

Policy: **Winter Operations**

Purpose: With the potential for severe winter elements, it is necessary to take extra care for the health and safety of personnel and the maintenance of equipment.

Scope: All Fire Department personnel

Winter Clothing

1. The possibility of working extended periods of time in cold weather and the hazards of exposure make it necessary to dress properly and maintain needed attire. Suggested guidelines include:
 - a. Extra gloves or mittens
 - b. Ski mask
 - c. Neck scarf
 - d. Spare uniform(s) kept at fire station
 - e. Sweatshirts
 - f. Extra hood
 - g. Change of socks
 - h. Hand towel carried inside turnout coat

Fireground Precautions

1. Beware of walking across lawns or open areas since snow may hide ditches, holes, curbs, etc.
2. After removing face piece, dry face to prevent freezing.
3. Tighten leaking couplings to prevent unnecessary formation of ice.
4. Permit nozzles to run (slightly cracked open) when not in use to prevent freezing.
5. Beware of slippery areas around apparatus due to ice formation (leaking connections, etc.)
6. Beware of the potential for unforeseen building collapse due to snow and ice loading on roofs.
7. It may be necessary to utilize vehicle exhaust to thaw frozen nozzles and couplings.
8. Beware of frost or ice on pitched roofs.

Apparatus Operations

1. Emergency driving and apparatus operations are very hazardous during adverse weather conditions. Special precautions should be taken.
 - a. Braking distance may increase three to twelve times for both emergency vehicles and other vehicles.
 - b. Fire department personnel may have to maneuver around stalled and/or abandoned vehicles along response routes.
 - c. To safely back apparatus, it may become necessary to position an additional spotter beside the driver's side of the cab when ice, steam, or frost obscures the mirrors.
 - d. Use engine speed retarder on dry pavement only.
 - e. Precautions:
 1. When spotting apparatus, be aware of ice on power lines and tree branches.
 2. Circulate tank water to keep equipment from freezing.
 3. If operating for a period of time, drain water extinguishers to prevent freezing.
 4. When the temperature drops well below freezing, inspect all intakes for ice and remove all discharge caps to check for ice between discharge valves and discharge caps (after each departure from the station).
 5. When operating at an incident, a salvage cover placed over the cab will protect against heavy ice buildup on the windshield.
 6. Place snow shovels on all vehicles and salt on all vehicles.

Apparatus Maintenance

1. Alcohol evaporators should be checked frequently and filled when necessary as equipped.
2. Apparatus air tanks should be bled more frequently with the increased condensation of cold weather.
3. Use water sparingly to wash down apparatus during very cold weather to avoid freezing.
4. Drain all discharge ports after any pumping operation by removing caps, wiping dry, and lubricating valves.
5. Be sure all tools are clean and dry.

Care of Hose

1. Break couplings, drain, and roll hose as soon as possible at the fire scene.
2. Frozen hose can be permanently damaged by forcibly bending or dragging. Carefully gather frozen hose and place on top of apparatus hose beds.

By the Order of: _____
Fire Chief

Date: _____