

# TOWN OF WATERTOWN FIRE DEPARTMENT STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINES

**SECTION: Alarm and Response Procedures**  
**SUBJECT: Alarm Responses**  
**REVISED: 1/2018**

## **PURPOSE:**

To provide uniform response guidelines to various emergencies, and non-emergencies. To identify inherent safety hazards in emergency responses.

## **POLICY:**

- A. The Town of Watertown Fire Department apparatus responses to emergencies, and operations shall endeavor to conform to those guidelines contained herein.
- B. The Town of Watertown Fire Department will operate under a two priority response system. Priority one being a response utilizing emergency lights and sirens. Priority two responses being a non-emergency response utilizing no lights or sirens.
- C. All units should respond with a minimum of two people whenever possible. Wait a reasonable amount of time for manpower to arrive to the stations
- D. Check the I Am Responding screen to see if manpower is responding to the stations, if there is wait for them before leaving.
- E. When responding to reported structure fires the first pumper will not respond until a minimum of two SCBA qualified personnel are on board. Wait a reasonable amount of time, if no manpower arrives contact a responding chief (if none are available, any officer on the truck makes the decision), and notify them of the manpower shortage.
- F. Drivers of apparatus should remain with that vehicle and monitor the radio unless a replacement driver is appointed, or a chief officer orders you to perform another task.
- G. Members are not to respond to calls if they have been drinking alcohol or taking medications that affect their ability to perform at emergency scenes.

## **CLASSIFICATION OF ALARMS:**

- A. The classification of alarms can change with information of dispatchers, or chief officers.
- B. The following alarms shall be classified as Priority One Responses.
  - 1. Any reported fire within a structure including chimney.
  - 2. Any fire reported adjacent to a structure.
  - 3. Any fire alarm reported.
  - 4. Building collapse
  - 5. Natural Gas/propane leaks.
  - 6. Any odor of smoke within a structure.
  - 7. Vehicle Fires.
  - 8. Auto Accidents with injuries.
  - 9. Brush or grass fires.
  - 10. Odor investigations within a structure other than smoke.

- C. The following alarms shall be classified as Priority Two Responses.
  1. Odor investigations outside of structures.
  2. Details (wash downs, water problems).
  3. Tree fires.
  4. Pole fires/wires down (weather related, not vehicle accident related)
  5. Utility shutoff.
  6. Vehicle/house lockouts (unless person is in distress).
  7. Basement pump details.
  8. Mutual aid station standby.
  9. Hazardous materials calls (non-motor vehicle accident related).
  10. Confirmed property damage accidents only.

**PROCEDURES:**

- A. Alarm Responses:
  1. Structure Fires: All TWFD apparatus should respond. Any fires, or alarms on the west side in the commercial area the response should be in the following order. Truck 1, Pumpers, Pumper/Rescue, Tanker. For fires, or alarms elsewhere the response should be in the following order. Pumpers, Pumper/Rescue, Tanker, Truck
  2. Reported fire or fire alarm at the Salmon Run Mall response should be in the following order. Pumpers, Truck, Pumper/Rescue, Tanker.
  3. Brush or Grass fires. Brush truck, Tanker, Pumpers should respond in that order.
  4. Standby mutual aid calls for the Ladder Truck, or Pumpers is requested the apparatus will respond with a minimum of four personnel from the closest station if manpower is available. The tanker will respond minimum of one operator.
  5. Mutual aid for the Ladder Truck, the pumper/rescue will also respond except to the City of Watertown.
  6. On reported incidents involving weapons or incidents of violence, assault of any kind, response shall be a ¼ mile from the scene. Response shall not continue until the scene is confirmed secure by Law Enforcement.
- B. Mutual Aid to the City of Watertown:
  1. Only equipment called for will respond with full crews. No private vehicles will respond to the City Station or Scenes for calls.
  2. All personnel responding to the City of Watertown will be interior qualified unless not enough manpower is available. Driver can be non-qualified.
  3. If request for the Ladder Truck is made for standby at the City station the pumper/rescue will NOT respond with the Ladder. If Ladder truck is requested to a scene in the City the pumper/rescue will respond with the Ladder truck.
  4. All other manpower will standby at Town of Watertown Station 1 or Station 3 (notify officer when maned).
  5. If pumper is requested, A pumper from station 1 or 3 if manpower is available will respond.
- C. Specific Alarms:
  1. CODE BLUE – (bomb threats). Closest pumper is to respond priority two. Other personnel is to respond to stations for standby.
  2. Gas Alarm – (BOCES). Pumper, pumper/rescue should respond. If Blue Light is flashing, responding vehicles shall remain at the roadside and will not enter the building or driveway. Call gas company for testing, or use meters on the apparatus.

D. Safety:

1. All apparatus shall proceed to emergency alarms with all available emergency warning devices operating, including headlights.
2. All apparatus including Chief vehicles will stop at all traffic lights that are red and all stop signs to be in compliance with NFPA 1500.
3. All members responding in private vehicles will stop at all traffic lights and stop signs. Will obey all traffic laws.
4. Blue lights may be utilized, but are only a courtesy light and no special privileges are extended. Must have a blue light card signed by the Chief before utilizing a blue light.
5. All apparatus drivers shall operate emergency vehicles in a safe manner taking into account traffic, road, and weather conditions. Must operate the apparatus within the NFPA 1500 guidelines.
6. Under no conditions shall apparatus exceed the posted speed limits unless there is no danger to other motorists or pedestrians, and conditions allow.
7. All personnel shall wear seat belts while apparatus is in motion.
8. Multiple responding apparatus shall communicate when approaching common intersections.
9. While riding in apparatus, helmets shall not be worn, place in helmet holding devices or place in body compartments until arrival on the scene.
10. All apparatus shall return to quarters upon notification by a department officer of a false alarm. A chief officer will continue priority two to confirm the false alarm. If no chief is available the closest apparatus will continue priority two to confirm the false alarm.
11. Non-members will be allowed to ride in apparatus during non emergency uses only. If an emergency occurs, the vehicle may proceed to the scene priority two only, or until the non-member passengers are taken to safety.
12. Mutual aid emergency personnel shall be permitted to ride in apparatus in the priority one mode. Must have proper PPE to respond.
13. Priority one, and priority two defined response calls that outlined above, responding personnel listening to dispatch or Chief officers can use their judgment to either upgrade from priority two to priority one, or to downgrade from priority one to priority two mode.
14. For alarm calls If a closer pumper calls in route the other responding apparatus should downgrade to priority two response mode unless other information is relayed by dispatch or ordered to do so by a Chief officer.

**END**