

ESCAMBIA COUNTY FIRE-RESCUE

Standard Operating Guidelines

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3500.010

Two In - Two Out Rule

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PURPOSE

So that ECFR personnel may operate safely and legally on an emergency scene, a minimum number of personnel shall be available on-scene prior to initiating operations within an Immediately Dangerous to Life and Health (IDLH) atmosphere.

OBJECTIVE

To establish standard guidelines and procedures that will serve to provide a safe working environment for all personnel and to reduce the risk of injury or death as a result of department operations at emergency incidents. This guideline will serve to ensure compliance with the Two In – Two Out provision contained in the Florida Administrative Code, Chapter Rule 69A-62.003.

SCOPE

All Personnel

DEFINITIONS

IDLH Atmosphere: An atmospheric concentration of any toxic, corrosive or asphyxiating 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.

Rapid Intervention Team (RIT): A specifically designated team (minimum two members) designed to provide personnel for the rescue of emergency service members operating at emergency incidents if the need arises.

Incipient Fire: A fire in the initial or beginning stage that can be easily controlled or extinguished by portable fire extinguishers.

PAR: Personnel Accountability Report

Qualified Firefighter: Personnel possessing certification as a Florida Firefighter I, II, or equivalent, as defined by the Florida Division of State Fire Marshal.

OPERATIONS

The first arriving officer shall determine if the incident involves an IDLH atmosphere. At no time shall individuals enter an IDLH atmosphere independently. Teams of at least two (2) qualified firefighters, equipped with SCBA, shall be required for entry into such an atmosphere at all times.

In fire situations, it will be necessary for the incident commander (IC) to determine if the fire is in the incipient stage. A team of two qualified firefighters may take action according to

standard operating guidelines to extinguish an incipient fire without the establishment of a Rapid Intervention Team (RIT).

If the presence of an IDLH atmosphere has been determined, and there are less than 4 qualified firefighters on the scene, personnel shall wait until at least 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 (properly dressed and equipped) are outside the IDLH atmosphere to serve as the initial RIT. Initial RIT members may be assigned other tasks and/or functions as long as these tasks and/or functions can be abandoned without placing any personnel at additional undue risk. Florida rules allow the IC and pump operator to act as an initial RIT.

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 be used for fireground communications, including communications between interior and exterior teams or the IC. However, they cannot be the main method for accounting for one's partner during interior operations. Team members must be in close proximity to each other to provide assistance in case of an emergency.

Until four qualified firefighters are assembled, operations outside of the IDLH atmosphere shall commence immediately in accordance with standard operating guidelines. Such operations include, but are not limited to: establishment of a 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 IC.

As the incident progresses, and as additional resources arrive on-scene, an identified and dedicated company shall be assigned as the RIT. This team shall be positioned immediately outside the IDLH atmosphere, fully outfitted with protective clothing and SCBA with the air mask ready to don, a portable radio, and other required rescue equipment. RIT members will be dedicated to perform firefighter rescue and accountability duties and shall not be assigned other tasks that would interfere with those responsibilities.

If the incident is in a high or mid-rise structure, large area facility, or other areas with multiple IDLH atmospheres, the IC shall establish the necessary number of rapid intervention teams so that rescue can be accomplished without a deployment delay. A team should be considered for each remote access point on any large facility. The IC will be responsible for determining the number of personnel and teams needed based on the specifics of the incident.

EXCEPTIONS

If upon arrival at a fire emergency, the officer finds a fire in its incipient stage, extinguishment of such fire shall be permitted with less than four persons on the scene.

Extinguishment of outside fires such as dumpster, brush, or automobiles, shall be permitted with less than four personnel.

If upon arrival at an emergency scene, the officer finds 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 persons on the scene when the probability of a rescue is made in accordance with normal size-up indicators and fireground evaluation factors. Examples include reports of persons inside or obvious and clear signs of persons inside an IDLH area.

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 RIT, 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 personnel shall form the entry team.

If it is determined that the situation warrants immediate intervention and four qualified personnel are not on-scene, the IC shall notify dispatch of the intent to enter the IDLH atmosphere prior to the availability of a RIT. Dispatch will initiate two alert tones and broadcast this information to all responding companies.