

Alton Fire & Rescue Department Standard Operating Guidelines (SOG)

SOG 1.3.11 Assessment of Safety Conditions at an Incident (reference SOP 1.3.11)

PURPOSE: To outline safety parameters and risk assessment guidelines.

SCOPE: All Department Members.

SPECIFICS:

- Assessing safety conditions shall be an on-going part of all tactical and strategic decision-making at all incidents and training settings.
- All members are responsible for communicating safety related information.
- All members are authorized to not follow a directive that is in violation of a safety related SOG or a standard practice.

DATE: Approved December 30, 2008

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Standard Operating Procedures (SOP)

SOP 1.3.11 Assessment of Safety Conditions at an Incident

PURPOSE: To outline safety parameters and risk assessment guidelines.

SCOPE: All Department Members.

SPECIFICS:

- Assessing safety conditions shall be an on-going part of all tactical and strategic decision-making at all incidents and training settings.
- All members are responsible for communicating safety related information.
 - Members functioning in a supervisory role at the scene of an emergency shall accept and act upon all safety related information as soon as is practical to ensure safety at the scene.
 - Immediate questioning of orders that appear to the recipient to be unsafe is required prior to implementing the order.
 - The questioning of orders shall address a specific concern providing the supervisor information to assess the issue.
 - If the action cannot be clarified ensuring the mitigation of the safety issue, then:
 - The action shall not be taken by the work group with the issue; and
 - The next level of supervision is to be immediately notified of the issue; and
 - Alternative methods of accomplishing the task in question shall be explored.
- Members are authorized to not follow a directive that is in violation of a safety related SOG or a standard practice.
- Disciplinary action:
 - Disciplinary actions SHALL NOT be taken against any member questioning an unsafe action at an emergency that could obviously be expected to cause injury to themselves or members of their work group.
 - Disciplinary action MAY be taken against a member questioning an unsafe action at an emergency if the concern is presented in what would obviously be determined to be in an insubordinate or disrespectful manner.

- Disciplinary action SHALL be taken against any member who is found to have:
 - Intentionally violated safety directives at an incident.
 - Intentionally given a directive or order that violates a safety related SOG or standard practice whether it results in the injury of a member or not.
 - Questioned a perceived unsafe action at any time if it is obviously in an insubordinate or disrespectful manner.
- Responsibilities:
 - All members are responsible for:
 - Their own safety as well as the safety of those working with them.
 - Continuously identifying unsafe actions.
 - Reporting unsafe actions to their immediate supervisor or nearest/most assessable supervisor.
 - Maintaining knowledge of safety related SOGs and standards of practice so as to minimize the potential for the injury, illness or death to themselves or other members.
 - Supervisory Personnel are responsible for:
 - Conducting a risk assessment at every incident, with an associated plan to minimize those risks.
 - Maintaining knowledge of safety related SOGs and standards of practice so as to minimize the potential for the injury, illness or death to themselves or other members.
 - Incident Commanders are responsible for:
 - Evaluating the level of risk at every incident to include at least the following:
 - The presence, survivability and potential to rescue human life.
 - The presence of savable property that requires minimal risk to members.
 - The presence of conditions that could create risk to members; including the presence of hazardous environments, unstable structures, chemicals, biological agents (including contagious disease) or explosive devices.
 - The “mechanism of the incident” or the cause and the potential that the cause of the incident itself may manifest itself in a way to increase the risk to members (such as unstable weather patterns, unruly patients or growing civil disturbance).
 - Re-evaluating incident conditions as often as necessary, but not less than every 20 minutes.;
 - Assigning a Safety Officer as necessary in conformance with Department SOGs.

- **Risk Assessment Guidelines for Structure Fire Fighting Operations include at least:**
 - Construction type, condition and size of structure, occupancy and contents.
 - Fire factors:
 - Location and extent of fire,
 - Estimated time of involvement.
 - Smoke conditions:
 - Volume,
 - Velocity,
 - Color,
 - Density.
 - Risk to occupants:
 - Known or probable occupants.
 - Fire fighting capabilities:
 - Available resources.
 - Operational capabilities and limitations.

- **Risk Assessment Guidelines for Emergency Medical Operations include at least:**
 - Surveying the scene regarding:
 - Traffic hazards,
 - Structural hazards,
 - Visible signs of violence or potential violence – especially in situations that could escalate to involve members.
 - Surveying the patient regarding:
 - Weapons or other items that could injure members,
 - Obvious signs of blood borne pathogens.
 - Evaluating information acquired regarding:
 - Unseen hazards to members,
 - Potential situations that could pose a risk to members.

- **Risk Assessment Guidelines for Hazardous Material Operations include at least:**
 - Evaluation of the training and the equipment of members on scene enabling a rescue in a “hot zone.”
 - Evaluation of members to support those in the “hot zone.”
 - Evaluation of time necessary to effect a rescue and the potential for rescue versus the need to shift to a recovery operations mode.

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