
	<b>STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINE</b>				
	OPERATIONS				
	INTERIOR STRUCTURAL FIREFIGHTER SAFETY, 2-IN, 2-OUT				
	Effective: 01/Oct/99	Revised: 28/Dec/2020	S.O.G. #: O-333	Page: 1 of 3	

**1.0 Objective**

- 1.1 The purpose of this guideline is to establish procedures for Fire Department personnel when commencing interior firefighting operations at structural fires where an Immediate Danger to Life and Health (IDLH) atmosphere exists as defined by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA).

**2.0 Responsibility**



- 2.1 It is the responsibility of all Department personnel to understand the procedures documented in this Standard Operating Guideline.

**3.0 Definitions**

- 3.1 Immediate Danger to Life and Health (IDLH) Atmosphere - The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) defines an IDLH atmosphere for interior structure fires to be “an advanced fire that has spread inside of the building where high temperatures, heat, and dense smoke” are present.
- 3.2 Working Structure Fire - Terminology used to identify any structure fire that meets the definition of an IDLH atmosphere.
- 3.3 Initial Stages of an Incident - Includes the period of an incident when tasks are being undertaken by the first arriving Company with only one team assigned or operating in the IDLH atmosphere.
- 3.4 Early Stages of an Incident - Includes the period of an incident following the initial stages of an incident. This period of an incident is indicated by having more than one team operating within the IDLH atmosphere.
- 3.5 Rapid Intervention Company (RIC) - A specifically designated rescue team at the scene of an emergency incident (beyond the initial stage of the operation) designed to provide personnel for the rescue of Fire Department members operating at the emergency incident if the need arises. The Rapid Intervention Standard Operating Guideline is O-310.

**4.0 Guideline**

- 4.1 At least four members shall be assembled before initiating interior firefighting operations at working structural fires (except as noted in 6.0 - Exceptions). At any time during an incident, the Incident Commander may request additional resources to maintain a safe emergency scene operation. On-scene operations shall be limited to those that can be safely performed by the personnel on the scene. The four members assembled for initial firefighting operations can include any combination of members arriving separately at the incident. This guideline is intended to compliment the Incident Commander’s use of discretionary judgment.
- 4.2 Whenever there is more than one team operating or assigned in the IDLH atmosphere, the incident shall no longer be considered in the “initial stage” and at least one RIC shall be required.
- 4.3 When a Company arrives on the scene and determines that an IDLH atmosphere exists at a structure fire, the Company Officer shall advise the Dispatch Center of a “working structure fire” as part of their initial size-up and radio report.
- 4.4 Members operating in the IDLH atmosphere area at emergency incidents shall operate in teams of two or more. Personnel are required to wear and utilize their Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA) and shall at no time enter an IDLH atmosphere alone. Team members operating in an IDLH atmosphere shall be in communication with each other through visual, audible, physical, safety rope, or electronic means. Team members must be in close proximity to each other to provide assistance in case of emergency.
- 4.5 During the initial stages of an incident, two (2) of the required four-person minimum on the scene must remain outside of the IDLH atmosphere as standby persons.
- 4.6 One (1) of the standby persons must provide constant awareness and maintain communications with the members of the interior team. This member *must* be equipped with a portable radio. The other standby person is permitted to perform other duties outside the IDLH atmosphere, such as the Apparatus Operator, Incident Commander, or

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other outside position. The duties of this standby person must not interfere with his/her ability to perform the duties of a standby person and assist in the event of an emergency.

- 4.7 The standby person(s) must have *full protective equipment, including S.C.B.A., necessary* to enter an IDLH atmosphere *readily accessible* in the event that the team members operating in the IDLH atmosphere need rescue.
- 4.8 If the standby person(s) is required to enter the structure to rescue the team member(s), the standby person(s) must notify the Highland Park Dispatcher before entering the structure (if the Battalion Chief is not already on the scene). The Highland Park Dispatcher shall confirm that the responding Battalion Chief is aware of the actions being taken.
- 4.9 Members who arrive on the scene of a “working structure fire” prior to the assembling of four persons may initiate *exterior* actions in preparation for an interior attack. These may include, but are not limited to, actions such as the establishment of a water supply, shutting off the utilities, placement of ladders, laying an attack line to the entrance of the IDLH atmosphere, or as exposure protection. (Except as noted in Section 6.0)
- 4.10 All first alarm companies (Code 3 and 4 units) must verbally acknowledge when they arrive on the scene of structure fires by radio. This verbal announcement is to inform the first arriving company(s) that additional personnel are on the scene. Arriving Companies should stage pursuant to Standard Operating Guideline O-309: Staging, unless given orders otherwise.

