AMWELL VALLEY FIRE COMPANY

STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINES

  Version 2.2.0

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Chief Robert Field

REVISION HISTORY

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USE OF THIS GUIDEBOOK

THE FOLLOWING PAGES OUTLINE THE METHODS AND GUIDELINES TO BE USED WHILE OPERATING AS A REPRESENTATIVE OF THE AMWELL VALLEY FIRE COMPANY, HENCEFORTH REFERRED TO AS AVFCO.

THESE METHODS AND GUIDELINES ARE THOSE OF THE AVFC. AND ARE BASED ON STANDARD PRACTICES USED THROUGHOUT THE LOCAL AND NATIONAL FIRE SERVICE.

THESE GUIDELINES SHOULD BE FOLLOWED AS CLOSELY AS POSSIBLE.

DUE TO FIRE GROUNDS BEING DYNAMIC IN NATURE, THE METHODS AND GUIDELINES LISTED WILL NOT BE THE ANSWER TO EACH AND EVERY INCIDENT THE AVFCO RESPONDS TO, BUT SHOULD SERVE AS A MINIMUM OPERATIONAL STANDARD FOR ALL INITIAL FIREGROUND ACTIONS.

THESE METHODS AND GUIDELINES ARE NOT MEANT TO BE THE ONLY MEANS OF PERFORMING A SPECIFIC TASK. MEMBERS MAY EMPLOY ANY TECHNIQUES NECESSARY PROVIDED IT IS SAFE TO DO SO AND THE END RESULT IS THE SAME.

MEMBERS SHOULD TRAIN ON ALL ASPECTS OF THESE METHODS AND GUIDELINES TO REMAIN PROFICIENT IN THEIR SKILLS.

WHEN THE MEMBERS OF THE AVFCO ARE ACTING IN A MUTUAL AID CAPACITY, SOME AVFCO METHODS AND GUIDELINES MAY CONFLICT WITH THOSE OF A MUTUAL AID DEPARTMENT(S).

AVFCO MEMBERS SHALL COMPLY WITH THE DIRECTIONS OF THE INCIDENT COMMANDER FOR THE INCIDENT, PROVIDED IT DOES NOT PLACE ANY AVFCO MEMBER(S) IN DANGER.

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# SECTION 1: TRAINING & EDUCATION

Training is an integral part of the fire service. All active members shall be familiar with the standard operating guidelines contained in this guidebook.

All active members shall pass a certified “Firefighter I” or “Fire Police” course within their probationary period to remain on the active roster.

The AVFCO conducts monthly active member drills on the third Thursday of the month. There is also a separate drill specialized for interior firefighters on the second Thursday of the month, although all members are welcome to attend.

## EMERGENCY SERVICES TRAINING CENTER

The institution charged with the continuing education of emergency services personnel in Hunterdon County is the Emergency Services Training Center (HCESTC).

All members are encouraged to seek out any and all training classes of interest and notify the training officer.

The training officer is the only member of the department that may register members for a training class. The training officer shall notify all chief officers of the members from the department attending the training class.

If a member would like to attend a class outside of the HCESTC, he or she must request approval from the training officer before signing up.

## ABSENCES

If, for any reason, a member cannot attend a class that they have confirmed registration, they must notify the training officer or lead class instructor immediately and before 72 hours of the first session of the class.

Failure to properly notify the training officer or lead instructor will result in a fine levied on the department by the Hunterdon County Fire Chiefs Association.

The member is responsible for repayment of this fine to the department, or if they cannot, completing a work detail determined by the Chief representative of the severity of the fine. The Chief may bring formal charges against the member if this obligation is not met within 30 days.

# SECTION 2: TURN OUT GEAR

Only turn out gear issued by the AVFCO shall be worn unless otherwise approved by the Chief.

Turn out gear not belonging to the AVFCO shall comply with all applicable standards in place at the given time.

Full turn out gear shall be described as:

* Helmet with chin strap and ear flaps
* Nomex or PBI protective hood
* Coat with liner in place
* Firefighting gloves
* Bunker pants with liner in place
* Firefighting boots

All turn out gear shall be fully compliant with all applicable standards in place at the time of issue.

Turn out gear shall be kept clean of dirt, debris, or any other contaminants that may lead to the premature degradation of the gear.

Turn out gear is subject to inspection at any point deemed necessary by the Chief.

Members shall be responsible to clean all portions of their turn out gear in the appropriate manner at a minimum of twice annually.

AVFCO issued turn out gear shall not be used for any other purpose than the participation of firefighting, training, and other official AVFCO events unless permission is received from the Chief.

All SCBA certified members shall be issued an SCBA facepiece of the appropriate size. Members shall be responsible for the upkeep and maintenance of the facepiece at all times.

Damage to the facepiece should be reported immediately and the facepiece removed from service. If the appropriate replacement facepiece is available, it shall be issued to the members. In the event that a facepiece is not available, one shall be used from the apparatus.

Members shall don the required turn out gear for the following incidents:

Structure fires – FULL

Vehicle fires – FULL

Automatic fire alarms – FULL

Wildland – Bunker pants and boots

Motor vehicle accidents – FULL

Landing zones – FULL

The Chief or officer in charge shall make the determination as to the turn out gear required for a particular operation and at what point any gear may be removed.

All members shall don the appropriate turn out gear before boarding an apparatus.

Apparatus operators may wear partial PPE at their discretion while driving, but shall don full PPE upon arrival on scene.

Members assigned to the protective hand line at a motor vehicle accident shall wear SCBA.

Members performing or assisting with the extrication and care of patients shall not be required to wear SCBA.

Members issued approved wildland firefighting gear may wear it in place of structural firefighting turn out gear during wildland fires.

Vehicle extrication, rope rescue, leather work gloves, or any other type of gloves not approved for structural firefighting shall be restricted to non-firefighting use only.

All members are issued an approved high visibility safety vest and shall wear it over their coat at all times when operating at any incident scene regardless of vehicular travel. The incident areas include, but are not limited to: state and county highways, roads, streets, parking areas, traffic circles/roundabouts, training sites, tender shuttle fill and/or dump sites, and landing zones.

The only circumstances a member may remove their safety vest is when participating in wildland or structural firefighting activities to prevent damage to safety vest or coat. In the event an officer permits removal of the coat, the safety vest must be donned again.

In the event that the member is not in possession of their issued high visibility safety vest they must either:

1. Don one of the spares provided on the apparatus; or
2. Remain in the apparatus if safe to do so or distance themselves at least 100’ from the operating area, as defined above, or hot zone.

## HELMETS

The Cairns 1044 helmet shall be the officially supplied helmet of the AVFCO for all firefighters aged 18 and older. Junior firefighters may be issued any NFPA compliant helmet.

Members may purchase and wear their own helmets provided they are of the same style and color as those supplied by the AVFCO.

Personally purchased helmets shall be compliant with all applicable NFPA standards and be approved for use by the Chief.

Member’s helmets not containing an approved face shield or goggles must have approved eye protection with them at all times.

The AVFCO is not responsible for any personally issued/purchased helmet in the event of damage or destruction.

Members shall be responsible for the upkeep and appearance of their helmets.

Wedges, chocking devices, flashlights, goggles, cameras, etc. may be placed or stored on the helmet provided such items do not interfere with or compromise the operation or safety of the helmet.

Stickers, pins, markings, decorations, etc. may be placed on the helmet provided they do not interfere with the safe operation of the helmet, do not contain profanity, or do not offend any other organizations, etc. They shall be removed immediately at the request of the Chief.

Members shall minimize the use stickers, pins, markings, decorations, etc. to prevent an unprofessional appearance.

Helmet color coding

White – Chief officers

Red – Captain (optional)

Yellow – Firefighters

Black – Junior firefighter

The front shield for the Cairns 1044 shall consist of:

Body Color: BLACK

Stitching Color: BLACK

Panel Color: YELLOW

Panel Lettering Color: REFLECTIVE - BLACK

Top Panel # 1 Characters: AMWELL VALLEY

Bottom Panel # 1 Characters: <FIREFIGHTER NAME>

Center Body Characters: 48

Center Body Character Type: RAISED LEATHER

Color Of Center Body Characters: YELLOW

# SECTION 3: RESPIRATORY PROTECTION

All interior firefighters shall comply with all applicable NFPA standards in effect regarding the proper operation, training and maintenance of self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA) in order to ensure the safety of all AVFCO members.

All interior firefighters are required to use SCBA whenever operating in an atmosphere suspected of being immediately dangerous to life and health (IDLH). SCBA shall be used at all firefighting operations including those operations involving, any phase of interior structural firefighting and during overhaul, vehicles, dumpsters, rubbish, carbon monoxide (CO) and other gas or odor investigation calls. This includes inside operations and outside positions where members may be exposed to smoke or other potentially toxic IDLH conditions. During these incidents, SCBA must be worn at all times unless expressly ordered by the Incident Commander.

In order to be qualified as an interior firefighter, each active member must be fit tested for SCBA use and have successfully completed and passed the mandated and approved courses required in the basic Firefighter 1 training course.

## FIT TESTING

All interior firefighters must take and pass the annual fit test in order to use an SCBA. Requirements and additional information can be found in the Respiratory Protection Plan.

The AVFCO conducts its annual fit test during the month of January. If a member is unable to attend the annual fit test, he or she must work with the Chief to locate and take a fit test that meets or exceeds the standards established by the AVFCO This includes both a cardiopulmonary evaluation and form factor fit testing.

All interior firefighters who have passed an annual fit test will be provided with the appropriate type and size facepiece.

## SCBA FACE PIECE (MASK)

All interior firefighters shall be issued an appropriate type and size facepiece for their use during fire company operations and training. The face piece will include a voice amplification device.

All interior firefighters who are issued a face piece and voice amplification device are responsible for cleaning and maintaining it on a regular basis.

All interior firefighters shall conduct user seal checks each time they wear their SCBA face piece. No interior firefighter may wear a face piece if they have any condition such as facial scars, beards or facial hair or missing dentures, which prevents them from achieving a good facepiece to face seal. No interior firefighter may wear headphones, jewelry, glasses or other articles that may interfere with achieving a good facepiece to face seal.

Any facepiece or voice amplification device that is damaged or defective shall be removed from service immediately and given to the SCBA Officer. A suitable replacement shall be provided as soon as possible.

## SCBA AND PACK

The AVFCO uses Scott SCBA model AIR-PAK 75 with the PAK-ALERT distress alarm, a Personal Alert Safety System (PASS).

The AVFCO uses a carbon wrapped 45 minute air cylinder with the Scott SCBA.

Only interior firefighters who have passed an annual fit test and are in good health and physical condition shall don a SCBA. It is each member’s responsibility to be physically and mentally prepared to enter confined, hazardous, and stressful areas.

In the event that an interior firefighter feels that they are overexerted, ill, or mentally or physically unable to carry out assignments, he or she must notify the Incident Commander immediately.

**AN INTERIOR FIREFIGHTER SHOULD NEVER GO INTO A HAZARDOUS SITUATION IF HE OR SHE IS NOT PHYSICALLY AND/OR MENTALLY PREPARED.**

SCBA and spare air cylinders shall be secured to fire department apparatus in such a manner as to be readily available for quick operation, yet secure enough to prevent injuries to members or accidental damage to the apparatus or the SCBA.

All interior firefighters shall maintain familiarization with SCBA equipment used by AVFCO. Officers will provide training to all interior firefighters on the correct inspection and cleaning of SCBA, the correct and efficient doffing of SCBA and the proper procedures to follow in the event of a SCBA emergency.

Under no circumstances may any part of the SCBA and/or its associated components be tampered with, modified, removed, or otherwise adjusted for any reason other than its intended use, nor will any safety features be bypassed.

## SCBA INSPECTION AND MAINTENANCE

The SCBA Officer is responsible to ensure that all SCBA and spare air cylinders are inspected monthly and after each use. The inspection shall include: a visual inspection for general operational readiness, cleanliness, damage or deterioration; cylinder condition, fill status, and hydrostatic test date; operation of the vibra-alert; operation of the PASS device; and operation of the regulator.

Any SCBA needing maintenance or repair shall be removed from service immediately and “TAGGED” with a description of the deficiency. Only properly trained and authorized individuals may perform repairs, adjustments or replacement of parts on SCBA.

SCBA air cylinders shall be pressurized to a 45 minute level on the cylinder gauge. The minimum acceptable air level reading on a cylinder gauge is 30 minutes. Any time a cylinder is found with less than 30 minutes, it will be removed from service immediately and recharged.

SCBA air cylinders will be receive a hydrostatic test every 5 years. Any SCBA air cylinder that is found to be in service beyond the 5 year test date will be removed from service immediately and sent for testing.

## INVENTORY

Whenever a SCBA or a SCBA air cylinder is placed into service, it will be issued an inventory tag number.

The tag will be placed on the middle of the back (non-air cylinder) side of each SCBA. The tag will be placed directly under the green hazmat label on each air cylinder. The inventory sheet must also contain the serial numbers of the SCBA and SCBA air cylinder, as well as the manufactured date and required test dates.

