



# PROCEDURES MANUAL

**SUBJECT:** Structure Fire Operations – Safety Considerations

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203.01.01

**APPROVED:**

*RW*

FIRE CHIEF

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## 203.01.01 Structure Fire Operations - Safety Considerations

### A. Purpose

To address safety considerations during structure fire operations.

### B. Full protective clothing including SCBA, shall be worn at the scene of all structure fires until the Incident Commander directs otherwise.

*Note:* Personnel raising ladders, working outside the building, or other external activities, are not mandated to use respiratory protective equipment as long as they are in a clear atmosphere.

### C. Members responding to working fires, or multiple alarm fires, will be wearing full protective equipment, including SCBA when reporting to the Incident Commander.

### D. All units will work under the direction of "Command", no free-lancing.

1. Companies shall function as part of a team working on their assignment as a cohesive unit.
2. All Companies should be supervised by a Company Officer and the Company Officer is responsible for the accountability and cohesiveness of the unit.
3. All Companies should leave the IDLH together. No Company Officer should send one member on a remote task or out of a building by themselves. In the event this occurs due to the inability to leave as a unit due to fire control efforts or no relief, then:
  - a. Officer must communicate to Command ("Engine 2, FF Smith leaving the building due to \_\_\_\_")
  - b. The firefighter leaving must verbally notify that he/she is clear of the building.
  - c. If the firefighter is going to rejoin his Company, Command shall notify the Company Officer and he/she must verify this firefighter makes it back to the working area.
4. If an immediate evacuation of the structure by operating units becomes necessary, an emergency message calling for retreat will be transmitted

on all radio channels in use at the scene (Fire ground and Dispatch).

- a. *Reference 203.01.04 – F. Structure Fire Operations – Radio Reports and Communications.*
  - b. Upon hearing this retreat message and/or signal, members shall immediately leave the structure and reassemble outside the fire perimeter.
  - c. The MSA SCBA Monitoring System evacuation signal shall be activated by the Accountability Officer.
    - i. This system will send a message to all activated ICM's on the fire ground to evacuate the structure.
    - ii. All members shall acknowledge this message via the ICM on the SCBA.
  - d. Company Officers shall account for all members and report a PAR to Accountability or to their assigned Division Supervisor upon exiting the building.
  - e. A PAR shall then be completed by the Accountability Officer for all companies that have not self-reported a PAR upon evacuation.
5. Critical Events or Dangerous Conditions
- a. All members operating at structure fire scenes should be aware of dangerous situations that may occur during a fire.
  - b. Any member who witnesses signs of these events or conditions shall notify their supervisor immediately. Supervisors shall notify Command and take appropriate action to protect persons.
  - c. Transmissions involving critical events would fall under "Emergency" communications. (*Reference Section 203.01.15 Mayday & Emergency Declaration*).
6. Two In and Two Out
- a. Fire fighters will not enter an Immediately Dangerous to Life (IDLH) atmosphere unless.
    - i. At least two fire fighters, using a buddy system, enter an IDLH atmosphere and remain in visual and voice contact with one another at all times.
    - ii. At least two fire fighters are located outside as initial back-up and the conditions for entry into an IDLH atmosphere listed below are met.
  - b. Nothing in this procedure is meant to prohibit fire fighters from performing emergency, LIFE SAVING RESCUE activities before an entire team has assembled.
    - i. When victims' lives are at stake, we will take a higher risk to save lives.

- ii. We will **NOT** take extreme risks for property.
  - iii. This exemption is for true life saving situations **ONLY**.
  - c. In order to ensure safe operations, these procedures may require an initial delay prior to entry especially for outlying companies. The first fire company on the scene in this situation should use this time to prepare for a safe and efficient interior attack into an IDLH atmosphere.
  - d. Members shall never make an interior attack on a fire beyond the incipient stage **without at least 2 fire fighters dressed in full PPE with SCBA on the scene as BACKUP**
7. Companies should use discipline not to overcrowd stairways, hallways and fire areas in the event rapid egress is needed.
- a. This is particularly important when committing resources into upper floors of residential buildings via narrow stairways.
  - b. Officer of Second Due Engine is responsible to keep the stairway clear. **The 2<sup>nd</sup> Engine Officer is in charge of the stairs, regardless of rank and will maintain a clear path of ingress and egress.**
  - c. Personnel shouldn't stage on the stairway, either be up or down.
  - d. Don't block the means of egress.
  - e. Company Officers must exercise discipline to ensure means of egress and fire areas aren't overcrowded with firefighters.
8. Exclusion Zones, Fire Zones and Fire Perimeters will be established as necessary (*Refer to Section 202.06 Fire Zones/ Perimeters*).