

**TOWN OF WATERTOWN FIRE DEPARTMENT
STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINES**

SECTION: Company Operations
SUBJECT: 2 in 2 out & FAST Team Policy
REVISED: 7/2013

PURPOSE:

To establish standard guidelines that will serve to provide a safe working environment, and to reduce the risk of injury or death as a result of department operations at emergency incidents. This policy will serve to comply with 2-in-2 out provisions in the OSHA Respiratory Protection Final Rule (29 CFR Part 1910).

POLICY:

To operate as safely and effectively on emergency scenes as possible. The following guidelines shall be adhered to by all personnel.

DEFINITIONS:

- A. IDLH Atmosphere: An atmosphere concentration of any toxic, corrosive or asphyxiant substance that poses an immediate threat to life or would cause irreversible or delayed adverse health effects or would interfere with an individuals ability to escape from a dangerous atmosphere.
- B. FAST: A specifically designated team (minimum two members) designed to provide personnel for the rescue of emergency service members operating at emergency incidents id the need arises.
- C. Incipient Fire: A fire in the initial or beginning stage which can be controlled or extinguished by a single hand line.

PROCEDURE:

- A. The first arriving unit shall determine if the incident involves an "IDLH" atmosphere. At no time shall individuals enter an IDLH atmosphere independently. Teams of at least two SCBA equipped personnel shall be required for entry into such an atmosphere at all times.
- B. In fire situations, it will be necessary for the incident commander to determine if the fire is in the incipient stage. A team of two qualified firefighters may take action, extinguish an incipient fire without the establishment of a FAST team.
- C. If the presence of an IDLH atmosphere has been determined, and there are less than four (4) qualified firefighters on the scene, units shall wait until at least four (4) qualified firefighters are assembled on the scene before initiating operations within the IDLH atmosphere. Two qualified firefighters may begin operating within the IDLH atmosphere as long as two additional qualified firefighters are outside the IDLH atmosphere to serve as the initial FAST team. One of the two initial FAST members must be responsible for establishing the point of entry and on scene accountability system. The second FAST member may be assigned other tasks or functions so long as these tasks or functions can be abandoned, without placing any personnel at additional risk, if rescue or assistance is needed.

- D. Members operating in IDLH atmospheres must use SCBA and work in teams of two or more. They must also maintain voice or visual contact with each other at all times. Portable radios and or safety rope tethering are not acceptable as replacements for voice or visual contact. Radios can and should be used for fire ground communications, including communications between interior and exterior teams. They cannot however be the sole tool for one's partner during interior operations. Team members must be in close proximity to each other to provide assistance in case of emergency.
- E. Until four (4) firefighters are assembled, operations outside of the IDLH atmosphere shall commence immediately. Such operations include, but not limited to: establishment of water supply, exterior fire attack, establishment of a hot zone, utility control, ventilation, placement of ladders, forcible entry, exposure protection, and any other exterior operations deemed appropriate by the incident commander.
- F. As the incident progresses to the point of more than one interior team, an identified and dedicated FAST team shall be established and positioned immediately outside the IDLH atmosphere. This team shall be fully outfitted with protective clothing and SCBA with their air mask in a ready position to don, a portable radio, and other required equipment. Both team members will be dedicated to perform rescue and shall not be assigned other duties unless a replacement team member is assigned. A charged hose line shall be dedicated to this team.
- G. If the incident is in a high or mid rise structure, large area facility, or other areas with multiple IDLH atmospheres and multiple entry points, the incident commander shall establish the necessary number of FAST teams so that rescue can be accomplished without a deployment delay. A team should be considered for each remote entry point on any large facility. The FAST team commander will be responsible for determining the number of teams needed based on the specifics of the incident.
- H. If a firefighter(s) becomes trapped, disabled, or otherwise in need of assistance by the FAST team, the incident commander shall announce this action to all units via radio. All radio traffic not directly related to the firefighter(s) rescue shall cease immediately to facilitate the rescue. An immediate personnel accountability report shall be conducted. The incident commander shall then assign personnel to assist in the rescue and to assist the FAST team as deemed appropriate. The FAST team shall continue to inform the incident commander of their progress and actions taken during the rescue.
- I. Should the incident commander order a building evacuation, a accountability report shall be conducted immediately after the building has been evacuated. The FAST team shall remain in place for immediate activation should a team fail to report during the accountability report.

EXCEPTIONS:

- A. If upon arrival at a fire emergency, members find a fire in its incipient stage, extinguishment of such a fire shall be permitted with less than four (4) persons on the scene. Extinguishment of outside fires such as dumpsters, brush, or automobiles shall be permitted with less than four (4) persons, even if SCBA are being worn.
- B. If upon arrival at the scene, members find an imminent life-threatening situation or probable life-threatening situation where immediate action may prevent the loss of life or serious injury, such action shall be permitted with less than four (4) persons on the scene when the probability of a rescue is made in accordance with normal size-up indicators and fire ground evaluation factors (examples: report of persons inside, signs of persons inside, etc.). The incident commander shall evaluate the situation, considering the occupancy, time of day, day of week, reports from persons on the scene, signs that persons may be inside the structure, etc. Entry may be considered if signs indicate a probable victim rescue. In the absence of clear signs or a report from a

responsible person on the scene that people are in the structure, it is to be assumed that no life hazards exist and interior attack shall not be initiated until the minimum of four (4) persons arrive on the scene.

- C. If members are going to initiate actions that would involve entering an IDLH atmosphere because of a probable or imminent life-threatening situation where immediate action may prevent the loss of life or serious injury and personnel are not on the scene to establish an initial FAST team, the members should carefully evaluate the level of risk that they would be exposed to by taking such actions. In all cases a minimum of two (2) people shall form the entry team.
- D. If it is determined that the situation warrants immediate intervention and four (4) people are not on the scene, the incident commander shall notify dispatch of the intent to enter the IDLH atmosphere prior to the availability of a FAST team. Dispatch shall then notify all responding units of this action.
- E. Should the incident commander on the scene deviate from this guideline, the actions taken shall be documented on the fire report and forwarded to the fire chief. The report shall outline the reasons, rational, justification, and end result of the deviation. All information in the report shall provide a comprehensive understanding of the actions taken.