The AVFCO shall conduct an annual equipment inventory, including SCBA and air cylinders.

## PASS DEVICE

The SCBA used by the AVFCO contains an integrated PASS device. All interior firefighters are required to become familiar with the normal operation of the integrated PASS device, including how to identify and avoid the effects of radio frequency interference (RFI).

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# SECTION 4: APPARATUS

## ENGINE 48-1

Shall respond first out from Station 48 unless otherwise directed by an officer or overriding apparatus response guideline.

Shall respond with a minimum of two interior firefighters and one driver to support fire suppression efforts that may be required at the scene unless otherwise directed by an officer or other response guideline.

Shall be permitted to respond for mutual aid with 4 interior firefighters and one driver holding “Firefighter 1” certification, unless otherwise directed by the Chief or IC.

## ENGINE 48-2

Shall respond first out from Station 48 on calls to residences on the following streets:

Mountain Road;

Mountain Church Road;

Ridge Road;

Lakeview Drive;

Orchard Road;

Lindbergh Road;

North and South Hill Road;

Zion Road;

Burd Lane;

Spring Hill Road;

Rainbow Hill Road;

Snydertown Road; and

Stony Brook Road;

Shall respond with a minimum of two interior firefighters and one driver to support fire suppression efforts that may be required at the scene unless otherwise directed by an officer or other response guideline.

Shall respond to landing zone stand-bys unless otherwise directed by an officer or overriding apparatus response guideline.

Shall be permitted to respond for mutual aid with 4 interior firefighters and one driver holding “Firefighter 1” certification, unless otherwise directed by the Chief or IC.

## TENDER 48

Shall respond second out from Station 48 unless otherwise directed by an officer.

Shall respond with a minimum crew of two members, unless otherwise directed by an officer.

Shall be permitted to respond for mutual aid with at least one interior firefighter and one driver having “Firefighter 1” certification, unless otherwise directed by the Chief or IC.

## TACTICAL (TAC) 48

Shall respond third out from Station 48 unless otherwise directed by an officer or overriding apparatus response guideline.

Shall respond with a minimum crew of two members, unless otherwise directed by an officer.

Shall be permitted to respond for mutual aid with two interior firefighters and one driver having “Firefighter 1” certification, unless otherwise directed by the Chief or IC.

Shall serve as the backup first due engine apparatus when Engine 48-1 is out of service.

## UTILITY 48

Shall respond second out from Station 48 for all motor vehicle accidents.

Shall be used to transfer fire equipment from the scene of fires or from station to station.

It shall, with permission of the Chief officers and membership, be used to support fire company business and operations to transport firefighters to and from training locations, meetings, conferences, and other activities.

## BRUSH 48

Shall respond first out from Station 48 on all wildland type fires.

Shall respond with a crew of two members, with at least one member having “Firefighter 1” certification and one driver.

Shall be permitted to respond for mutual aid with two members having “Firefighter 1” certification, unless otherwise directed by the Chief or IC.

Shall be used to transport the Hunterdon County Foam Taskforce Foam trailer and must respond with two interior firefighters to support fire suppression efforts that may be required at the scene.

## CAR 48

Shall respond, when possible, and serve as the Chief’s vehicle/command post.

Shall respond first out from Station 48 on all cardiac arrest assists.

It shall, when required, be the only “take home vehicle” in the AVFCO.

It shall, with permission of the Chief officers and membership, be used to support fire company business and operations to transport firefighters to and from training locations, meetings, conferences, and other activities.

Shall be permitted to respond for mutual aid with an officer when responding to South Hunterdon County Tender Task Force requests.

## OUT-OF-SERVICE GUIDELINES

In the event that an apparatus is not mechanically sound or any of its equipment is not functioning and needs to be removed from service, at minimum the following should be done:

* Remove the keys from the ignition and place them on the dashboard of the apparatus.
* Place a sign on the steering wheel that designates the apparatus is out-of-service.
* Lift the hood, if room in the bay exists.
* Note on the dry erase boards in the bay of each building that the apparatus is out-of-service.
* Notify the Chief or officer in charge, as well as the Captain.
* Notify Hunterdon County Communications that the apparatus is out-of-service.

If a piece of equipment malfunctions but does not require the apparatus to be removed from service, the piece of equipment shall be removed from the apparatus and placed in the Engineer's’ room and tagged out-of-service with a description of the issue.

In the event that an out-of-service apparatus is requested for mutual aid or a mutual aid station cover assignment, its replacement must at minimum meet the requirements of the request set forth by the mutual aid partner. If the replacement apparatus is unable to meet these guidelines, then Hunterdon County Communications shall be notified that the apparatus will not respond. The decision to respond shall be made by the Chief, an officer, past chief, or most senior member at the time of the request.

## GENERAL OPERATION

All operators shall have performed the appropriate driver training methods on that apparatus as set forth by the AVFCO and have the written approval of an officer in their training file.

Additional training in the operation of emergency vehicles from sources other than the AVFCO is recommended.

All apparatus shall respond from Station 48 unless otherwise directed by the Chief.

All apparatus shall have an ANSI-ISEA 107-2010 compliant high visibility traffic vest for each riding position. All vests shall be kept in a readily available position for donning by the wearer.

Apparatus shall be permitted to leave the road surface to support wildland fires, safe apparatus placement, or as otherwise directed by an officer.

Apparatus not actively responding to an emergency (returning from calls, proceeding to drills, fuel trips, etc.) shall not operate with any warning devices activated.

Parking brakes shall be set and wheel chocks placed whenever the vehicle is parked, unless it is parked in the fire station. Wheel chocks shall be positioned correctly to ensure complete contact with the tires, both in front and behind the wheel. Chocks shall not be placed at angles. Chocks must completely contact the tire to be effective.

Keys for the vehicle shall be kept in the vehicle ignition, unless otherwise directed by an officer.

Apparatus shall not leave the scene of an incident or training session until all equipment is accounted for and returned to its proper location on the apparatus.

When backing the apparatus, a minimum of 1 member shall be positioned behind the vehicle and in full view of the operator to assist with the safe operation of the vehicle. This member shall be responsible for keeping all additional members and bystanders away from the rear of the vehicle while it is in motion and to warn the operator of any unseen hazards.

# SECTION 5: GENERAL RESPONSE

## DISPATCH

The AVFCO is dispatched by the Hunterdon County Communications Center. Initial dispatch for incidents will be simulcast over UHF Fire 1 and VHF Ambulance 2.

Member issued pagers are activated after receiving a set of tones at the beginning of the dispatch. Once activated, the radio transmission will describe specifics such as location, type of incident, units assigned, and any other relevant information will follow.

Members will also receive the dispatch via text message or the IAmResponding application on their mobile phone. Members shall mark themselves in IAmResponding before responding.

## LEVELS

The county fire box alarm system consists of a three level system.

Each level indicates a specific type of incident and therefore dictates the type of response for a given incident. The general description of each level is listed below. The list does not encompass every possible call for assistance. Calls may be assigned a level as determined by the dispatcher.

**Level 1** - all automatic fire alarms, water flow alarms, landing zone requests, odor of smoke, open burns, motor vehicle accidents, motor vehicle fires, wire or pole fires and any other alarm not described in levels 2 and 3.

**Level 2** - any structural smoke condition, gas leak, or chimney, appliance or outbuilding fire.

**Level 3** - any structural or contents fire.

Any fire within a structure (regardless of what is burning) is considered to be a structure fire and will be dispatched as a level 2 or 3 depending upon the classification of the building.

## POV RESPONSE

All members shall respond to the station for calls.

Eligible members may display a blue light in their vehicle for the purpose of responding to AVFCO calls if and only if they possess a valid blue light permit from the State of NJ. This permit must be in the vehicle at all times. They must not not utilize sirens or other audible warning devices in conjunction with a blue light.

Members responding to an incident are not exempt to traffic laws and may be stopped, ticketed, and fined for any infractions.

Only the Chief and Deputy Chief shall be permitted to display a red warning light and use audible warning devices in their personal vehicle, if and only if they possess a valid red light and siren permit from the State of NJ. This permit must be in the vehicle at all times.

Chief officers may respond to the scene with their personal vehicle at any time as AVFCO does not have any apparatus designated solely for Chief officer use.

Members should, whenever possible, avoid responding directly to the scene of an incident. This will reduce the congestion at the scene and will ensure an adequate crew assembles for the apparatus that will be needed and that they will have the proper PPE.

There may times when the incident is the near the member’s residence or will pass the incident when responding to the station. If the member lives within approximately one mile of the incident or will pass the incident they may respond directly to the scene for the following types of incidents:

* Level one incidents
* Motor Vehicle Accidents
* Cardiac Assists

If the member responds directly to the incident they must park in a position that does not obstruct apparatus response or staging, must leave the vehicle unlocked and leave the keys in the vehicle in the event it must be moved.

## APPARATUS RESPONSE

If there are several members responding to the station at the same time, the highest ranking officer or most recent ex-chief shall designate apparatus assignments. Wait for assignment before boarding an apparatus.

Apparatus shall only respond when the minimum number of firefighters as specified in [Section 4](#_f2hrtbbmycff) have boarded.

All members shall be seated in an appropriate seat equipped with a seat belt. All members shall have the appropriate seat belt fastened prior to the driver placing the apparatus in motion.

Members shall not ride in any other position on the apparatus. Members shall not ride on the rear of any apparatus while it is motion.

Mutual aid assignments must be fulfilled with only the type of apparatus requested and staffed accordingly. Contact Hunterdon County Communications if there is any confusion on the apparatus for which we are alerted.

If at any time all apparatus capable of providing fire coverage are on active assignment, a member must remain at station and call for a cover assignment immediately.

If at any point after dispatch, or even upon arrival, there is a possibly that the incident is insecure, an officer shall notify Hunterdon County Communications immediately. All operators shall stage apparatus away from the incident and await clearance from law enforcement.

During an emergency response the apparatus should be responding with all emergency warning devices activated (lights, sirens, airhorns).

During an emergency response all members shall be in full turnout gear with the exception of their helmet. Helmets shall not be worn at any time while the vehicle is in motion with the exception of open cab apparatus. Helmets shall be kept in an NFPA 1903 approved helmet restraint device or a compartment to prevent helmet movement in the event of a motor vehicle crash if the apparatus is so equipped. See the NFPA 1903 standard on motorized fire apparatus for additional information.

The operator shall remain with the apparatus at all times unless otherwise directed by an officer.

Members shall remain with staged apparatus unless otherwise directed by an officer.

The operator shall be responsible for the equipment used at an incident and for its return to the apparatus after an incident has been terminated.

The operator shall be responsible for any maintenance to the vehicle after returning to the station.

## UNCONTROLLED INTERSECTIONS

Uncontrolled intersections shall be defined as: Any intersection that does not offer a control device (stop sign, traffic light, or yield sign) in any direction and particularly in the direction of approach of the emergency vehicle.

When approaching an uncontrolled intersection, operators shall scan all possible entry points to the best of their abilities for civilian vehicles, other approaching emergency vehicles, and pedestrians that may be unaware of the approaching emergency vehicle.

Operators shall slow the vehicle by use of the service brakes and in conjunction with the engine brake until reaching a complete stop.

Operators shall not proceed through the intersection until it is safe to do so.

When in emergency mode, all audible warning devices shall be sounded and all visual warning devices shall be on prior to entering the intersection.

The member riding in the officer’s seat (passenger seat) shall also assist with safely navigating the intersection.

The member riding in the officer’s seat (passenger seat) shall control the usage of audible and visual warning devices such that the operator can maintain their attention on safely operating the apparatus.

Operators should avoid using the opposing (oncoming) lane if at all possible when responding.

## CONTROLLED INTERSECTIONS

Controlled intersections shall be defined as: Any intersection that is controlled by a traffic light, stop sign, yield sign, or amber or red caution lights.

When approaching a controlled intersection, operators shall scan all possible entry points to the best of their abilities for civilian vehicles, other approaching emergency vehicles, and pedestrians that may be unaware of the approaching emergency vehicle.

Operators shall slow the vehicle by use of the service brakes and in conjunction with the engine brake until reaching a complete stop.

Operators shall not proceed through the intersection until it is safe to do so.

When in emergency mode, all audible warning devices shall be sounded and all visual warning devices shall be on prior to entering the intersection.

The member riding in the officer’s seat (passenger seat) shall also assist with safely navigating the intersection.

The member riding in the officer’s seat (passenger seat) shall control the usage of audible and visual warning devices such that the operator can maintain their attention on safely operating the apparatus.

Operators should avoid using the opposing (oncoming) lane if at all possible when responding.

## APPARATUS PLACEMENT ALONG ROADWAYS

Roadways shall include all streets, county and state highways, and parking areas.

Apparatus shall be placed in a position that best protects the incident and the on scene personnel from being struck by oncoming vehicles during their operations.