**5.0 Procedure: Initial Stages of Operation**

5.1 Non-High rise Fires



- 5.1.1 If a Fire Company arrives on the scene of a “working structural fire” with less than four persons on the scene, the Company *must* wait until four persons are assembled on the scene before initiating interior fire operations in an IDLH atmosphere (except as noted in Section 6.0 ).
- 5.1.2 When the first arriving unit(s) is staffed with four (4) persons, the Company Officer will normally assign the Apparatus Operator and one Firefighter as the standby persons until the RIC is established. Once the RIC is established in accordance with S.O.G. O-310, the standby person(s) will report to the Incident Commander for reassignment. Normally, these personnel will be reassigned to their respective Companies such as Engine #33 working with Truck #33 and the Ambulances working with their respective Engine or Squad Company.

5.2 High rise Fires

- 5.2.1 When the first arriving unit on scene and they have less than four personnel, the Company Officer shall utilize all assigned personnel to investigate the situation, but not enter the IDLH atmosphere until another unit arrives on the scene. The second arriving unit will serve as the standby persons until the RIC is established. Once the RIC is established, the standby persons will report to Command for reassignment.
- 5.2.2 When the first arriving unit on scene with four or more personnel, the Company Officer shall utilize all personnel to investigate the situation. If the Company Officer determines that entry into the IDLH is warranted before another unit arrives on the scene, two personnel must remain outside the IDLH atmosphere (floor below or enclosed stairwell) as the standby persons until another unit arrives on the scene or until the RIC is established.

**6.0 Exceptions**

- 6.1 If, upon arrival at the scene, members find a situation where immediate action may prevent the loss of life or serious injury, such action is permitted with less than four persons on the scene when conducted in accordance with normal size-up indicators and fireground evaluation factors.
  - 6.1.1 Residential Occupancies - In the absence of a report from a responsible person on the scene that everyone is out of the residence, it is to be assumed that a life hazard exists until the primary search has been completed and an all-clear has been reported to Command.

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- 6.1.2 Business or Commercial (Non-Residential) Occupancies - The Company Officer will have to evaluate the situation (normal size-up procedures), considering the occupancy, time of day, day of the week, reports from persons on the scene, signs that persons may be inside the structure, etc. to determine what mode of operation they will proceed with.
- 6.1.3 Vacant or Abandoned Structure - Entry into the IDLH atmosphere with less than the minimum four (4) persons on the scene is *not allowed* unless there are clear signs or a report from a responsible person on the scene that people are in the structure.
- 6.2 If, upon arrival at the scene, members find a situation where immediate actions may prevent the loss of life or serious injury, and four members have not yet arrived on the scene, the members should carefully evaluate the level of risk that they would be exposed to by taking such actions.
- 6.3 If the risk evaluation determines that the situation warrants immediate intervention to prevent the loss of life and four persons have not yet arrived on the fireground, the members must notify Dispatch of their actions, who will relay this to the responding Battalion Chief. Such action is intended to apply only to those circumstances when the member's training and experience indicate that the nature and extent of the fire call for such actions to prevent the potential loss of life or serious injury.
- 6.4 If the decision is made to enter an IDLH atmosphere before four persons are assembled on the scene, the member making that decision will forward a report after the incident to his/her Battalion Chief explaining his/her reason for doing so.

**7.0 Reference**

- 7.1 Highland Park Fire Department
- 7.2 NFPA 1710: 5.2.3 Deployment: Initial Full Alarm Assignment Capability: 5.2.3.2.2 (5)

Approved:  Fire Chief