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| ***REPLACE WITH YOUR MASTHEAD*** | | |
| **VFIS logo black JPG** | **SOG Title:** | |
| **SOG Number:** | |
| **Original Date:** | **Revision Date:** |
| **ABC Fire Department General Operating Guideline** | | |

**Rescue**

***This is a sample of a standard operating guideline (SOG) on this topic. You should review the content, modify as appropriate for your organization, have it reviewed by your leadership team and if appropriate your legal counsel. Once adopted, make sure the SOG is communicated to members, implemented and performance monitored for effective implementation.***

**Purpose:**

To define the concept of search and rescue. It will be the policy of the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Fire Department to perform a search in all involved and exposed occupancies which can be entered.

**Definitions:**

Primary Search — a quick and thorough search of all involved and exposed areas by the fire that can be entered to verify the removal and/or safety of all occupants. The speed and completeness of this search phase must be emphasized to maximize victim survival. Primary searches will constitute all searches performed during the initial operations phase.

Secondary Search — a thorough search performed after the fire has been confined. Different companies should perform secondary searches than those involved in the primary search.

**Procedures:**

* The primary area for life safety is the fire floor which will be the first area searched.
* The second most critical area for life safety is the floor above the fire. Once the fire floor has been searched, the floor above the fire will be searched.
* The third most critical area for life safety is the uppermost floor of the fire building. When the primary search on the fire floor and the floor above has been completed, the upper most floor will be searched.
* The fourth most critical area for life safety are the floors between the floor above the fire and the uppermost floor of the fire building. This area will searched after the uppermost floor working downward toward the fire floor.
* Upon completion of the primary search on a specific floor, the individual responsible for the search shall communicate to the Incident Commander through the chain of command:
  + “FLOOR # PRIMARY SEARCH COMPLETE ALL CLEAR”. This will indicate that no victims were found during the primary search.
  + If a victim is found, the victim shall be removed from the structure and the IC notified through the chain of command. The IC shall call for another crew to complete the primary search
* The search pattern used by \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Fire Department shall be done in a consistently. Crews performing a primary search without a hand line shall be aware of the location of a hand line in the event they require immediate protection. If a search crew without a hand line must go past or above the fire, they will only do so when at least one hand line is in place and the hand line crew is aware of the search crews; destination.
* Incident command will not depend upon reports from civilians to determine the status of victims. Fire fighters should utilize reports pertaining to location, number and the condition of victims as support fin primary search efforts and must perform and complete a primary search wherever entry is possible.
* The incident commander must make a basic rescue decision to either remove victims from the fire or the fire from the victims. In certain situations, occupants may be safer where they are located than removing them through hazardous areas and in addition, such actions may impede fire-fighting efforts.
* All initial fire attack efforts must be directed toward supporting rescue efforts and hose lines must be placed in a manner to control interior access, confine the fire and protect avenues of escape. Hose line placement is a critical factor in these situations and the IC and all other operating companies must realize that the operation is in a rescue mode. It may be necessary to operate in a manner that “writes off’ the building in order to have adequate rescue time.
* Normal means of interior access (stairs, halls, interior public areas, etc.) should be utilized to remove victims whenever it is possible. Secondary means of rescue via ladders, ropes and fire escapes should be used in theft order of effectiveness.

***This is a sample guideline furnished to you by VFIS. Your organization should review this guideline and make the necessary modifications to meet your organization’s needs. The intent of this guideline is to assist you in reducing exposure to the risk of injury, harm or damage to personnel, property and the general public. For additional information on this topic, contact your VFIS Risk Control representative.***

**References:**

West Redding (CT) VFD – GOG 6-OF-602 Developed/Revised/Reviewed by VFIS ETC