**TERMINOLOGY**

* Advanced warning equipment: devices used to warn approaching motorists of a temporary traffic pattern change (flares, cones, barricades, signs, etc).
* Block: positioning apparatus to block a lane(s) of traffic to protect responders working in the area affected by the incident.
* Buffer zone: the protected area around the responders.

Apparatus shall be positioned in a blocking manner while still allowing access from other emergency apparatus or personnel.

Apparatus shall be positioned to protect the driver/operator from the flow of traffic.

All personnel should make every attempt to exit the vehicle to the safe side and not into the oncoming traffic side of the vehicle.

Advanced warning equipment shall be placed in a manner that the equipment extends from the rear most section (tailboard or rear bumper) of the blocking apparatus to a minimum distance of 320 feet.

The distance of the equipment shall be increased dependent upon the posted speed limit, road conditions such as sight limiting hills, blind curves, weather conditions, etc.

**TEMPORARY TRAFFIC CONTROL ZONE CHECKLIST**

* Set up appropriate advanced warning equipment
* Limit the number of vehicles on the roadway
* Stage unnecessary vehicles and personnel off roadway
* Park all apparatus on the same side of the road
* Position apparatus to protect responders and the incident scene
* Limit scene lighting use to the incident only
* Keep lanes open when possible

## RESPONSE MODE CHANGES

Not all incidents are true emergencies. Units may be advised to change their response mode from emergency to non-emergency when it is deemed that an emergency no longer exists.

Changing the response mode for incidents within the primary response area of AVFCO may only be given by the Chief, officers, past chief, or most senior member responding at the time.

The officer or member making the request should either be located on scene or received an arrival report from an AVFCO or mutual aid unit. Common sense and good judgment must be exercised when making the decision to change response modes.

At least one unit from AVFCO, officer or apparatus, shall continue response to any fire box alarm within the AVFCO primary response territory to compile a report.

Changing the response mode for mutual aid incidents should only be acknowledged from the incident commander, staging officer, or the dispatching agency.

## CANCELLATION

Units may be cancelled at any given time if their response is deemed unnecessary.

Cancellation for incidents within the primary response area of AVFCO may only be given by the Chief, officers, past chief, or most senior member responding at the time.

Cancellation for mutual aid incidents should only be acknowledged from the incident commander, staging officer, or the dispatching agency.

Cancelled units shall proceed to the nearest cross street or intersection and exit the roadway being used for the response prior to deactivating any and all warning devices. This will help keep confusion to other drivers to a minimum.

Members or units must return to the station for roll call after being cancelled.

## ARRIVAL

The first arriving unit shall provide a radio report to Hunterdon County Communications including the following:

* Identification of the unit arriving.
* Correct address if different from dispatched address.
* Brief description of what is involved in the incident, such as the building size and construction, or the number of vehicles.
* Conditions such as working fire, multiple patients, or hazardous material spill.
* Any hazards or safety concerns.
* Assumption, identification, and location of command.
* Brief description of action to be taken, such as initiating first floor attack. Also include strategy (investigative, defensive or offensive).
* Any requests for additional resources with staging information.

The first arriving unit shall then conduct a 360 degree evaluation of the incident and provide any updates or corrections to other responding units.

## FORCIBLE ENTRY

Any indication of fire, water flow, or life safety hazards shall require immediate entry into a structure or area. An assessment of the incident and its urgency shall dictate the extent of forcible entry performed.

**DESTRUCTION OF PROPERTY SHALL BE DONE AS A LAST RESORT**

Certain properties and facilities are equipped with a Knox Box System. These are typically structures that are equipped with an automatic fire alarm, automatic water flow (sprinkler) alarm or a combination of the two.

Certain businesses may have a Knox Box entry system to gain entry to specific areas of their property.

An access key to the Knox Boxes and locks are kept in the cab of Engine 48-1 and Car 48. These keys may be removed through the use of apparatus assigned PIN numbers assigned by the Chief or requested via Hunterdon County Communications. If an officer is not available to use the assigned pin, access must be requested via Hunterdon County Communications.

In the event that a key is removed from the apparatus and used for entry, the dispatcher shall be notified of the use and return of the key to the holder for documentation.

If a key is lost or broken, the Chief or an officer shall be notified at the earliest possible convenience.

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# SECTION 6: INCIDENT MANAGEMENT

The AVFCO utilizes the National Incident Management System (NIMS). The AVFCO incident management system shall be used at all incidents requiring the use of more than one piece of apparatus and its crew complement.

The size and scope of an incident shall determine the extent to which the system is expanded.

## INCIDENT COMMAND

Upon arrival at an incident, command shall be established in order of rank. The command rank shall be Chief, Deputy Chief, Assistant Chief, Captain, Lieutenant, past chief, or senior most member of the crew.

The highest rank available at an incident shall assume the role of Incident Commander (IC) for the entire operational period or until relieved by a later arriving, higher ranking officer.

In the event the above are not available or on-scene and mutual aid is requested, the highest rank of the mutual aid company may assume command.

The IC is responsible for all aspects of the response, including developing incident objectives and managing all incident operations. The IC sets priorities and defines the organizational structure for the particular response. Even if other positions are not assigned, the IC will always be designated.

When an initial arriving unit arrives and encounters a situation which requires immediate action, the IC may need to act as part of the crew until the incident is stabilized. This information shall be relayed to the dispatcher to inform them that the formation of an incident command structure is going to be delayed.

The IC must establish a physical location for managing the incident, referred to as the Command Post. The IC must announce the location of the command post in order to assist in coming units as to where to report for instructions. Areas to be avoided should be along the sides or in the lanes of vehicle travel, areas of high smoke concentration, excessive noise, in or near collapse zones, within a hazardous atmosphere, or areas that fire may spread rapidly (grass/brush), etc.

## OPERATIONS

The Operations Officer shall be designated by the Incident Commander on scene prior to the beginning of operations. If an additional resource is not available to be the Operations Officer, the Incident Commander must assume this position until a resource is made available.

The Operations Officer is responsible for implementing tactics to accomplish the incident objectives and directing all on scene operations.

The Operations Officer must report information about incident progress, changing conditions, changing tactics, and special activities to the IC.

The Operations Officers must determine the need for and request additional resources from the IC. They must also review and suggest resources that may be released to the IC.

## SAFETY

General safety is the responsibility of all the members, both on the fireground and in the fire houses. Any member witnessing a safety infraction should act to correct the situation within his/her authority and ability and immediately report the concern to a fire officer.

The Safety Officer shall be designated by the Incident Commander on scene prior to the beginning of operations. If an additional resource is not available to be the Safety Officer, the IC must assume this position until a resource is made available.

The Safety Officer shall continually monitor the scene for unsafe or deteriorating conditions, unsafe acts or hazardous operations.

The Safety Officer holds the same on scene authority as any fire officer in so far as enforcing procedures pertaining to safety of the members operating at an incident.

The Safety Officer shall have the authority to halt all operations if deemed unsafe beyond the training level of personnel on scene.

## ACCOUNTABILITY

On scene accountability is the responsibility of all members responding to an incident.

The Accountability Officer shall be designated by the IC on scene prior to the beginning of operations. If an additional resource is not available to be the Accountability Officer, the IC must assume this position until a resource is made available.

The Accountability Officer must maintain an accurate Personnel Accountability Report (PAR) of personnel on scene, and a separate report of personnel involved in any hot zone.

The Accountability Officer should issue a PAR check at regular intervals throughout the incident. A PAR check is a radio call signaling a roll call usually answered by an officer or team leader.

The Accountability Officer should make every attempt to deploy and make use of accountability boards in Car 48 to support accountability operations.

All members of AVFCO are issued two accountability tags:

Tag #1 - Should be placed on the loop in the apparatus a given member is responding on. The loop must be brought to the command post by the responding officer or team leader on arrival.

Tag #2 - Given to the Operations or Accountability Officer upon entry to the hot zone, or if no officer is available, placed at the point of entry where it can be clearly seen and retrieved by the Operations or Accountability Officer.

Members should make every attempt to place the accountability cone on Engine 48 in service near the entry point to the operations area.

Members should avoid haphazardly throwing tags about the fire ground. Tags may become lost or unavailable in the event a roll call must be taken.

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# SECTION 7: FIRE POLICE

A member of the AVFCO shall qualify as fire police after the following:

1. Successfully completing a fire police training course formulated or approved by the Division of Fire Safety.
2. Taking an oath that they will justly, impartially and faithfully discharge their duties according to the best of their ability and understanding.

Fire police shall have the authority to act as fire police anywhere within the State. The authority of the fire police shall never supersede any duly authorized police officer.

Fire police shall perform the following duties under the incident command system, including but not limited to:

* Protect property and contents.
* Establish and maintain fire lines.
* Control traffic as necessary, from the fire station to and at the vicinity of the fire, fire drill or other emergency call, or at any public event where fire police services may be requested to protect the public, until the arrival of a duly authorized police officer.
* Wear an authorized fire police badge on the left breast of the outermost garment while on duty.

Fire police may arrest any person who unreasonably refuses to comply with an order and keep that person under arrest until the incident, drill, or event has ended as per NJSA 15:8-4.

The Chief may appoint a fire police captain. This officer shall be the highest ranking fire police member and serve as the fire police team leader during incidents, drills, or events within the primary response area of the AVFCO.

Fire police shall respond to the following incidents:

* Structure fires
* Incidents along a roadway
* Weather related emergencies such as flooding
* Hazardous Materials spills or leaks
* At the request of the IC or law enforcement

Fire police shall utilize UHF AVFCO private channel 2 for all incidents, drills, or events unless otherwise directed by the IC.

Fire police members shall respond directly to an incident in their POV. Fire police shall follow all applicable traffic laws while responding in their POV.

Fire police shall stage their POV in a manner not precluding access from emergency apparatus and at a safe distance away from any hazards.

Fire police shall carry the necessary safety equipment in their POV including:

* An ANSI-ISEA 107-2010 compliant high visibility traffic vest or coat
* Traffic control devices such as flares or cones
* Traffic signalling devices such as wands

Fire police shall be permitted to travel to the station and respond with Utility 48 as directed by the IC in order to bring additional traffic and crowd control equipment to the scene.

Fire police shall not ride any other AVFCO apparatus unless otherwise directed by the IC.

Upon arrival, fire police shall don their high visibility vest or coat and deploy any necessary traffic and crowd control devices unless otherwise directed by the IC.

Upon arrival, the highest ranking fire police member shall collect all fire police accountability tags and report to the command post unless otherwise directed by the IC. This member shall also serve as the Auxiliary liaison.

# SECTION 8: RADIO PROCEDURES

The AVFCO utilizes two different types of radios. One is for high frequency (VHF) and one for ultra-high frequency (UHF):

VHF: All primary police and EMS channels for Hunterdon County. Additionally, some Mercer County and state wide channels have been included. Reference the frequency list posted above the radio in the apparatus for the definitive list. Police channels are monitor only and cannot be transmitted on.

UHF: All primary fire channels for Hunterdon County. These are Fire 1 through 13, and AVFCO private channels 1 and 2. Used for all AVFCO radio communications during the majority of incidents.

## GENERAL RADIO COMMUNICATIONS

Radio transmissions shall be kept to a minimum during any incident.

Radio transmission should contain only information pertaining to the operations being conducted, specifically the conditions, actions, and needs (CAN).

Radio transmissions shall be clear and concise. Speak in a clear, strong voice, relaying all information as quickly and professionally as possible.

Acknowledge a transmission by repeating it back to the requesting unit. Never acknowledge a transmission until it is fully understood.

All unnecessary chatter should cease during radio transmissions.

Think before speaking, thereby eliminating errors and eliminating the need to repeat messages.

Members must know whom they will be transmitting to prior to beginning a transmission (dispatch (Hunterdon County Communications), command, apparatus, portable, etc.).

## BASIC RADIO CONSIDERATIONS

Members should ensure they are on the correct channel.

Members should listen prior to transmitting to ensure the channel is clear and available.

Members should avoid lengthy descriptions and unnecessary repetition.

Prior to speaking, push the Push-to Talk (PTT) button and wait for the talk permit tone to end.

Hold the microphone close to the mouth and speak into it and not across it.

Avoid transmitting when sirens and/or horns are operating.

Members shall remain calm, avoid uncivil, angry, abusive, derogatory, or sarcastic language/tones during transmissions.

Members should identify one’s self and transmit a message in one, single transmission.

Members shall not transmit the names of a firefighter(s) or a civilian(s) over any radio channel.

## MOBILE RADIO USE

Radios permanently mounted in the apparatus are referred to as mobile radios. AVFCO apparatus have mobile radios in high and ultra-high band frequencies.

Mobile radios should be used by the incident command whenever possible, not a portable radio.

Always secure all microphones to their holders to prevent any accidental or open transmissions.

## PORTABLE RADIOS

UHF portables have all 13 Hunterdon County fire and AVFCO private channels programmed.

Portable UHF radios are located within the firehouse and on all apparatus. AVFCO Chief officers and Captain are also issued a personal portable UHF radio.

Only the Chief and Deputy Chief may sign on with the dispatch center using a portable radio.

