

San Mateo County Fire Service POLICIES AND STANDARDS MANUAL

Title: Out Team

Policy No. 2000-11

Adopted 10/03/00

Revised 07/11/05

Purpose: The purpose of this policy is to provide additional safety for firefighters at emergency incidents and to insure that all joint operations involving San Mateo fire agencies adhere to applicable State and Federal regulations. This policy outlines specific procedures to be followed by firefighters operating in an IDLH (immediately dangerous to life and health) atmosphere.

Policy: It is the policy of the San Mateo County Fire Chiefs that entry team personnel shall follow the specific procedures and requirements outlined below for any operations within an IDLH atmosphere. Incident commanders shall also assign an "Out Team" of at least two trained and equipped firefighters to provide accountability and to assist with emergency rescue of entry team members.

References:

- 29 CFR 1910.134 Respiratory Protection Standard
- NFPA 1500: Health and Safety Program, part 204.2.
- ICS – 910 Firefighter Incident Safety and Accountability Guidelines
- San Mateo County Fire Service Policies and Standards Manual Rapid Intervention Crew Policy No. 2000-10

Background: Federal regulations require standby protection for an entry team entering an IDLH environment that includes stationing a minimum of two trained and equipped personnel at the entry point of the IDLH atmosphere for the purpose of emergency rescue and accountability. IDLH means an atmosphere that would cause irreversible adverse health effects, or would impair an individual's ability to escape from a dangerous atmosphere.

Procedures:

1. All firefighters shall wear positive-pressure SCBA and SAR equipment when entering IDLH atmospheres.
2. Members operating in hazardous areas at emergency incidents shall operate in teams of two or more.

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3. Direct contact between inside team members shall be maintained via voice, visual, or tether line. Radios are not acceptable as the only means of contact between inside team members.
4. The ICS identification term for the Outside Rescue/Accountability Team in San Mateo County will be known as the **Out Team**.
5. The Out Team will consist of at least two trained individuals outside the IDLH atmosphere assigned to provide immediate rescue and accountability.
 - a) One of the Out Team members shall be in full protective clothing, with SCBA, rescue equipment, communications-equipped and dedicated at the point of entry to the IDLH atmosphere. This individual shall maintain accountability. Accountability must be in some written form.
 - b) The other Out Team member(s) shall be in full protective clothing, with SCBA, and may be assigned to an additional role.
 - c) Assignments shall not be made to Out Team members if by abandoning the assignment to assist with or perform rescue, they jeopardize the safety and health of any firefighter working at the incident.
 - d) The Out Team may include the Incident Commander or an apparatus operator if properly dressed and equipped.
7. Full compliance with this policy and procedures is required except:
 - a) When immediate action is required to prevent loss of life or serious injury.
 - b) When a single team of less than four personnel is on the scene and immediate rescue of civilians is required. In this case, the rescue team shall direct responding companies to provide necessary rescue support and back-up upon arrival.
 - c) When the fire is in the incipient stage.
8. No exception shall be permitted when there is no possibility to save lives.

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9. Every rescue action will be investigated and a report forwarded to the agency Fire Chief.
10. When a Rapid Intervention Crew (RIC) is established, the Incident Commander shall have the following options with regard to the status of the Out Team:
 - Keep one member of the Out Team in place for accountability purposes and have the remaining Out Team members available for re-assignment on the incident.
 - Keep one member of the Out Team in place for accountability purposes and combine the remaining Out Team members with the RIC Team.