim and rescuers.

  - RAIN. Consider the affects of rain on the hazard profile.

  - TIME OF DAY. Is there sufficient lighting for operations extending into the night?

Consider the affect on family and friends; keep family informed.Consider news media; assign a P.I.O.

## **OPERATING GUIDELINES**

### **EFFECTIVE DATE OCTOBER 1, 2006**

#### **3-21 THERMAL IMAGING CAMERA DEPLOYMENT PURPOSE**

The purpose of this procedure is to identify the strategic and tactical approach for the deployment of thermal imaging cameras (also referred to as TIC's).

#### **SIZE-UP**

The TIC may provide valuable information during size-up, which can assist the Incident Commander in determining the strategy and formulating the incident action plan. Early identification of tactical priorities/needs can prove beneficial in placing initial and subsequent attack lines. When a company officer or incident commander arrives on the scene, one of the first challenges is to identify the location of the fire. A TIC can save a great deal of time by helping to pinpoint a concentration of heat within a particular area of the building, especially in large commercial or multistory structures. An incident commander, armed with this knowledge, can better direct firefighters regarding their point of entry and plan of attack so as to optimize their resources. Even before firefighters enter a burning structure, the incident commander or company officer can accomplish a great deal from the exterior with the aid of thermal imaging technology. Some factors that can be assessed from the outside include finding the seat of the fire, observing changing or spreading conditions, identifying critical building construction features and identifying conditions that could threaten structural integrity. A sector officer will also benefit from this information in assessing the operational objectives, progress and needs within the sector.

#### **DEPLOYMENT**

The early and rapid deployment of the Thermal Imaging Camera (TIC), while operating in an Offensive Strategy, may enhance visibility in a visibly diminished atmosphere, thus increasing firefighter safety and survival, as well as improving the survival potential of our customers. The TIC can also be deployed while operating in a Defensive Strategy. It can provide the Incident Commander or Company Officer with valuable information during size-up. Early identification of structural compromise, fire location within the structure, e.g. attic, and identification of severely threatened exposures would provide valuable information when determining the strategy. This information would also aid in identifying key tactical positions/needs. By deploying a TIC to the exposures, information could be obtained as to the extent of impingement to the exposed structure, early identification of avenues of fire spread and possibly any hot spots, which could cause extension. It shall be the responsibility of the Company Officer/Command to rapidly deploy the TIC in a visibly diminished atmosphere or in an atmosphere that may suddenly become visibly diminished.

#### **PRIMARY APPLICATION**

The primary use of the TIC for the fire department is for conducting search/rescue and crew accountability tasks. The use of a TIC can prove to be a useful tool during search and rescue tasks by reducing the amount of time it may take using standard search techniques. This will result in a more effective and organized search, while quickly identifying the fire. By locating the fire quickly, we will better able to determine our tactical priorities and rescue priorities. The TIC will enhance the ability to maintain crew

accountability by increasing the vision capabilities of the operator/Company Officer. This will ultimately lead to enhanced firefighter safety while working in a hostile environment. This does not replace the accountability tasks required of the team leader and each individual operating on the fire ground. The team must stay together in complex situations and/or structures in order to enhance our survival.

While the TIC may enhance the operation of the crews on the fire ground, it is imperative to realize, that with any tool, there are limitations. TIC deployment into the operation should not instill a sense of security. Crews and TIC operators must be aware that the TIC may malfunction and sole reliance on the camera is not prudent firefighting. Additionally, it should not replace or violate the core of our experience, training, safety procedures, or standard firefighting practices/principles. As always, safety must be the top priority.

**OPERATING GUIDELINES**  
**EFFECTIVE DATE: OCTOBER 1, 2006**

**3-22 CAR FIRES**

This procedure identifies operational tactics for safe handling of motor vehicle fires.

**FIRE CONTROL OPERATIONS**

The minimum level of protection for firefighters is full protective clothing breathing air from their SCBA. Officer must wear full protective clothing in order to directly supervise crews. The minimum size of hose line is the 1-1/2" hand line.

**APPARATUS PLACEMENT**

Apparatus should be placed upwind and uphill of the incident if possible. This is to afford protection from hazardous liquids and vapors and reduces smoke in the work area. Consideration must be given to using the apparatus as a barrier, to shield the incident scene from traffic hazards. Warning lights should be left operating, in conjunction with the use of traffic cones where needed. Additional consideration should be given to positioning the apparatus at an angle to better allow the removal of any hose from the pre-connect cross-lay compartments.

**WATER SUPPLY**

If the water carried on the responding apparatus will not be sufficient, early considerations must be given to additional water supply sources. A supply line or other engines/tankers may be required.