Members not elected to a line officer position shall not take a portable radio from the station with the exception of emergency responses and/or training sessions or with permission from the Chief.

Portable radios found in in single bank chargers shall be placed back and set to Hunterdon County UHF Fire 1 after use. Portable radios found in gang chargers shall be placed back and set to Hunterdon County UHF Fire 8.

## HEADSET USE

Some AVFCO apparatus have headsets linked to the radios. These headsets interface into the mobile radios and eliminate the need to use the traditional microphone when transmitting and allow for an increased hearing ability.

Transmissions are controlled by the small button on the side of the headset earphone. This button must be pushed and held to transmit a message.

Volume to the earphones is controlled by a small knob which can be rotated clockwise or counterclockwise depending on the desired volume.

## CHANNELS

**HUNTERDON COUNTY CHANNELS**

UHF Fire 1 Dispatch of all calls VHF Ambulance 2 Dispatch of all calls

UHF Fire 2 Fire command VHF Ambulance 5 EMS Command

UHF Fire 3 Fire command VHF Tac 1 LZ Command & Interop

UHF Fire 4 Fireground North

UHF Fire 5 Fireground North

UHF Fire 6 Fireground East

UHF Fire 7 Fireground East

UHF Fire 8 Fireground South

UHF Fire 9 Fireground South

UHF Fire 10 Fireground West

UHF Fire 11 Fireground West

UHF Fire 12 Water supply

UHF Fire 13 Water supply

**AVFCO CHANNELS**

UHF 48 Private 1 Private channel for general operations

UHF 48 Private 2 Private channel for fire police operations

## TERMINOLOGY

**PHONETIC ALPHABET**

A alpha H hotel O Oscar U uniform

B bravo I India P papa V Victor

C Charlie J Juliet Q Quebec W whiskey

D delta K kilo R Romeo X x-ray

E echo L lima S sierra Y yankee

F foxtrot M Mike T tango Z zulu

G golf N November

**OFFICER DESIGNATIONS**

Chief 48 Fire Chief

Deputy 48 Deputy Fire Chief

Assistant 48 Assistant Fire Chief

Captain 48 Fire Captain

Lieutenant 48-1 First Lieutenant

Lieutenant 48-2 Second Lieutenant

FP 48-1 Fire Police Captain

FP 48-2 Fire Police

**BUILDINGS**

ALPHA Front

BRAVO Left side

CHARLIE Rear

DELTA Right side

BASEMENT Below grade

FLOOR 1 through N, may also be termed DIVISION.

ATTIC Space between the top floor ceiling and roof. Also called a cockloft.

**RADIO DIALOGUE**

All radio transmissions shall be done using plain English language. Past practices of 10 code use shall no longer be used. Below is a list of commonly used terms/short phrases:

Acknowledged To understand and/or received the message

Advise Give this message to

Affirmative Yes

Available Apparatus is staffed and ready for a call, normally used when returning.

Awaiting crew Apparatus is awaiting members to staff it and respond

Be advised Reflects the desire to make another party aware of specific information.

Cancel/Recall Services not needed when units have already been dispatched.

Clear Apparatus and personnel have left the incident.

Command Incident commander.

Correct What has been transmitted is accurate.

Confirm Verify the entire message.

Correction An error was made in the previous transmission.

Cross streets The two nearest intersections to assist in location an incident

En Route Responding, proceeding to the incident location.

In service Apparatus is functional, and is capable to respond

Hold traffic All on air personnel cease radio transmissions/traffic.

Hunterdon Hunterdon County Communications.

In quarters Apparatus has safely returned to the station.

Mayday One or more personnel are in need of emergency assistance.

Negative No

Non-emergency Apparatus to respond without lights and siren.

On location Apparatus has arrived on location of the incident

On radio Apparatus is awaiting or partially staffed, but not yet able to respond

Operations Incident operations officer.

Out of service Apparatus is not functional or unable to respond.

Priority traffic An imminent danger exists. See emergency radio procedures.

Proceed with caution Advise others to be aware of potential hazards while responding.

Received Okay, understood, affirmative

Repeat Repeat your message.

Responding Proceeding to the incident location. Synonymous with “En route”.

Returning Apparatus and personnel are leaving the scene.

Stand by Request is acknowledged, but do not transmit until advised.

# SECTION 9: EMERGENCY RADIO PROCEDURES

The following procedures are to be utilized by firefighters operating in or adjacent to any structure or space in which an IDLH (Immediately Dangerous to Life and Health) atmosphere is present.

Emergency radio procedures shall be used at any point in which firefighters recognize that they are in imminent danger, recognize an imminent hazard, or become trapped or incapable of retreating from the situation.

There shall be 3 (three) acceptable radio transmissions for emergency radio procedure use:

* Urgent
* Mayday
* Emergency button activation

## URGENT

This transmission shall be used any time the safety of firefighters operating at an incident becomes questionable or when imminent danger arises. Examples are visible cracks developing in walls, roofs becoming soft, changes in smoke or fire conditions, firefighters retreating from their assigned tasks.

In the event that an URGENT radio transmission has been received, the IC shall notify the dispatcher and have an emergency broadcast of the situation on all available frequencies.

Depending upon the information given during an URGENT radio transmission, the IC may opt to evacuate all members from the area and switch to a defensive attack mode. Should this decision be made, the evacuation signal shall be transmitted in 2 (two) forms.

1. The evacuation order shall be given over the radio by the IC and the dispatch center.
2. The sounding of the apparatus air horns with sets of 3 blasts until all units have acknowledged the order.

All firefighters receiving the evacuation signal shall immediately stop their operations and retreat from the area.

All members shall report to the apparatus they responded on, or to a predetermined muster point for an accountability roll call.

The muster point shall be determined by the Safety Officer in conjunction with the IC. This point should be remote from the command post to avoid large gatherings around the IC.

## MAYDAY

This transmission shall be reserved for a situation in which firefighter(s) have become trapped, incapacitated, or unable to exit the space on their own without assistance.

A MAYDAY TRANSMISSION IS NOT AN EVACUATION ORDER. ALL FIREFIGHTING EFFORTS SHALL CONTINUE TO ENSURE THAT THE AREA IN WHICH THE RESCUE NEEDS TO BE PERFORMED REMAINS AS SAFE AS POSSIBLE FOR THE RESCUERS AND VICTIM(S).

A MAYDAY transmission should include a series of information to enhance the possibility of a successful rescue operation. LUNAR is an acronym to assist firefighters in remembering the pertinent information:

L: LOCATION Your current or last known location.

U: UNIT Your unit or identification number.

N: NAME Your name

A: ASSIGNMENT What was your assignment at the time of the emergency?

R: RESOURCES Which resources will be needed to perform the rescue or removal. (breathing air, wire cutters, lifting equipment, etc.)

A MAYDAY transmission should be transmitted over all accessible channels until answered.

The IC shall immediately notify the dispatcher of the situation and request that the channel be ‘DEDICATED” to the rescue efforts only.

Upon receiving an URGENT or MAYDAY radio transmission, ALL radio transmissions shall cease to allow the IC and the RIT the ability to hear all pertinent information.

## EMERGENCY BUTTON ACTIVATION

All AVFCO UHF portable radios are equipped with an orange emergency button. In order to activate the emergency button, press and hold for approximately 3 (three) seconds.

This transmission shall be reserved for a situation in which firefighter(s) have become trapped, incapacitated, or unable to exit the space on their own without assistance and are unable to transmit a MAYDAY.

The IC shall immediately notify the dispatcher of the situation and request that the channel be ‘DEDICATED” to the rescue efforts only.

Once a MAYDAY radio transmission or EMERGENCY BUTTON activation has been made, your PASS device shall be placed in the alarm mode as an additional distress signal and to act as a tracking source for the rescue team. The PASS device may need to be shut off (when possible) to enhance the ability to communicate by radio to the IC or the rescue team.

# SECTION 10: FIRE ALARM ACTIVATIONS

Fire alarms and smoke detectors can provide occupants an advanced warning of potentially hazardous situations. While all alarm activations shall be regarded as potential fires, most are either inadvertent activations or false alarms.

Some alarm systems may also transmit an alert to Hunterdon County Communications for immediate dispatch. The AVFCO shall respond to all automated fire alarm and smoke detector activations. Only the first due apparatus shall respond in emergency mode. All other responding apparatus will respond in non-emergency mode to automated alarms.

Engine 48 shall be the first apparatus to respond to all fire alarm and detector activations unless otherwise directed by an officer.

The first arriving unit shall establish incident command and give an arrival report to Hunterdon County Communications including the following details:

* The size and occupancy of the structure.
* Any visible fire conditions and / or additional hazards.
* How many occupants are still in the building or unaccounted for.

Crews of two interior firefighters shall investigate the cause of all alarms to determine if an actual emergency exists. All interior firefighters shall wear full turn out gear with SCBA unless otherwise directed by the IC or operations officer.

Each crew shall also be equipped with a portable radio. At least one crew shall utilize a thermal imaging camera during the investigation.

## FALSE ALARMS

If Hunterdon County Communications advises that the alarm is a “confirmed false alarm,” one unit shall continue to respond in non-emergency mode to verify that it is indeed a false alarm and obtain any information necessary to complete the incident report. All other units shall recall unless otherwise directed by an officer.

If crews confirm a false alarm, the IC will notify Hunterdon County Communications and cancel all other responding apparatus. Personnel on scene may assist the homeowner with resetting the alarm prior to leaving the scene.

## UPGRADES

If a crew identifies a hazard during an investigation, the crew shall immediately notify the IC with type, size and extent, and location of the hazard within the structure.

If crews have identified a haze or light smoke condition, the IC shall upgrade the alarm box to level 2 with Hunterdon County Communications and request the corresponding additional apparatus.

The IC shall advise crew(s) of any smoke observations in an effort to aid the search for the source of the smoke condition. Otherwise crew(s) shall start at the lowest level in the structure and search each room, checking all major appliances and electronics along the way.

Once identified, the IC shall attempt to secure or shut down any power sources contributing to the condition. If possible, crew(s) shall remove the object(s) contributing to the condition from the structure.

If crews have identified a heavy smoke condition or actual fire, the IC shall upgrade the alarm box to level 3 with Hunterdon County Communications and request the corresponding additional apparatus. All subsequent operations shall be conducted in accordance with [Section 11](#_nir078okzcl8) regarding structure fires.

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# SECTION 11: STRUCTURE FIRES

A structure fire is a fire, at any point in the process of combustion, involving any of the structural components of various types of buildings, including residential, commercial, agricultural and industrial buildings.

## ARRIVAL

The first arriving officer will complete a 360 degree viewing of the structure to determine occupancy and the status of any occupants, the type of structure and number of stories, presence of truss construction, visible smoke and fire conditions, the location of any hazards or exposures, the availability and quantity of water, the lag time for obtaining more water and the need for any additional resources.

An on scene officer will assume command, establish communication channels, and develop an incident action plan for fire suppression. The IC shall consider the following basic principles in developing the incident action plan: life safety; incident stabilization; and property conservation.

Engine 48 shall respond first for all structure fires and stage as close to the structure as possible without compromising the safety of the crew or inhibiting future fireground operations. Any hoselines necessary for initial fireground operations shall be deployed and the pump engaged.

Tender 48 shall respond second. If a reliable water supply has yet to be secured, firefighters shall drop the portable water tank as close to the roadway entrance as possible and deploy a length of large diameter hose necessary to reach Engine 48-1 or 48-2 in order to establish a water supply.

The IC shall consider the logistics of water supply and other responding apparatus. Routes to and from the scene shall remain open unless no other option exists. Any apparatus not needed at the scene shall be staged accordingly.

## SCENE SAFETY

The IC shall designate an accountability officer responsible for the overall accountability of all personnel assigned to the structure fire. The accountability officer shall collect all accountability tags. The accountability officer shall also conduct a Personnel Accountability Report (PAR) every 10 minutes, however, timing and frequency may depend on the situation and needs of the incident. Company officers shall maintain an awareness of the location and condition of assigned company personnel.

Utilities should be shut down and brought under control to ensure that they will not contribute to the fires spread, overall damage or create any type of safety hazard.

Fire personnel shall shut down the power via circuit breakers. The IC should request the response of the proper electric company at structure fires where electrical involvement or damage has occurred. See [Section 13](#_4fv969optog9) for considerations involving photovoltaic and alternative energy sources.

Fire personnel shall shut down gas lines at the meter and have the gas company notified. Meters that have been shut off by fire personnel should be properly tagged and locked. Firefighters shall not extinguish any burning gas before the source can be secured.

There shall be at least 2 active interior firefighters on any interior attack hose-line. There shall be at least 2 active interior firefighters in any interior search and rescue. Each firefighter must be in full structural firefighting PPE including an SCBA. At least one firefighter must be equipped with a portable radio.

All PPE in addition to the use of an SCBA shall be utilized until the IC determines that the premises are safe and free of any IDLH. The IC or Operations Officer will make that determination based on information gathered during an inspection of the premises while using the multi-gas meter and thermal imaging camera.

