

**Policy: Staging**

**Purpose:** The objective of Staging procedures is to provide a standard system of initial placement for responding apparatus, personnel and equipment prior to assignment at tactical incidents.

**Scope:** This policy applies to all Northern Piatt FD personnel and apparatus.

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**Policy**

Effective utilization of these procedures will:

- Prevent excessive apparatus congestion at the scene.
- Allow time for Command to evaluate conditions prior to assigning companies.
- Place apparatus in an uncommitted location close to the immediate scene to facilitate more effective assignment by Command.
- Produce more effective communications by virtue of reducing radio traffic during the critical initial stages of fire operations.
- Allow Command to formulate and implement a plan without undue confusion and pressure.

Staging involves two levels: LEVEL I and LEVEL II.

- Level I Staging is automatically in effect for all incidents involving two or more units.
- Level II Staging supersedes Level I when ordered by Command.

Command Vehicles will not stage on arrival at an incident. These vehicles will be parked outside the operational area, where they will not restrict access to the scene, and personnel will report to the Command Post.

**LEVEL I - STAGING**

Level I Staging will automatically apply to all multiple unit responses unless otherwise ordered by Command. Level I Staging involves the following:

- The first arriving engine company will respond directly to the scene and will operate to best advantage.

- The first arriving squad will go directly to the scene and place their apparatus in a location that will provide maximum access for support and not impede the movement of other units and indicate their action by radio.
- All other units will stage in their direction of travel, uncommitted, approximately one block from the scene until assigned by Command. A position providing a maximum of possible tactical options with regard to access, direction of travel, water supply, etc., should be selected.
- All engine companies will pull map books and reference immediate fire area for water supply.

Staged companies or units will, in normal response situations, report company designation, standing by and their direction (Engine 342, South); it may be necessary to be more specific when reporting standby positions in extraordinary response situations. An acknowledgment is not necessary from either Dispatch or Command. Staged companies will stay off the air until orders are received from Command. If it becomes apparent Command has forgotten the company is in a staged position, the company officer shall contact Command and re-advise him of their standby status.

These Staging procedures attempt to reduce routine traffic, but in no way should reduce effective communications or the initiative of officers to communicate. If staged companies observe critical tactical needs, they will advise Command of such critical conditions and their actions.

Companies should continue response to the scene until a company reports on the scene. When a first arriving company reports on the scene, Level I Staging will begin within these guidelines.

In situations where the simultaneous arrival of first due companies is possible, the affected officers shall utilize radio communications to coordinate activities and eliminate confusion. It will be the ongoing responsibility of Piatt County Dispatch to confirm the arrival of the first on-scene unit.

Pre-fire planning will identify exceptions to Level I Staging with regard to the special functions that must be performed in that particular occupancy. In the absence of such tasks, regular Level I Staging procedures will automatically apply.

## **LEVEL II - STAGING**

Level II Staging is used when an on-scene reserve of companies is required. These companies are placed in a Staging Area at a location designated by Command. When Command announces "Level II Staging", all responding companies will report to and remain in the Staging Area until assigned. First Alarm companies will continue with Level I Staging unless instructed otherwise. When going to Level II, Command will give an approximate location for the Staging Area. Companies which are already staged

(Level I) will stay in Level I Staging unless advised otherwise by Command. All other responding units will proceed to the Level II Staging Area.

The Staging Area should be away from the Command Post and from the emergency scene in order to provide adequate space for assembly and for safe and effective apparatus movement.

When calling for additional resources, Command should consider Level II Staging at the time of the call. This is more functional than calling for Level II Staging while units are enroute. The additional units will be dispatched to the Staging Area.

Command may designate a Staging Area and Staging Officer who will be responsible for the activities outlined in this directive. In the absence of such an assignment, the first Fire Department officer to arrive at the Staging Area will automatically become the Staging Officer and will notify Command on arrival. The arrival notification will be made to Command on predetermined fireground radio channel.

In some cases, Command may ask the Staging Officer to scout the best location for the Staging Area and report back to Command.

The radio designation for the Staging Officer will be: "STAGING". All communications involving Staging will be between Staging and Command. All responding companies will stay off the air, respond directly to the designated Staging Area, and report in person to the Staging Officer. They will standby their unit with crew intact.

When directed by Command, the Staging Officer will verbally assign companies to report to specific sectors, telling them where and to whom to report. Staging will then advise Command of the specific unit(s) assigned. The operating Sector Officer may then communicate directly with the company by radio.

Staging will give Command periodic reports of available companies in Staging. Command will utilize this information to request additional resource.

The Staging Officer will also be responsible for the following functions:

- Coordinate with the Police Department to block streets, intersections and other access required for the Staging Area.
- Ensure that all apparatus is parked in an appropriate manner.
- Maintain a log of companies available in the Staging Area and inventory all specialized equipment that might be required at the scene.
- Progress reports to Command indicating number and type of units available.

- Assume a position that is visible and accessible to incoming and staged companies. This will be accomplished by leaving the red lights operating.
- In some cases, the Staging Officer may have to indicate best direction of response and routing for responding companies to get into the Staging Area.

Ambulances responding to incidents where Level II Staging has been established will be dispatched to the Staging Area. The Staging Officer will acknowledge the arrival of the ambulances with the Ambulance and will give instructions to the ambulance personnel as requested by Command.

At some incidents, such as a major medical emergency, it may be necessary to designate a parking area for unused apparatus near the incident scene. This would be necessary when the Staging Area is too far from the incident to facilitate hand carrying needed equipment to the incident site. In such cases, the Staging Officer shall designate the parking site and instruct each company of its location before they leave Staging. The parking area should be close enough to the incident site to allow easy transfer of needed equipment to the scene. The parking area should in no way impede necessary access for ambulances or other units to the incident area.

Unless otherwise instructed by Command, Staging will advise Command when the level of resources in the Staging area is depleted to one engine. Command will make a decision whether or not to request additional companies.

By the Order of: \_\_\_\_\_  
Fire Chief

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

