

Alton Fire & Rescue Department Standard Operating Guidelines (SOG)

SOG 1.3.3 Operating Power Saws (Reference SOP 1.3.3)

PURPOSE: To ensure the safe operation of power saws

SCOPE: Personnel operating power saws

SPECIFICS:

- Whenever possible, the crew leader shall be present to supervise cutting operations and to assure compliance with safety procedures.
- The number of personnel should be limited to the minimal number required to sustain the operation.
- **FUELING AND MAINTENANCE PRECAUTIONS.** Observe all safety regulations on the safe handling of fuel.

DATE: Approved: 9/13/2007; Revised August 25, 2009

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Standard Operating Procedures (SOP)

SOP 1.3.3 Operating Power Saws

PURPOSE: To ensure the safe operation of power saws

SCOPE: Personnel operating power saws

SPECIFICS:

- Whenever possible, the crew leader shall be present to supervise cutting operations and to assure compliance with safety procedures.
- The number of personnel should be limited to the minimal number required to sustain the operation. All other personnel should move to a safe location until the operation is complete or assistance with the operation is needed.
- Personnel operating power saws should wear appropriate protective equipment.
- Always place the safety guard in the proper position to provide protection for the use intended before operating the saw.
- Operating a power saw above chest height is extremely hazardous and should not be attempted as a normal course of action.
 - This type of operation shall be conducted only under the direct order and/or under the supervision of an officer. The officer ordering this operation shall weigh the value gained against the extreme hazard to personnel.
- The use of a power saw from ladders is not recommended, if there are alternatives. All equipment will be carried and operated in a safe manner. When operating close to highly combustible materials, care shall be exercised to prevent ignition from sparks.

- Side pressure or twisting of blade when operating a rescue saw must be avoided. The saw should never be forced. If too much pressure is applied to the blade, the hazard of blade breakage (carbide tipped) or blade shattering (aluminum oxide or silicon carbide discs) is increased. (A blade which breaks or shatters during cutting operations may cause serious injury to the operator, or to others in the area).
- The saw cut should be only as deep as necessary. Deep cuts may weaken supporting beams and lead to collapse. The experienced operator will know when he has reached a beam by the sound and feel of the saw. The blade guard if equipped can be used to control the cutting depth of the blade (rescue saw).
- If conditions permit, scrape gravel and debris from the path to be cut, in order to reduce the danger of injury from flying chips and loose materials.
- When using the rescue saw to open metal buildings, doors, etc., (where conditions permit) utilize methods to eliminate the hazards of sharp edges. (Consider making your cut in either an X design or a triangular design with the points bent inward).

FUELING AND MAINTENANCE PRECAUTIONS

- Observe all safety regulations on the safe handling of fuel. When necessary to refuel, comply with the following:
 1. The saw should never be refueled while the engine is running.
 2. If fuel is spilled while refueling, wipe off saw before starting.
 3. Do not operate the saw if there is a fuel leak.
 4. Do not restart the saw in a small enclosed space after refueling.
- Equipment should be kept in good, clean, and in serviceable condition. Examine the rescue saw cutting wheel for nicks or defects at regular intervals and after each use. (Care must be taken to assure that the abrasive saw blades do not become contaminated with petroleum based products. Such contamination may dissolve the resin which is

used to bond the blade, causing the blade to shatter when used). New blades should be stored in plastic bags to ensure cleanliness.

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