There should be a Rapid Intervention Team (RIT) in place on any interior operation or any situation where firefighters are exposed or could be exposed to any IDLH situation. RIT crews must be authorized and properly trained before participating in any interior structural fire attack or search and rescue operations. See [Section 12](#_7d4iheavkrtj) for more information on RIT.

All personnel on structure fire scenes are required to participate in incident rehabilitation. Rehabilitation operations will be performed pursuant to [Section 14](#_d3u3ub1pqh1v).

Fire Police may be deployed to assist with traffic and crowd control at a structure fire.

## RESCUE

Human life is the most important consideration at a structure fire. Rescue of humans is a priority over all other strategic considerations at a structure fire.

The IC will determine whether a primary or secondary search shall be conducted immediately after scene size up.

During a primary or secondary search all rooms should be marked by some means to indicate that the particular room has been searched. Crews should attempt to isolate all rooms from further fire spread.

## EXPOSURE PROTECTION

Exposure protection is the strategy of preventing a structure fire from spreading to any uninvolved building(s) or uninvolved parts of the fire building.

The IC shall be responsible for ensuring the initial protection of exposures and assigning teams appropriately.

## CONFINEMENT

The strategy of confinement means preventing the fire from extending to uninvolved sections of the building.

Generally, the most effective method of confining fire spread is a direct attack on the fire. However, there may be situations when a transitional attack could be used, e.g., an initial defensive attack to knock down the fire followed by a direct attack. A defensive attack should not be used when a crew(s) are operating in the interior of the structure.

During the process of confinement, firefighters must consider and explore all avenues of fire spread, including concealed spaces such as attics, suspended ceilings, construction voids, shafts, openings, utility raceways, and ducts. Where fires involve concealed spaces, it is very important that crews open up and extinguish any fire in these areas.

## EXTINGUISHMENT

In most fire situations, a quick and aggressive direct attack on the seat of the fire will extinguish it. The quick extinguishment of the fire will also simultaneously assist in any rescue operations, the protection of any exposures, and confinement of the fire.

A fire attack crew must thoroughly extinguish the fire. The crew may then ventilate the area to assist in ensuring that the fire is extinguished and aid in overhaul operations.

The size-up will provide information as to equipment and manpower needs to extinguish the fire. Fully involved, heavy timber, or large structures may require additional water than what is on scene. The IC must appoint a Water Officer in this case.

The role of the Water Officer is to ensure that there is sufficient quantities of water to aid in exposure protection, confinement, extinguishment, and overhaul.

The Water Officer may request activation of County designated Tender Task Forces. A Tender Task Force consists of a series of water tenders and two fill engines. Once activated, the Water Officer must assign primary and secondary fill sites along with water shuttle routes and dump locations. Task force operations are usually assigned UHF Fire channels 12 or 13.

## VENTILATION

Based upon the situation, ventilation may need to occur anytime during the operation. Ventilation shall be employed to:

* Channel heat, smoke and flames from potential victims.
* To prevent backdraft and flashover.
* To remove heat and smoke from the building so to reduce property damage.
* To allow the interior of the structure to be more tenable and safer for firefighting operations.

## OVERHAUL

Overhaul is the process of searching for any areas that may contain hidden fires or allow for its extension. It is also the process of placing the building and its contents in a safe condition prior to leaving the scene, as well as assisting in determining the point of origin for the fire investigation and the preservation of evidence in the event of a suspicious fire.

Overhaul operations begin while attempting to place the fire under control and continue afterwards until the fire is extinguished and all possible fuels are brought within room temperature. Overhaul tools are located on several apparatus, including Engine 48-1, Engine 48-2 and Tac 48.

Numerous hazards may still exist such as weakened floors, ceilings, walls, and/or stairs, extreme water weight within the structure, and elevated carbon monoxide levels and the possible presence of toxic fumes. Any hazards such as holes in floors, collapsed sections of stairs, ceilings, walls, etc. should be taped off to restrict personnel from operating near the danger area.

Anything that may be considered evidence to a crime or helpful to the investigation of the cause and origin of the structure fire should be left in place or as close to the original location as possible. However, items that must be moved to allow for the complete extinguishment of the fire should be communicated to the IC and moved as necessary. When safe to do so, the location and orientation of those items should be clarified with the investigators.

## SALVAGE

Salvage is the process of reducing the fire, smoke, and water damage during and after a fire. Salvage operations begin as soon as possible during an incident as long as it does not deter from other primary incident objectives.

Salvage equipment is located on Engine 48-1 and Engine 48-2.

# SECTION 12: RAPID INTERVENTION TEAM

At this time, the Amwell Valley Fire Co. does not have a Rapid Intervention Team (RIT) and relies on the support of our mutual aid partners to provide those services. The primary mission of a RIT is to provide prompt and effective support in the event of a fire ground emergency.

## QUALIFICATIONS

Departments providing RIT services must at a minimum have members who have completed RIT awareness and operations level certifications.

Although not required by AVFCO, departments should encourage their members to take additional or continuing education training courses and regularly participate in Hunterdon County RIT drills.

Any responding RIT must provide the minimum required equipment on the response apparatus as defined by the NFPA and local and state guidelines.

Departments not meeting the previously listed minimum requirements for assistance shall be removed from the AVFCO box alarms.

## RESPONSES

A RIT is required for all structural fire incidents. RIT are designated via predefined box alarms and are dispatched by Hunterdon County Communications. All requests for additional RIT assistance must be done by the IC via Hunterdon County Communications.

The requested RIT must respond with a minimum of four qualified members, or more if required by that department’s RIT response guidelines.

In the event that the requested RIT does not have sufficient staffing, they must notify Hunterdon County Communications and have the message relayed to the IC. The IC shall immediately request the next available RIT.

## STAGING

The responding RIT shall stage their apparatus under the direction of the IC with regard to personnel safety, the nature of the incident, location of other apparatus, the quick and efficient access to equipment, and any other factors required by that department’s RIT response guidelines.

The RIT leader shall report to the IC with the accountability tags and announce the team’s arrival. All team members do not need to report to the command post with the team leader unless otherwise required by that department’s RIT response guidelines.

It will be the responsibility of the IC to relate all pertinent information about the incident, including but not limited to: the radio channels being utilized for operations and command, current operational strategy, specific hazards, number and location of firefighters, and any additional information as required by that department’s RIT response guidelines.

## COMMUNICATION

It will be the discretion of the RIT, in conjunction with the IC, to establish a communication strategy via the available, but not limited to: Hunterdon County fireground channels, available AVFCO ultra-high band radio channels, or RIT department specific radio channels.

## PREPARATION MODE

After reporting to the IC, the RIT team shall conduct their own 360 of the scene to determine any equipment needed in event of a fire ground emergency. This must include ladders for additional means of egress, tools for rapid entry into the structure, extra air packs or cylinders, and any other items specified by that department’s RIT response guidelines.

The RIT shall stage all equipment in such a manner that it allows for rapid deployment in the event of a fire ground emergency. The RIT shall be proactive and take any actions necessary in preparation for an emergency, acting in concert with incident objectives and operations.

## EMERGENCY MODE

In the event of a fire ground emergency, Mayday radio procedures shall be implemented and the IC will communicate to the RIT the nature and location of the emergency, number of personnel involved, current incident operations, and fire ground conditions.

The primary action taken by the RIT shall be to locate and supply a dedicated air supply to the victim(s). All additional activities will be performed as soon as possible.

The RIT team shall establish a means of egress and remove any victim(s) from IDLH conditions, requesting any additional resources directly from the IC.

This operation shall continue until either all victim(s) are removed from the IDLH conditions, the IDLH conditions no longer exist, or the IC deems any additional operations too hazardous for remaining crews.

## REASSIGNMENT

The IC may reassign the RIT to support or directly participate in fire suppression activities. Any changes must be clearly and effectively communicated to the RIT team or its designated leader, and all pertinent information must be provided as required by their department’s RIT response guidelines.

In the event that the on-scene RIT is or may potentially be re-assigned to support or directly participate in suppression activities, then the IC will request the next available RIT.

# SECTION 13: ALTERNATIVE ENERGY SYSTEMS

Firefighting operations on commercial and residential buildings that contain photovoltaic or thermal energy systems must consider the additional and unique hazards posed by these systems.

The hazards present in photovoltaic systems include tripping/slipping, structural collapse due to extra weight on the roof, flame spread, electrical shock, and inhalation exposure.

Direct contact with conduit, solar panels and batteries in a photovoltaic system should be avoided as it presents an electrocution hazard. It is important to note that even when known shutdown steps have been taken to isolate electrical current, some system components may still be charged. Firefighters should treat all wiring and solar power components as if they are energized.

The hazards present in a thermal system is the presence of hot scalding liquids. Direct contact with a damaged system may cause scalding.

## INITIAL RESPONSE

In the event that responding apparatus to a fire call have prior knowledge of the existence of a solar power system, they should immediately inform Hunterdon County Communications.

If the initial size up of a fire scene reveals the presence of a solar power system, the IC must be informed immediately. The information relayed should include the type of photovoltaic system, the location of DC and AC disconnects, and if the system contains battery storage.

Responding units should provide sufficient access to the structure for aerial apparatus.

Before any other firefighting operations occur, the photovoltaic system shall be deactivated as much as possible. This includes lock-out and tag-out of all electrical disconnects and isolating the system at the inverter using reliable methods. It should be noted that, capacitors inside the inverters will continue to provide an electric charge for several minutes on both sides of the disconnect even after it is opened (shut down).

## EXTINGUISHMENT

Because a photovoltaic solar system can generate electricity not only when the sun is shining, but also from artificial light such as from scene lights on apparatus, firefighters should exercise due care during fireground operations.

It should be noted that while solar power systems are designed for durability in many types of weather, they do not necessarily possess good fire resistant qualities. Solar power systems may contain plastics and other combustible materials. If a solar power system becomes engulfed in fire, extinguishment must be undertaken as set forth in this guideline.

In the event that the IC determines to employ a direct attack on a structure with a solar system, all extinguishment methods must use a 10 degree or wider stream with a fog nozzle or be at least 20 feet or more from any component of the system if using a smooth bore nozzle, in order to reduce potential electrical current to minimal levels.

Firefighters should never cut or damage any conduit, electrical equipment or panels at any time.

In the event that battery storage is a part of the photovoltaic system, firefighters need to be aware of the hazards posed by battery components. Batteries that are burning/burned or damaged in a fire generate fumes and gases that are extremely corrosive. Spilled electrolyte can react with other metals and produce toxic fumes, as well as potentially flammable or explosive gases. When extinguishing a fire involving batteries, the preferred method is either dry chemical, CO2 or foam.

## ROOFTOP OPERATIONS

During rooftop firefighting operations solar systems present challenges to firefighters. Firefighters performing rooftop operations should be aware of the tripping/slipping hazards posed by solar power systems, particularly in dark or smoky conditions. Consideration must be also be given to the additional weight of a photovoltaic array on a structure that may already be weakened due to fire.

In the event that the Incident Commander determines that it is necessary to vent the roof, any ventilation performed must be done on a portion of the roof that does not contain solar panels. In addition, such operations must always be performed from an aerial apparatus. Under no circumstances should solar panels or components be damaged or compromised to perform vertical ventilation

## OVERHAUL

During overhaul operations, firefighters must continue to wear full PPE, including respiratory protection. Care should be taken during all fire ground operations to protect against respiratory exposure from products of combustion, as well as chemicals released from damaged components.

Care must also be taken to not damage solar panels or components during overhaul. It should be noted that if solar power system wiring or components sustain any shorts or damage, those components may present shock and fire hazards if the system becomes energized once sunlight returns.

Any extinguishment methods used on or near solar system components during overhaul must be applied at a 10 degree or wider stream with a fog nozzle or at least 20 feet or more from any component of the system if using a smooth bore nozzle, in order to reduce potential electrical current to minimal levels.

# SECTION 14: INCIDENT REHABILITATION

All rehabilitation (rehab) operations shall be done in coordination with all applicable federal, state, and local guidelines pertaining to such operations.

Baseline vital signs shall be established for each active member of the AVFCO. These baselines shall be recorded yearly while the member is at rest. The results shall be filed and a copy given to the EMS agency establishing the rehab area.

## ESTABLISHMENT

A rehab area shall be established at all structure fires. A rehab area may also be established for training activities or any other incident based on the following:

* Incident duration
* Level of physical exertion
* Weather or adverse environmental conditions
* Use of one 45 minute SCBA bottle

Responsibility for establishing a rehab area shall be shared between the IC, the Safety Officer., and the EMS branch officer or representative.

Rehab sector areas shall be established in areas appropriate for the weather, time, and location of the particular incident.

## FUNCTIONS

Firefighters may be directed to the rehab area at any time during an operation by incident command, operations officer, safety officer, or team / group supervisor. The rehab sector shall provide the following:

* Rest
* Re-hydration
* Cooling or warming
* Medical Monitoring & treatment
* Relief from adverse environmental conditions
* Caloric & electrolyte replacement
* Accountability

Vital signs and any necessary medical treatment shall be the responsibility of the EMS agency operating the rehab area. It is at the discretion of the EMS agency to clear firefighters for reassignment.