**FIRE ATTACK**

A working fire involving the interior of the vehicle passenger compartment will damage the vehicle beyond repair. As such, the attack plan should consider the vehicle as a "write off" and a safe and appropriate approach and fire attack must be implemented. Where patients are trapped in the vehicle, first water should be applied to protect the patients and permit rescue. When rescue is not a factor, first water should be applied for several seconds to extinguish fire or cool down the area around any fuel tanks or fuel systems. This is especially important if the fuel tanks are Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) or Liquid Natural Gas (LNG). At least one member of the attack team must have forcible entry tools in his/her possession to provide prompt and safe entry into the vehicle.

**HAZARDS AND SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS**

Liquid Petroleum Gas (LPG) and Liquid Natural Gas (LNG) are becoming commonplace as fuel for vehicles. Pressure release devices can create a lengthy "blow torch" effect, or should the pressure relief device fail, a BLEVE may occur. Vehicles may not be marked to identify this fuel hazard. If there is flame impingement on a visible LPG/LNG storage tank, take action to control the fire and cool the tank.

If vapors escaping from the storage tank relief valve have ignited, allow the LPG/LNG to burn while protecting exposures and cooling the tank. Shutting off the valve at the storage tank can control flow of gas through piping.

Energy Absorbing Bumpers consist of gas and fluid filled cylinders that, when heated during a fire, will develop high pressures which may result in the sudden

release of the bumper assembly. This could result in serious injury to anyone in its path. Bumper assemblies have been known to travel 25 feet.

Batteries are explosion hazard due to presence of hydrogen vapors. Avoid contact with battery acid. When the situation is stable, disconnect battery cables (ground cable first).

Combustible Metals. Some vehicles have various parts made of combustible metals, such as engine blocks, heads, wheels, etc. When these metals are burning, attempts to extinguish them with water will usually add to the intensity of the fire. Large quantities of water, however, will cool the metal below its ignition temperature. After some initial intensification, the fire should go out. Dry chemical extinguishers can also be effective.

Trunk/Rear Hatch/Engine Hoods--Hold-open devices may employ, along or in any combination with any of the following: springs, gas cylinders, extending arms, etc. When gas cylinders are exposed to heat, failure or rupture of these devices should be expected. Excessive pressure may develop in lift assists causing a trunk, hatch or hood to fly open with explosive force when the latch mechanism is released. To insure personal safety, be sure to allow sufficient clearance when releasing latches.

Fires involving the trunk/cargo area should be approached with extreme caution. Contents may include toxic, flammable or other hazardous materials. Expect the worst!

Fuel Tanks. May be constructed of sheet metal or plastic. A rupture or burn-through may occur with these tanks causing a rapid flash fire of the fuel. Do not remove gas cap, as tank may have become pressurized. Do not direct hose stream into tank, as this will cause pressurization of tank, with a possible result of burning fuel spewing from the tank fill opening.

Interior. Use caution when opening doors or breaking windows. Appropriate approach, ventilation and safety concerns must be considered. Have a charged handline ready before making entry.

Vehicle Stability. Tires or split rims exposed to fire may explode, causing the vehicle to drop suddenly. Expect exploding rim parts or tire debris to be expelled outward from the sides. Approach from the front or rear of the vehicle for maximum protection from potential flying debris. Some larger vehicles, such as buses, employ an air suspension system. When these systems are exposed to heat or flame, they may fail, causing the vehicle to SUDDENLY drop several inches.

## **OPERATING GUIDELINES**

**EFFECTIVE DATE: OCTOBER 1, 2006**

### **3-23 RESPONSE TO POWER LINE/ ENERGIZED ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT**

It is our policy to respond to reports of power lines down and other hazards involving energized electrical equipment (transformers, substations, electric vaults) for fire control and public safety. It is the responsibility of the company officer to maintain that level of safety until relieved by another fire company, police agency or utility company.

#### **PURPOSE**

This procedure will establish a standard approach and response to the report of power lines down. Power lines can come in contact with the ground as a result of storm related activity, fire, or vehicles striking power poles. In all cases, the potential for electrical shock/electrocution and secondary fire must be considered.

#### **ELECTRICAL SAFETY AWARENESS**

Electricity always seeks its lowest level or ground. It will travel any path it can as it seeks a ground. A direct path to ground is when contact is made between something energized and a portion of your body such as your hand, arm, head, or other body part. An indirect path to ground happens when you are holding something or touching an object that is in contact with something energized. This could include tools or other equipment you may be holding or when touching a fence, vehicle, or other object that may be in contact with something energized. *Gradient Voltage (Step and Touch Potential)*. When power lines are down they will energize the ground around them. For Example: point of ground contact could be 700 volts. This voltage will lessen as it radiates out from this point; for example, 400 volts. If your feet are in areas where there is a voltage difference, you could complete the circuit and be the source to ground. This is called "step potential." This danger could be indicated by a tingling sensation in the feet and serve as a warning to back away from the area.

