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**CHAPTER II            Operations**  
**SUBJECT 3            Emergency Operations**  
**TOPIC 19             Railroad Emergencies**

Rev. 3/91

A.    SCOPE

To define operational procedures at railroad derailments and or fires.

B.    PRIORITIES

1.    To determine which mode of operation to follow. A decision must be made to either commit forces to "fight the fire", or to withdraw and evacuate the area.
2.    Pre-planning which railroads traverse your district, how the railroads are contacted including a list of telephone numbers. Access roads, water supply, evacuation routes, etc.
3.    All fire companies should know if the tracks in their district are main line or switch tracks leading to an industrial complex.

C.    SAFETY

1.    Responding members shall wear full protective clothing including SCBA.
2.    In fires involving pressure tank cars, (DOT 105 or 112) observe for possible B.L.E.V.E conditions. If B.L.E.V.E. conditions exist, evacuate area immediately.
3.    When a cargo fire involves hazardous materials such as:  
          Explosives  
          Oxidizers  
          Organic Peroxides  
          Poison - A  
          Unstable or Reactive  
the immediate and/or surrounding areas should be evacuated.
4.    When operating in areas where several sets of tracks must be crossed to approach emergency, caution must be used until all rail traffic is shut down.

C. SAFETY (continued)

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5. Fire apparatus can be an excellent source of ignition when driven up close to rail incidents. Keep apparatus back, and if approach is necessary, do so on foot with full fire protection clothing including SCBA.
6. Do not approach derailed cars within 2000 feet, unless life is involved or absolute identification is made of product in derailed cars. If cars are leaking toxic or hazardous materials, follow 'HAZARDOUS MATERIAL', procedures, Chapter 203.20.

D. FIRE FIGHTING ALONG OR OVER RAILROAD TRACKS

1. Make every attempt to determine what is involved in fire before making an offensive attack. Incident Commander to use binoculars. Attempt to locate railroad engineer and/or conductor to obtain shipping papers.
2. Lay the first fire line over tracks, then immediately lay a section of hose under tracks and shut down line. Then connect to line under tracks eliminating the hazard of hose being cut by trains.
3. If train(s) must be halted due to multiple lines over tracks, hazard to fire fighters, or because of the nature of the fire or emergency:
  - (a) Notify Fire Alarm Dispatcher of location and ownership of track.
  - (b) Send fire fighters both directions on track at least ½ mile to alert oncoming train of problem ahead on track. Light flares and place in middle of tracks. Give hand signals to oncoming train. Train Engineers have orders not to proceed past any flare.

D. FIRE FIGHTING ALONG OR OVER RAILROAD TRACKS (continued) Rev. 8/89

- © Railroad tracks have small electrical charges going through the tracks. By laying a metal bar across tracks, thereby closing circuit, the lighting will change warning oncoming trains of possible problems ahead. Station a Fire Fighter by metal object to remove same if train approaches. This will only work on main line tracks.
- (d) Fire Fighters sent down tracks shall have portable radios to notify command when trains are approaching.