No member shall leave the scene of an incident that has a rehab area without participating in the rehab process and cleared for reassignment.

# SECTION 15: OTHER FIRES

## WILDLAND FIRES

A wildland fire is any non-structure fire that occurs in vegetation or natural fuels.

Members shall wear proper the PPE at all wildland fires consisting of cotton or denim clothing and a minimum of turn out bunker pants and boots. Members may choose instead to wear NFPA compliant wildland firefighting gear if available.

All apparatus and personnel shall be staged up wind and in a manner which provides quick escape in the event fire conditions deteriorate and begin to overrun the area.

Brush 48 shall respond first for all wildland fires.

Engine 48 shall respond second to provide manpower.

Tender 48 shall also respond if additional water is required or as directed by an officer.

The first arriving unit shall give an arrival report to Hunterdon County Communications including the following details:

* The actual location and size of fire.
* Direction and characteristics of fire travel.
* Type of fuel burning (light grass, heavy brush etc.)
* Number and location of exposures.
* Additional resources needed.

The IC shall notify the NJ Forestry Service if the size of the fire is greater than a quarter of an acre or the size and complexity of the wildland fire exceeds the resources of the AVFCO.

The IC shall establish and communicate escape routes to all members operating on scene.

The IC shall determine if a direct or indirect attack is needed. Life safety, incident stabilization, and structural protection take priority over extinguishment of wildland fires.

The IC shall initiate a direct attack if the fire can be extinguished at the current size and pace. Members shall attack the head of the fire first. If that is not possible, attack the flanks and work toward the head.

The IC shall initiate an indirect and/or parallel attack if the fire is large or fast moving. Members shall cut fire lines at a distance ahead of the fire (or utilizing natural fire breaks, such as roadways) and at the flanks to halt the progress of the fire.

Members shall continually monitor hazards while operating at a wildland fire:

* Be cautious of changes in wind direction and velocity.
* Be cautious of spot fires below you and your crew.
* Be cautious of frequent “flare ups”.
* Be cautions of downed electrical wires.
* Be cautious of equipment and personnel working above and around your crew (falling rocks, trees etc.).

Members shall take appropriate measures in order to avoid heat exhaustion. Members shall enter incident rehabilitation at the discretion of the IC and as often as conditions allow.

## VEHICLE FIRES

A vehicle fire is an uncontrolled burning involving a motor vehicle.

A motor vehicle contains many types of flammable materials, including flammable liquids like gasoline and oil. Fuel leaks from ruptured fuel lines also can rapidly ignite, especially in vehicles where sparks are possible in the engine compartment.

Members shall wear proper the PPE at all vehicle fires consisting of full turn out gear. Any members operating near the vehicle(s) shall also don an SCBA. until the IC determines that the area is safe and free of any respiratory hazards

Engine 48-1 shall respond first for all vehicle fires followed by Tender 48 for additional water.

All apparatus shall be staged up wind unless deployed for traffic control.

The first arriving unit shall give a report to Hunterdon County Communications confirming the type of vehicle, the extent of the fire, traffic flow, and any hazards present.

All operations shall be in accordance with [Section 18](#_vpcu909ax7py) if at any time the contents of the vehicle are believed to be or positively identified as hazardous materials.

Members shall secure the scene to provide protection for the public and emergency crews operating the incident. Keep all warning lights activated.

If along a roadway, provide assistance with traffic control until law enforcement arrives, and continue to provide traffic control if requested.

Only interior firefighters may be involved in rescue and extinguishment operations.

**BEGIN RAPID EXTRICATION PROCEDURES IF THE VEHICLE IS STILL OCCUPIED.**

Any hoselines necessary for initial operations shall be deployed and the pump engaged.

Firefighters shall approach the vehicle slowly from the side extinguishing the fire as they approach. Firefighters shall use appropriate tactics to minimize hazards from exploding bumpers, ruptured engine blocks, fuel tanks, and tires.

Firefighters shall open and cool the engine compartment and trunk of the vehicles. Upholstery and additional compartments shall be opened up as necessary during overhaul. Power to the vehicles shall be disconnected.

## WIRE & UTILITY POLE FIRES

Downed wires and utility pole fires carry an additional risk of electrocution.

Brush 48 shall respond first to all wires down and utility pole fires, unless directed by an officer.

Utility 48 shall respond second to provide additional traffic and crowd control equipment, unless directed by an officer.

When responding to a report of wires down or a utility pole fire, apparatus should approach the incident location with caution, stopping with at least one uncompromised span of wires before the downed lines or damaged pole. Operators shall not park apparatus over manholes, catch basins or other underground vaults.

The first arriving unit shall give a report to Hunterdon County Communications confirming the incident location, the extent of any fire or electrical arcing, and the closest safely identifiable pole number.

Members shall not move, touch, or cut wires down. An electrocution hazard may exist at any time. Electrical circuits will often attempt to clear themselves by cycling the current. Wires may recoil when charged or moved.

Members shall not extinguish electrical fires until de-energized. Members shall never enter an electrical substation or facility.

The IC shall establish an operational perimeter of at least 30 feet in all directions from downed wires, poles, fences, vehicles, guard rails, railroad tracks, and puddles of water which may be electrically energized.

The IC shall direct fire police or members to close any lanes of travel that extend into the operational perimeter. Detours shall be established at the nearest intersections if the road is completely closed.

The IC may direct fire suppression efforts at threatened exposures which are outside the operational perimeter.

Units shall remain on scene until the utility company arrives and de-energizes the circuit or the IC determines that the circuit is and will remain de-energized, and all fires are extinguished.

# SECTION 16: CARBON MONOXIDE ALARMS

Carbon Monoxide (CO) is an odorless, colorless and tasteless gas that is a by-product of combustion. It can be deadly. Many household appliances, such as furnaces, kitchen stoves, hot water heaters and unvented fuel heaters, as well as generators, lawnmowers and automobiles, all produce CO.

Carbon monoxide poisoning may be difficult to diagnose. The symptoms may include headache, nausea, fatigue and dizziness. The symptoms are similar to the flu at low exposure levels. Higher exposure levels can cause convulsions, unconsciousness, and even death.

Meters capable of detecting CO levels are located on Engine 48 and Tac 48. A meter will be used to monitor the atmosphere during any suspected CO investigation. Each meter must be examined and tested on a regular basis. Any problems with a meter shall be reported to the Captain or another officer, and the meter must be taken out of service until repaired.

## PROCEDURES

Any active firefighter that will be entering the premises must don their SCBA upon arrival at the scene.

The IC should assess the incident and request a BLS dispatched to the scene as a precaution if any of the following factors can be determined:

* if any of the occupants are or have been feeling ill (i.e., headaches, dizziness, nausea);
* the number and location of any CO detectors that were activated;
* the location of any combustion equipment or appliances; and
* whether any occupants remain in the building or are unaccounted for.

## INVESTIGATION

At least two active firefighters, equipped with SCBA, a CO meter and a portable radio will be assigned to conduct a search/investigation of the building. Prior to entering the building, an active firefighter must calibrate a CO meter in fresh air away from any potential sources of CO and comply with the startup procedures recommended by the manufacturer of the meter. The firefighter must then take a first reading at the threshold of the entrance to determine the initial CO level.

If a reading of 35 ppm or less is detected, firefighters should then begin monitoring the lower levels of the building and then proceed to higher levels. Firefighters must inform the IC of their findings and actions throughout the course of the investigation.

If a reading above 35 ppm is detected at any time, firefighters will immediately mask up and utilize their SCBA for the remainder of their time inside the building. Firefighters must evacuate any occupant(s) from the premises.

Once all occupants are accounted for, the investigation will shift to check all possible sources of CO and shut down any of those systems believed to be generating the gas. (Remember, when checking appliances, that they must be running for a few minutes to get an accurate reading.) The IC will notify the appropriate utility company and occupant/owner.

The premises must then been ventilated, using positive pressure or passive ventilation until CO readings in all areas have been reduced to a safe level. Only then, and under the discretion of the IC, may the premises be occupied again.

The IC will inform the occupant(s) that if the detector is re-activated or they feel there may be a problem, to evacuate the area and call 911.

If all readings were 35 ppm or less, the IC will:

* inform the occupant(s) that our instrument did not detect an elevated level of CO at this time;
* recommend that the occupant(s) check their CO detector in accordance with the manufacturer’s instructions;
* advise the occupant(s) to reset the CO detector, if applicable, in accordance with the manufacturer’s instructions;
* inform the occupant(s) that if the CO detector reactivates or they feel there may be a problem, to evacuate the area and call 911.

Any firefighter likely to have been exposed to a dangerous level of CO during an incident shall be evaluated by emergency medical personnel on the scene.

# SECTION 17: COMBUSTIBLE GAS LEAKS

Calls for odor of gas, gas leak, broken gas line, etc. may involve situations that range from minor to potentially major incidents. All of these situations shall be approached as potentially dangerous situations.

Natural gas is lighter than air and will dissipate quickly in an outdoor environment. Inside a structure, natural gas can form pockets particularly in attics and dead air spaces. The flammable limits of natural gas are roughly from 4% to 15% in air. Natural gas is a non-toxic substance but can reduce oxygen concentrations and create an IDLH environment.

Propane (Liquefied Petroleum Gas) is heavier than air and can pool in depressions, valleys or low lying areas outdoors and the lower levels of a structure. The flammable limits of propane are roughly from 2% to 9.5%. Propane is a non-toxic substance but will displace oxygen in an enclosed environment and create an IDLH situation.

Pressurized propane containers are also subject to BLEVE when exposed to intense heat or open flames. Keeping the container cool reduces the risk of a BLEVE.

Prior to entering any potentially hazardous atmosphere, firefighters shall zero a combustible gas meter in fresh air and comply with the startup procedures recommended by the manufacturer of the meter. Gas meters are located in Engine 48-1, Engine 48-2 and Tac 48. These meters have been calibrated with methane gas which leads lower explosive limit (LEL) readings for certain other gasses like propane to be higher than what is detected.

Radios, pagers, cell phones, flashlights and other equipment that is non-intrinsically safe shall not be used or taken into potentially explosive environments. All intrinsically safe equipment shall be turned on prior to entering the structure.

The threat of fire shall be controlled by eliminating the source of combustible gasses and/or securing ignition sources.

In the event a combustible gas is already on fire, the most effective method of extinguishment is securing the flow of gas from the source. Burning gasses should not be extinguished before the source of the gas is secured, as this will change the situation from a visible to an invisible hazard with the potential for an explosion.

## OUTDOORS

When responding to an investigation of an outdoor gas leak, apparatus should approach the incident location with caution and upwind, stopping at least 150’ from the scene. Operators shall not park apparatus over manholes, catch basins or other underground vaults.

A limited number of interior firefighters, equipped with SCBA, a combustible meter(s) and a portable radio will shall enter the scene on foot and conduct a search/investigation of the area relaying all findings and actions along the way.

All other units shall stage away from the scene and remain alert for other gas leaks in the area

Firefighters shall be mindful of changing weather or wind conditions that may affect the flow and spread of combustible gasses.

If a leak is detected, the IC shall request an appropriate gas company response from Hunterdon County Communications. The rate of the leak and volume of any containers shall be included in the request.

Firefighters shall secure or isolate the gas source and stop the leak. If this is not possible:

1. All persons within the minimum protective action distance shall be evacuated immediately.
2. All units shall stage away from the scene and await gas company response.
3. The IC shall establish a water supply with due consideration for the safety of personnel and the protection of apparatus and exposures.

## ENCLOSURES

When responding to a report of a gas leak within an enclosure, apparatus should be positioned in the safe location. Apparatus should approach the scene with caution.

The IC shall request an ambulance from Hunterdon County Communications if any of the following conditions are met:

* Any occupants are or have been feeling ill (i.e., headaches, dizziness, nausea);
* Any occupants remain in the building or are unaccounted for; or
* At any time crews report a combustible gas meter LEL reading above 10%

A limited number of interior firefighters, equipped with SCBA, a combustible meter(s) and a portable radio will shall conduct a search/investigation of the building relaying all findings and actions along the way.

Firefighters shall take a first reading just outside of the entrance of the building to determine the initial gas level.

If a reading of less than 1% is detected at the entrance, firefighters shall continue to walk through the enclosure taking readings periodically and at at the entrance to every room.

Closed doors should be cracked slightly to insert the probe and a reading obtained before opening the door. Opening a door or venting an atmosphere that is above the Upper Explosive Limit (UEL) could cause an explosion.

All switches shall be left in their current positions, as any change could cause an ignition.

Firefighters may ventilate the building if all gas LEL readings in the building are less than 10% and no active leak is found.

If at any time an active leak or an LEL reading of 10% or greater is detected:

1. All personnel shall evacuate the building immediately and stage at a location outside the minimum protective distance.
2. The IC shall request an appropriate gas company response from Hunterdon County Communications.
3. Firefighters shall secure or isolate the gas source and stop the leak if possible.
4. The IC shall establish a water supply with due consideration for the safety of personnel and the protection of apparatus and exposures.