#### **Key Points**

Lock out of down power lines generally occurs after three (3) operations or attempts to reenergize. Even though you may hear this, do not assume the line is dead or de-energized. Downed lines must always be considered energized with potentially lethal current.

Lines can reset and become "hot" or "energized" again by manual operation of a switch, by automatic re-closing methods (either method from short or long distances away); by induction where a de-energized line can become hot if it's near an energized line, or through backfeed conditions.

Power line tends to have "Reel Memory" and may curl back or roll on itself when down.

Use caution when spraying water on or around energized electrical equipment. Hose streams conduct current! Never spray directly into the power lines. Use a fog spray at the base of the pole. Your primary responsibility is to protect the surrounding area.

PCB hazards: Smoke potentially fatal; avoid and contain pools of oil around transformers.

## **RESPONSE TO POWER LINES DOWN**

Request utility company to respond.

Consider all down wires as "energized."

Place apparatus away from "down lines and power poles."

Locate both ends of downed wires.

Secure the area/deny entry.

Periods of high activity; company officer may choose to leave one (1) crew member on scene with a radio to wait for utility company.

In the event of multiple lines/poles down over a large area, call additional resources.

All personnel upon arrival must report to command or acct.

## **DOWN POWER LINES AND VEHICLES**

Request utility company to respond.

Do not touch vehicle.

Have occupants remain inside the vehicle.

Place apparatus a safe distance away from down lines.

If occupants must leave the vehicle (fire or other threat to life) instruct them to open the door, not step out! They should jump free of the vehicle without touching vehicle and ground at the same time.

All personnel upon arrival must report to command or acct.

## **SUB-STATION, TRANSFORMER, ELECTRICAL VAULT AND MANHOLE FIRE**

Request utility company to respond.

Clear the area.

Be aware of explosion potential.

Place apparatus in a safe location away from overhead power lines.

Protect exposures.

All personnel upon arrival must report to command or acct.

**POLICIES AND PROCEDURES  
EFFECTIVE DATE OCTOBER 1, 2006**

**3-24 RESCUE & EXTRICATION GUIDLINE**

**Policy Currently Not in Place.**

**POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**  
**EFFECTIVE DATE OCTOBER 1, 2006**

**3-25 CLANDESTINE DRUG LABORATORIES GUIDELINES:**

**SCOPE:**

The number of clandestine drug laboratories has increased dramatically in recent years. The number of seizures, “busts”, or “raids”, made by law enforcement agencies has also increased. Clandestine drug laboratory investigations, seizures, and arrests of suspects are all police department or law enforcement agency matters. However, local law enforcement agencies are calling upon fire department hazardous incident response teams for assistance during raids and for advice on safety matters

**POLICY:**

The Splendora Fire Department will provide limited support for police departments and other agencies, when requested, at sites of clandestine drug laboratories. All clandestine drug laboratories will be investigated by the Montgomery County Sheriff's office and Montgomery County Fire Marshall's office. These two agencies must be contacted as soon as possible.

**HAZARDS:**

Substitution of proper equipment with unsafe items is prevalent in low budget clandestine laboratory operations. For example, pressure cookers have been substituted for three neck flasks in the initial cooking stage of methamphetamine. Without ventilation, this type of operation can easily generate toxic levels of phosphene gas. Booby traps have been left in place and armed when a lab is abandoned. Opening or moving doors, windows, refrigerator doors, chemical containers, or furniture may be a triggering mechanism for an explosive device or chemical reaction that is lethal. Trip wires made from monofilament fishing line may be strung across doorways, hallways, or across rooms to activate different types of devices. It is imperative that nothing is moved, shut off, turned on, or touched, at a laboratory, whether it is operational or abandoned. Electric switches, vacuum pumps, glassware, chemical containers, or anything that is plugged into a wall outlet should not be touched. Water sources, especially to reflux or condensing towers, should not be shut off. Shutting off the water supply to a cooking process can result in an explosion.

**INDICATORS:**

Personnel should be aware of the indications of potential clandestine drug laboratories when responding to EMS, Fire, Gas in Residence, or any other service request.

Common indicators are:

Unusual odors like ether, acetic, solvents, and odors of urea.

Glassware that is normally associated with school or industrial laboratories, such as flasks, beakers, flasks with vacuum ports, glass cooling towers, and funnels.

Heating elements, hot plates, or heating mantles

Vacuum pumps, plastic or rubber tubing.

Marked and unmarked chemical containers of various sizes.

**TACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS:**

The recognition of the presence of a clandestine drug laboratory that is involved in a fire may not occur until after fire control has been achieved. The initial indications of the presence of a laboratory may be subtle or very apparent. Depending on the products involved, a fire in a lab can spread faster and burn with more intensity than what might normally be expected. The color of the flames may appear to be an unusually bright or dark orange, or the flames may be of several different colors. An unusual color of smoke or odor may also be present. A laboratory that is involved in a fire situation should be viewed pessimistically by command. A defensive mode may be appropriate for personnel safety. Standard protective clothing and SCBA use may not afford complete protection. An acceptable alternative is to protect any exposures and allow the fire to burn, providing the products of combustion being generated are not complicating the problem further. Run-off may also create a problem and diking may be necessary.

**HEALTH AND SAFETY:**

Personnel showing any signs or symptoms of a chemical exposure during or after any incident involving a laboratory or a suspected laboratory should be treated and transported to a hospital. All potentially exposed personnel and equipment must be decontaminated. All potentially exposed personnel should complete a Hazardous Material Exposure Report. Exposed equipment, especially protective clothing, may have to be properly disposed of. Notification should be made directly to the fire chief or their assistants.

**ENTRY:** The Splendora Fire Department personnel will not participate in a law enforcement agency entry operation into a suspected and unsecured clandestine drug laboratory. Security shall mean that law enforcement teams have surveyed the area and all suspects are in custody, and confirmation that the building has been searched and no explosive devices were found. Splendora Fire Department personnel may make entry into a secured drug laboratory if an emergency situation involving hazardous materials develops and if the safety of the Splendora Fire Department personnel is not jeopardized.

**ADDITIONAL FIRE DEPARTMENT RESOURCE:**

The incident commander, on duty officer, or battalion chief needed at the site will determine additional resource requirements. A multi-company response will cause the activation of the incident command system.

**DISPOSAL:**

Proper disposal of the hazardous material(s) in a clandestine laboratory is the responsibility of the law enforcement agency that is making the seizure. The law enforcement agency on-scene must arrange clean up with the proper contractor.

**POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**  
**EFFECTIVE DATE OCTOBER 1, 2006**

**3-26 RESCUE BOAT OPERATIONS**

**Purpose:**

To guide personnel to a successful conclusion of emergency incidents involving water rescue and high water evacuation, without injuring themselves or citizens. This guideline will enhance fire department operations during hurricanes, floods, and water rescues.

**Objectives:**

To define the responsibilities and duties of fire department personnel at incidents involving the use of rescue or evacuation boats. To standardize the emergency response guideline, while providing for maximum safety of all personnel.

Policy currently not in place.

# **Splendora Fire Department**

## ***Code of Ethics***

Montgomery County ESD #11/ Splendora Fire Department is proud to serve our community, and we have set our goals high in order to provide the best fire/rescue service for the Splendora area. The citizens of Montgomery County expect and deserve the best possible service from the fire department. The citizens expect members of its fire department to be neat, courteous, honest, and of good conduct. To this end, we, the members of the Splendora Fire Department, recognizing the critical role of conscience in choosing among courses of action and taking into account the moral ambiguities of life, commit ourselves to:

1. Demonstrate the highest standards of personal integrity, truthfulness, honesty, and fortitude in all our public activities in order to inspire public confidence and trust in Montgomery County ESD #11/ and the Splendora Fire Dept.
2. Serve the public with respect, concern, courtesy, and responsiveness, recognizing that service to the public is beyond service to oneself.
3. Strive for personal professional excellence and encourage the professional development of our department members and those seeking to enter the field of firefighting.
4. Approach our organization and operational duties with a positive attitude and constructively support open communication, creativity, dedication, and compassion.
5. Serve in such a way that we do not realize undue personal gain from the performance of our official duties.
6. Avoid any interest or activity, which is in conflict with the conduct of our official duties.
7. Respect and protect the privileged information to which we have access in the course of official duties.
8. Exercise whatever discretionary authority we have under law to promote public interest.
9. Accept as a personal duty the responsibility to keep up to date on emerging issues and to administer the public's business with professional competence, fairness, impartiality, efficiency, and effectiveness.
10. Support, implement, and promote merit employment and programs of affirmative action to assure equal opportunity by our recruitment, selection, and advancement of qualified persons from all elements of society.

11. Eliminate all forms of illegal discrimination, fraud, and mismanagement of all public funds, and support of colleagues if they are in difficulty because of responsible efforts to correct such discrimination, fraud, mismanagement or abuse.

12. Respect, support, study, and when necessary, work to improve federal and state constitutions and other laws, which define the relationships among public agencies, department members, and all citizens.

Member Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Witness Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Fire Chief's Sig: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_