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# SECTION 18: HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

The AVFCO responds on many occasions to incidents involving Hazardous Materials (HazMat).

While the majority of these incidents involve fluids spills during motor vehicle accidents, other situations may arise in local businesses as well as other modes of transportation that involve Hazardous Materials.

## TRAINING

The AVFCO, as well as the NJ DFS, mandate that all active members are trained and certified to respond to hazardous materials incidents.

Fire police and exterior firefighters must have at least an awareness level certification. Interior firefighters must be certified to the operations level.

Members shall not operate beyond their level of training. Any operations requiring certifications beyond those held by members on scene shall be handled by the Hunterdon County Hazardous Materials Team or other outside agency.

Members shall participate in an annual “refresher training course”. All active members must attend or will be banned from responding to hazardous materials incidents or incidents where possible hazardous material exposure could occur.

## RESPONSES

Hazardous Materials may present themselves in many forms. Members must be prepared for a HazMat incident in which the material is not readily identifiable and act accordingly. Such situations may involve a gas, a solid, a liquid, or a combination thereof.

All AVFCO apparatus are equipped with an Emergency Response Guidebook (ERG) that can assist members in identifying a material and initial response information.

Responding units should attempt to gain as much information about the incident as possible prior to arriving on scene. A determination of the route and how to proceed to an incident should be made based upon these findings. If materials and scale cannot be determined prior to arrival, all members shall stage at a distance determined by the IC or the recommendation set in the ERG book and take no further offensive actions.

HazMat responses shall be handled in emergency mode unless otherwise directed by the IC.

## INCIDENT COMMAND

The AVFCO should remain in command at a HazMat incident. All other responding agencies should operate within a unified command structure.

If an incident proves to be overwhelming for the initial incident commander, he or she may choose to transfer command to a person of another organization (e.g. HazMat response team) with higher qualifications.

## VEHICLE AND ROADWAY FLUIDS

A vehicle fluid leak is generally considered to be a small scale incident.

Most vehicle fluid leaks occur after a motor vehicle accident and involve gasoline, anti-freeze, motor oil, transmission fluid, or diesel fuel. While these fluids do not present an immediate threat to life, they may present a threat to the environment and/or future vehicle travel in the affected area.

Confirmation should be made that any fluid released is not something other than a typical vehicle fluid. If the fluid is found to be a different classification of material, see response for “Other Incidents & Unidentified Materials”.

Typical vehicle fluids can be contained by using an absorbent (speedy dry), pads, or booms. An assortment of these can be found on Engine 48-1, Tac 48, and Utility 48.

If the amounts of absorbents carried on the responding apparatus are insufficient to handle the spill, additional amounts may be obtained from various sources, including but not limited to:

* Surplus supply at the station
* Utility 48 should be used to retrieve and transport the surplus to the scene.
* Towing company
* Spill response contractor
* Hunterdon County HazMat
* NJ Department of Transportation

All absorbents, regardless of form, shall be placed in either a labeled HazMat or red colored bag and left with the vehicle for removal from the scene. In the event properly labeled HazMat or red colored bags are not available black, “contractor” type garbage bags may be used.

Usage of these bags for HazMat must be communicated to the tow company or spill response team such that they can take the appropriate action. The AVFCO does not remove or dispose of hazardous materials.

## OTHER & UNIDENTIFIED MATERIALS

Other circumstances that may lead to a HazMat incident are, but not limited to, the following:

* Train derailment
* Large release of fluids or gasses from containers
* Manufacturing or storage mishaps
* Fires involving a HazMat.

Spills or leaks larger than 55 gallons or 600 pounds are considered large scale incidents.

Any response to an incident such as those listed above shall be handled defensively until the identity of the material(s) and the hazards are confirmed. Confirmation of the material(s) involved may need to be made by members of organizations other than the AVFCO.

The IC shall call the Hunterdon County Hazardous Materials team immediately if the materials, hazards, or scale are not within the scope of the members and resources responding. Members may still be able to assist under the direct supervision of an agency qualified to handle the incident.

## RESCUE/VICTIMS

Structural firefighting PPE provides minimal or no protection against hazardous materials and substances. Members shall not depend solely upon their PPE or SCBA to protect them from exposure to a hazardous material.

HazMat rescues may only be performed by members certified with level technical or above, or personnel from an outside agency, while wearing the proper PPE for a given hazardous material.

Members shall not come in contact with any victim suspected of being contaminated by any hazardous material or substance. Victim(s) shall not be placed in any apparatus for sheltering purposes. Any and all victims should be instructed to follow all orders given by the IC and/or the Hazardous Materials team to ensure the safety of all parties involved.

Members shall not come in contact any victim(s) until the decontamination process is complete.

## DECONTAMINATION

Any and all members coming in contact with a hazardous material must go through the appropriate decontamination process as they leave the hazardous area.

Contaminated PPE, equipment, and personal clothing shall be removed during the decontamination process.

Any items removed during decontamination shall be placed in the correct containment bags or locations. These items may need to be sent to a professional organization for proper decontamination or destruction.

Members may use water based decontamination (dilution) if appropriate. Engine 48, Tac 48, or any other engine can provide the water flow necessary. Ladders, tarps, and booms can provide a sufficient decontamination station.

# SECTION 19: MOTOR VEHICLE ACCIDENTS

A motor vehicle accident (MVA) occurs when a vehicle collides with another vehicle, pedestrian, animal, road debris, or other stationary obstruction, such as a tree or pole. Motor vehicle accidents may result in injury, death and property damage.

## RESPONSE

All apparatus shall respond to the incident in accordance with [Section 4](#_f2hrtbbmycff).

Engine 48 contains fire suppression and disentanglement mechanisms. It shall be the first apparatus to respond to an MVA and staged as close to the incident as possible.

Tac 48 shall immediately follow, be placed in a manner blocking the incident from traffic, but leaving enough room for any responding medical units.

Utility 48 may be deployed along with its advanced warning signs to aid in traffic and fluid control.

Additional apparatus may be deployed to aid in blocking the incident from traffic.

All personnel must don the proper minimum PPE. This includes a helmet and OSHA approved traffic vest. Additional PPE (gloves, eye protection, turn out gear, etc.) may be required based on the tasks of the particular incident.

## INCIDENT COMMAND

Motor vehicle accidents are initially medical incidents. It is the duty of responding medical personnel to establish command.

If AVFCO arrives on scene before any medical personnel, establishing incident command shall be deferred unless conditions or complexity warrant immediate action. AVFCO shall also provide an arrival report containing but not limited to the number of vehicles involved, the number of patients, extent and mechanism of injury, and additional resources needed.

Incident command may be transferred to AVFCO once patient care is complete or medical personnel have cleared the scene.

## OBJECTIVES

Secure the scene to provide protection for the accident victims and emergency crews operating the incident. Apparatus, flares, and cones shall be deployed to close any lanes of travel where the vehicles or patients may be located. Keep all warning lights activated. Provide assistance with traffic control until law enforcement arrives, and continue to provide traffic control if requested.

Perform and inner and outer scene size up to determine any potential fire situations, electrocution hazards or any other safety issues. Communicate these hazards to the IC immediately. The IC shall request utility or tow companies if needed.

Establish patient contact if medical personnel have yet to arrive. Also verify patient vitals and determine the extent of injuries. Be sure to approach the patient(s) head on to avoid neck or spine injuries.

**BEGIN RAPID EXTRICATION PROCEDURES ONLY IF THERE IS IMMEDIATE DANGER TO THE PATIENT(S) AND THERE IS NO THREAT OF ELECTROCUTION.**

If the vehicle is in possible contact with electrical wires, members shall keep at least 30 feet away and await response from the electric company. Members shall instruct patients to stay calm and remain in the vehicle.

Otherwise, fire suppression capabilities shall be established. Only interior firefighters may be involved in fire suppression operations and must don full firefighting PPE. Power to the vehicles shall be disconnected and a charged 1 3/4” handline deployed near the vehicle(s) involved. The primary responsibility of AVFCO is to provide fire suppression.

Evaluate and address any fluid spills or hazardous materials. This is for the safety of both emergency personnel and patients. See [Section 18](#_vpcu909ax7py) and “Vehicle Fluid Leaks” for more details.

A landing zone shall be established in accordance with [Section 20](#_3i9ewm7cavvi) only if requested by medical personnel. If medical personnel are not yet on scene, AVFCO may request that a medical helicopter be placed on standby. Command of the landing zone may be assigned to a mutual aid fire department if adequate resources are not available.

Vehicle stabilization shall commence if the patient(s) need to be extricated from the vehicle. All members operating in a stabilization or extrication capacity shall don full turnout gear along with gloves and eye protection meeting NFPA standards.

Disentanglement operations may only begin once medical personnel arrive or an AVFCO member holding the certification of “Vehicle Rescue Technician” is on scene. Rescue tools are located on Engine 48 and shall be deployed along with protective tarps. All edges and sharps shall be capped during the operation and discarded vehicle parts placed in a single location.

Provide assistance to medical personnel as requested, manpower permitting. Any member that may come in direct contact with the patient shall wear proper PPE including nitrile gloves.

Aid in cleanup of the accident scene, after obtaining approval from law enforcement. If there is a significant amount of debris spread over a large area, consideration may be given to washing the roadway down with a handline. The wrecker or tow service is responsible for removing the vehicles and any absorbents.

# SECTION 20: MEDICAL HELICOPTER LANDINGS

AVFCO is responsible for securing landing zones for medical evacuation helicopters.

## RESPONSE

The Chief or officer in charge shall determine the location of the landing zone.

A combination of Car 48 and an apparatus capable of providing initial fire suppression shall be used to secure the scene. This can include either Tac 48, Engine 48-1, Engine 48-2, or Tender 48.

The apparatus providing initial fire suppression shall remain with the drivetrain engaged and all hand lines stowed.

The ranking officer or firefighter at the landing zone shall establish landing zone command.

Units operating at the landing zone shall demarcate a 100 foot square at the location. Cones, flares, or electronic flares are examples of suitable markers visible from the air.

In accordance with Cathy’s Law (NJSA 2A:58D-2), no member shall take photos of a patient at medical evacuation helicopter landings, the extrication prior, or any other scene at which the AVFCO is operating.

## LANDING ZONE REPORT

Command shall provide a landing zone report.

Tactical channel 1 (a.k.a. Tac 1) shall be utilized for all communications with the helicopter unless otherwise directed by Hunterdon County Communications.

The following is a basic list of items to be included in the report to the incoming helicopter pilot:

* A description of the area being utilized (open field, parking lot, highway travel lane, etc).
* A description of the landing surface (soft ground, high grass, sloped ground, etc).
* A general dimension of the landing site. (100 x 100, 75 x 80, etc).
* Any additional information may be transmitted to the pilot as necessary (location of power/utility transmission lines, structures, etc.).

The dispatch center shall be notified that the helicopter has landed and also when the helicopter has taken off from the landing zone.

The correct terminology for this report should be: “the helicopter has landed safely” or “the helicopter has departed without incident”. If the destination hospital is known, this information should be given to the dispatcher also.

# SECTION 21: SQUAD ASSIST

The AVFCO may be called to assist medical personnel for a variety of incidents. Assistance will most likely be in the form of manpower as members of AVFCO have limited emergency medical certifications.

Any member that may come in direct contact with the patient shall wear proper PPE including nitrile gloves. Turn out gear will not protect against bloodborne pathogens.

Any member that believes to have been exposed to bodily fluids while assisting medical personnel shall follow all exposure mitigation techniques as described in the AVFCO Exposure Control Plan and immediately report the exposure to the IC or operations officer. The member shall be transferred to the nearest healthcare facility for a confidential medical evaluation.

## CARDIAC ARREST

AVFCO shall be alerted for any confirmed cardiac arrest or requested by medical personnel during incidents with a possible cardiac arrest.

All members that board an apparatus responding to a cardiac arrest shall have a current and valid “CPR” certification.

Car 48 shall respond first to all cardiac arrests. It is equipped with an AED.

Additional apparatus equipped with an AED may respond, manpower permitting.

If emergency personnel are not yet on scene, the first arriving unit shall provide a report to Hunterdon County Communications with a patient assessment including the following:

* Level of consciousness
* Breathing and airway
* Pulse and rhythm
* Confirmation of cardiac arrest
* Resuscitation measures

Members shall perform CPR immediately after a confirmation of cardiac arrest.

Members shall use an AED as soon as it is ready. If CPR is in progress, continue until the AED is turned on, the AED pads are applied and the AED is ready to analyze the heart rhythm.

Members shall continue to perform resuscitation measures until the patient exhibits any noticeable signs of life or otherwise directed by medical personnel.

## LAND SEARCH & RESCUE

AVFCO may be alerted for rough terrain or other land-based search and rescue efforts.

Engine 48-1 shall respond first to all land search and rescues with a minimum of four members.

Engine 48-2 shall respond second with a minimum of two members.

Car 48 shall respond third and any additional apparatus may respond thereafter, manpower permitting.

If emergency personnel are not yet on scene, the first arriving unit shall establish incident command. The IC shall utilize Hunterdon County TAC 1 or other cross-agency frequency for land search and rescue communications.

The IC shall interview bystanders or contact Hunterdon County Communications for the number and last known location of the patient(s).

The IC shall prioritize patient self extraction unless the patient is immobile or such extraction would cause undue harm to the patient.

The IC shall request mutual aid if the roughness of the terrain or size of the search area is too great for the responding units. The IC shall request all terrain vehicles, gators, or any other resources needed for search and rescue operations.

The IC shall request personnel accountability reports (PAR) regularly throughout the incident.

Members shall don proper PPE including bunker pants, boots, and helmets. Members shall also equip themselves with a bottle of potable water.

Members shall equip themselves with a flashlight when the incident may extend into the night.

Members shall conduct a search of the terrain in crews of at least two based on coordination from the IC or operations officer. All crews shall be assigned a portable radio.

Any crew that locates the patient(s) shall immediately notify the IC or operations officer of the location and condition of each patient. Crews shall remain with the patient(s) until medical personnel arrive.

The IC or operations officers shall direct crews and resources to the location of the patient(s) for a safe and orderly extraction.

Members shall assist medical personnel as requested during patient extraction.

# SECTION 22: SEVERE WEATHER EVENTS

Severe weather events can spur a series of incidents within a relatively short period of time. Planning, incident prioritization, and resource management are key to dealing with severe weather events.

## PLANNING

Advanced warning of any severe weather threat is critical to protecting the lives and property in the primary response area of the AVFCO.

All officers shall monitor hazardous weather briefings from the National Weather Service and the Hunterdon County Office of Emergency Management (OEM). Officers shall also monitor local weather conditions at all times.

The Hunterdon County OEM may activate the Hunterdon County Emergency Operations Center (EOC) for severe weather events impacting the county.

The Chief or officer in charge shall call members to standby at station if advised by the Hunterdon County EOC. The Chief shall request any supplies needed from the the East Amwell and / or Hunterdon County OEM prior to a standby.

The Chief or officer in charge may also call members to standby if locally severe weather conditions are expected.

All members shall report to the station at the designated time as conditions may deteriorate and prevent access to the station. Members shall bring any medications or personal items needed.

The Chief or officer in charge shall notify Hunterdon County Communications that the station is staffed. Incidents shall be dispatched to the Chief or officer in charge over a predesignated radio channel instead of VHF Ambulance 2.

The Chief or officer in charge shall notify the Auxiliary of all standbys and appoint the highest ranking fire police officer as the Auxiliary liaison. The liaison shall coordinate all food and supplies needed from the Auxiliary for the duration of the event.

The standby shall last for the duration of the event unless otherwise directed by the Chief or officer in charge.

## AREA COMMAND

The Chief or officer in charge shall establish area command at any time multiple incidents exist as result of a severe weather event. The Area Commander (AC) shall advise Hunterdon County Communications that command has been established and request communication channels if none have been assigned.

The AC shall assign apparatus and resources to each incident based on priority. The order of priorities during a severe weather event shall be public safety, life rescue, incident stabilization, and conservation of property.

A designated logistics officer shall record the details of all incidents throughout the event, including the times when the incident was received and when apparatus were dispatched, arrived, and cleared the scene.

The logistics officer shall record the current location of all apparatus and crews throughout the event. The officer shall also record any road closures.

## OPERATIONS

Brush 48 shall respond first during all severe weather incidents unless directed by the AC.

Members shall respond with caution and remain alert for:

* Falling branches
* Flying debris
* Fast rising water
* Downed or low hanging wires
* Slip or ice hazards

Members shall clear the scene as soon as possible during severe weather events.

Members shall cordon off any lanes or barricade any roads with wires or trees down and clear the scene immediately. Members shall advise the AC and logistics officer of any road closures.

Members shall not operate in an extremely hazardous weather conditions. The AC shall recall all members if sustained winds reach 60 MPH or higher.

Members shall only respond to pump details after the severe weather threat has concluded and any ongoing incidents do not require additional resources.

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# SECTION 23: WATER RELATED INCIDENTS

A water related incident shall be any incident in which the AVFCO responds that may place members near, or in, bodies of water during the course of operations. This includes but is not limited to rescues, removals, victim searches, and evacuations.

Hazardous water conditions may exist near lakes, ponds, rivers, streams and retention basins. These conditions may form due to heavy rains causing flash flooding or failure of retention systems.

## RESPONSE

A water related emergency is classified as a technical rescue incident. The AVFCO is not equipped or trained in technical rescue operations related to water rescue. The AVFCO shall work under the direction of the IC and operate as a support unit only.

All responses to water related incidents shall be handled in the non-emergency mode unless otherwise directed by the IC.

## RESCUE

AVFCO issued structural firefighting PPE is not meant for water rescue operations. Such PPE may become a danger to the wearer in the event that they fall into the water. AVFCO members shall not operate near or in any body of water while wearing structural firefighting PPE.

Members certified in water rescue operations and wearing appropriate water rescue PPE may assist with water rescue operations under the direction of technical rescue personnel.

Members certified in water rescue awareness may utilize other means to perform the rescue such as throwing ropes, extending a ladder or tool, or any other mechanism that allows a safe distance between the member and the body of water.

Members shall attempt to locate, calm and maintain contact with the victim(s) until property trained and equipped rescuers arrive.

# SECTION 24: ALCOHOL

No member shall respond to any incident under the influence of alcohol or other controlled substance. This includes medications.

No member shall respond having a blood alcohol concentration (BAC) of 0.04% or higher. This is the equivalent of more than one drink.

Those suspected of responding with a BAC between 0.04% and the New Jersey legal limit of 0.07% will not be allowed on any apparatus or aid in operations in any capacity.

If you suspect someone on scene is under the influence of alcohol or another substance, notify an officer immediately.

Alcohol may be consumed on firehouse grounds under certain conditions:

* Never during a duty crew, work, or stand-by shift. THE SHIFT MUST BE OVER.
* Only members meeting the legal age requirements (21 and older).
* No alcohol is permitted outside the building.

If a member is found in illegal possession of a controlled substance, the local law enforcement agency will be notified.

# SECTION 25: DISCRIMINATION & HARASSMENT

The AVFCO will maintain a policy of non-discrimination with regard to all members and applicants.

AVFCO prohibits discrimination against anyone on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, age, national origin, veteran status, disability or any other basis prohibited by applicable federal, state or local laws.

All aspects of membership within the AVFCO will be governed on the basis of merit, competence, and qualifications. All members and applicants are guaranteed equal opportunities.

The most productive and satisfying work environment is one in which work is accomplished in a spirit of mutual trust and respect.

Harassment is a form of discrimination that is offensive, impairs morale, undermines the integrity of employment relationships and causes serious harm to the productivity, efficiency and stability of our organization.

AVFCO does not nor will ever endorse or condone any form of discrimination or harassment by any members.

All members have a right to work in an environment free from discrimination and harassing conduct, including sexual harassment.

Harassment on the basis of an member's race, color, creed, ancestry, national origin, age, disability, sex, arrest or conviction record, marital status, sexual orientation, membership in the military reserve or use or nonuse of lawful products away from work is expressly prohibited under this policy.

Harassment on any of these bases is illegal under NJSA 10:5-12.

## DEFINITION

In general, harassment means persistent and unwelcome conduct or actions on any of the bases outlined above.

Sexual harassment is one type of harassment and includes unwelcome sexual advances, unwelcome physical contact of a sexual nature or unwelcome verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. Unwelcome verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature includes, but is not limited to:

* The repeated making of unsolicited, inappropriate gestures or comments.
* The display of offensive sexually graphic materials not necessary for the duties required by the membership.

Harassment on any basis (race, sex, age, disability, etc.) exists whenever:

* Submission to harassing conduct is made, either explicitly or implicitly, a term or condition of an individual's employment.
* Submission to or rejection of such conduct is used as the basis for an employment decision affecting an individual.
* The conduct interferes with an employee's work or creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment.

Discrimination or harassment may be subtle, manipulative and is not always evident. It does not refer to occasional compliments of a socially acceptable nature. It refers to behavior that is not welcome and is personally offensive. All forms of gender harassment are covered. Men can be sexually harassed; men can harass men; Women can harass other women. Offenders can be fellow members, Officers, Chiefs, and others.

## COMPLAINT PROCEDURES

Any member who believes he or she is being discriminated against or harassed, or any member, who becomes aware of discrimination or harassment, shall promptly notify the Chief or any other officer. If the individual believes that the Chief or officer is the harasser, another officer shall be notified.

Upon notification of a discrimination or harassment complaint, a confidential and impartial investigation shall be promptly commenced and will include direct interviews with involved parties and where necessary with members who may be witnesses or have knowledge of matters relating to the complaint. The parties of the complaint will be notified of the findings and their options.

Retaliation of any kind against any member bringing a complaint or assisting in the investigation of a complaint is prohibited. Such member may not be adversely affected in any manner related to their membership. Such retaliation is illegal under NJSA 34:19-3.

The AVFCO views discrimination, harassment, and retaliation to be among the most serious breaches of workplace behavior. Consequently, appropriate disciplinary or corrective action, ranging from a warning to expulsion, can be expected.

Any complaint reported in good faith, even if found to be unsubstantiated, shall not be considered a false accusation. Any member found to have reported a false accusation regarding discrimination or harassment in the workplace shall result in discipline. This discipline may include expulsion from the department.

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# SECTION 26: JUNIOR FIREFIGHTERS

The AVFCO, in order to help recruit new members, formed the junior firefighter program. The junior program is designed to encourage participation in the AVFCO, increase knowledge of firefighting, build friendships and assist the community.

All junior firefighters are subject to the child labor laws of the State of New Jersey.

During training exercises and on emergency scenes, no junior firefighter shall be required to perform duties which would expose him to the same degree of hazard as a regular member of a volunteer fire company.

## REQUIREMENTS FOR MEMBERSHIP

In order to be accepted into the junior firefighter program, an applicant must be between 14 and 17 years of age, be actively enrolled in a recognized school, and submit an application for membership.

The application must include the express written consent of the applicant’s parents or legal guardian.

The applicant must also be in good physical health as evidenced by a physical evaluation conducted by a certified doctor.

Junior firefighters must comply with the bylaws and standard operating guidelines of the AVFCO.

In order to maintain membership, a junior firefighter must maintain a “C” average in school grades. Each junior firefighter will provide a copy of his/her report card to the Chief on a quarterly basis.

The failure of a junior firefighter to maintain a “C” average or comply with the bylaws and standard operating guidelines may result in his/her expulsion from the program. A junior firefighter’s use of controlled substances or alcohol will result in her/his immediate expulsion from the program.

Junior firefighters may participate in meetings, trainings, drills and special events.

Junior firefighters may not participate in any capacity during school hours if they are absent from school.

## TRAINING

Junior firefighters, when properly equipped with personal protective equipment, are permitted to participate in classroom and/or skills and hands on training evolutions.

Junior firefighters are prohibited from participating in training evolutions involving live burns, hazardous materials, or any environment that would expose him to the same degree of hazard as a regular member of a volunteer fire company

Junior firefighters are prohibited from using any hydraulic rescue tools.

Junior firefighters aged 16 and older are permitted to use a SCBA during training evolutions.

## EMERGENCY SCENES

Junior firefighters, who have attained the age of 16, are permitted to respond to emergency scenes on fire apparatus on a space availability basis. First preference must be given to active firefighters.

Junior firefighters may only respond to emergency calls between the hours of 6 a.m. and 10 p.m. In the event that a junior firefighter is participating in an emergency call that occurred prior to 10 p.m. and then extends past 10 p.m., the junior firefighter will be dismissed from the scene at the earliest feasible opportunity. Until the junior firefighter is returned to the station, he/she will remain under the direct supervision of the fire company officers. Parents are not permitted to drop off or pick up junior firefighters at emergency scenes.

Junior firefighters attending emergency scenes must wear designated gear that easily identifies them as junior firefighters. This includes a black helmet outfitted with “Junior Firefighter” decals.

Junior firefighters are prohibited from performing any and all activities on an actual incident or non-training environment, which would subject the minor to performing any tasks in connection with firefighting operations.

The only authorized activity for a junior firefighter on an actual incident scene is to observe the operations at a safe distance.

Junior firefighters will be permitted to tour a scene with a senior officer once the scene has been declared safe.

Junior firefighters must conduct themselves appropriately at all times. Horseplay, insubordination or other inappropriate conduct will not be tolerated.

Junior firefighters will be provided the same insurance coverage as active firefighters.

## ACTIVE MEMBERSHIP

Upon reaching the age of 18 and having complied with all of the requirements of the junior firefighter program and with the approval of the Board of Fire Commissioners, a junior firefighter may become an active member of the AVFCO.