

BLACKWOOD FIRE COMPANY OPERATING GUIDELINE

1.21 INCIDENT RESPONSE - ICE/COLD WATER RESCUE

- 1.21.1 When dispatched for an Ice/Cold Water Rescue Assignment, personnel trained and qualified in this discipline will be given priority in staffing R-84. Personnel qualified to the Ice Rescue Technician Level shall don the Ice Rescue Suits (IRS) and personnel qualified to the Ice Rescue Operational level shall don the Stearns Work Suits (SWS) prior to response in lieu of their structural PPE. See Attachment 1.21.1 Ice Rescue Qualifications.
- 1.21.2 Where appropriate, dive agencies should be notified early in the incident to provide SCUBA diver support.
- 1.21.3 Incidents will remain classified as a RESCUE until a victim has been reported submerged for greater than 1 hour. Incidents will then be classified as a RECOVERY. In incidents where down time is unknown, operations will continue in a RESCUE mode until 1 hr after arrival.
- 1.21.4 Rescue 84 is ONLY equipped for surface water/ice rescue. We will only operate in a support role or attempt a surface search for submerged victims.
- 1.21.5 Careful evaluation should be made prior to committing personnel if a vehicle has entered the water. Hazardous materials could be present in the water, the vehicle could be unstable and trap a rescuer, and entry should not be made with surface equipment to a submerged/partially submerged vehicle.
- 1.21.6 While responding, the OIC and / or Rescue Officer should attempt to ascertain the circumstances surrounding the incident, the number and location of victims, and ensure adequate resources have been dispatched.
- 1.21.7 On arrival, if the victims' location is obvious, personnel who have donned the IRS should prepare for immediate victim assistance by:
- Ensuring their suit is donned properly
 - Ensuring appropriate accessories are donned (flippers, weights, traction soles, etc...)
 - Securing their tether line to a shoreline anchor.
 - Being equipped with, as a minimum, an ice pole and victim sling.
 - Establishing communications with the victim, encouraging survival and self rescue.
- 1.21.8 Simultaneously, shoreline attempts at rescue should be made by using

throw bags or the reach pole system when practical.

- 1.21.9 The IC must designate personnel to interview witnesses to determine:
- Activities prior to accident
 - Description of victim(s)
 - Last location of victim(s) (Triangulate)
- 1.21.10 Additional personnel should don the Stearns work suits when working shoreline. No personnel should be within the warm zone (20' from water edge) without a PFD. Accountability will be established for all personnel operating in the warm and hot zones. Access to this area can only be gained by use of the accountability tag attached to the PFD.
- 1.21.11 The rescue boat should also be prepared for use. The priority for deploying the rescue boat will be based on the probability that it will be needed to complete the rescue.
- 1.21.12 Back up personnel for the entry team will also be equipped with IRS and have anchors and equipment prepared to immediately assist the entry team.
- 1.21.13 Line tenders should be constantly aware of the entry teams' progress and should remain alert for hand/light signals by the entry team.
- 1.21.14 Preparations for victim recovery and rescuer rehab should also be made. R-84 driver/operator should ensure that all cab heaters are running for rescuers and the Hypothermic Stabilization Bag is provided to EMS personnel and placed in a warmed ambulance. The EMS crew should remain warm in the ambulance until signaled to receive the victim and prepare for the victim by taping blankets to the long board which will be used, preparing extra towels, space blankets and wool blankets and opening and familiarizing themselves with the hypothermic stabilization bag.
- 1.21.15 Victim care must receive the highest priority. Drowning victims may still survive even if submerged for up to an hour. Drowning victims are extremely fragile. Their care should be similar to that of the severe trauma patient. Slow, cautious and gentle movements are required. Rough handling can be fatal to the cold water drowning patient. Resuscitation should be attempted on any victim submerged for one hour or less regardless of absence of vital signs.

1.21.16 Personnel who have entered the water, should be evaluated thoroughly by EMS and decontaminated as necessary and provided with assessment/treatment for hypothermia. Personnel who have ingested water should also be provided additional medical evaluation.

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Attachment 1.21.1
Ice Rescue Qualifications

Operational Level

Can operate within all areas of the warm zone and the hot zone only if operating in boat.

Training - Minimum training will include: Hypothermia prevention and recognition. Proper use of water/ice PPE. Proper use of water/ice rescue equipment. Line handling techniques and tender responsibilities. Reach and Throw type rescue techniques. Rescue Boat Deployment. Also included should be victim care and EMS interface training.

Technician Level

Can operate in all areas including ice and water (hot zone) entry.

Training - Minimum training will include: Operational Level qualification, proper use of the ice rescue suits, in-water/ice (hands on) victim rescue techniques including ice pole, victim sling and transport devices. Additional training is recommended in patient care techniques. All personnel qualified to the technician level should have completed at least 2 successful practical performance rescues.

These qualifications can be attained by:

- 1) Successful completion of a recognized surface ice/water rescue course (Lifeguard Systems, or equivalent) which includes the above training elements. Participation in in-water phases of course qualifies to the technician level. Classroom and shore training qualifies to operational level.
- 2) Successful completion of a course which contains all elements of the operational level, and in-house qualification on equipment and in-water/ice techniques. Technician level qualification can be gained through successful completion of at least 2 practical rescues.
- 3) In house training alone can only qualify personnel to the operational level. In house training will consist of all elements listed in the Operational Level.

Attachment 1.21.2 Ice Rescue Protocol

This protocol expands on the duties of the Rescue Company as described in OG 1.21 Incident Response - Ice/Cold Water Rescue. This scenario involves a minimum crew of 6 to accomplish efficiently and assumes that BLS/ALS are available for medical care. Ice/Water PPE is available for 8 personnel. 4 in Stearns Ice Rescue Suits (IRS) and 4 in Stearns Work Suits (SWS).

Driver -

1. Position apparatus for best tactical advantage and to act as a wind break where possible. Engage PTO generator for dark hours incidents.
2. Turn on all breakers which may be necessary for incident. (Lights, body outlets, etc...)
3. Position light tower if necessary.
4. Ensure cab heaters are running and doors/windows are closed.
5. Don SWS and associated equipment.
6. Provide Hypothermic Stabilization Bag to EMS or prepare in cab if necessary.
7. Coordinate deployment of Rescue Boat.

Rescue Officer -

1. Don SWS in station, complete en route, unless he will act as a entry or back up crew. Then will don IRS.
2. Scene size up, victim location(s), numbers. *
3. Witness interviews.*
4. Determine rescue tactics.
5. Draw profile map of scene.*
 - Include Victim location
 - Land Marks
 - Area where range markings took place
 - Exit Corridor
 - Entry Points
 - Hazard Control Zones (water or ice - HOT zone, 20' from water/ice edge WARM zone, beyond this area - COLD zone)

* If also acting as IC or all functions if rescue officer on mutual aid.

Entry Crew

1. Don ice rescue suit (IRS) in station, complete en route.
2. Ensure correct accessories are available based on incident. (Victim sling, ice pole, traction soles, flippers, ankle weights)
3. Obtain anchor/tether line and secure to suit (open water - back, ice - front) and land or ice anchor.
4. Establish contact with victim(s), encourage self rescue. Maintain communications with victim throughout entire rescue process.
5. Access victim from opposite sides, on a 45 - 60 degree angle, staying low, checking ice with pole. On approach, spread eagle on ice, body perpendicular

to victim.

6. Immediately make contact with ice pole loop or by victim grasping pole, then establish buoyancy with a victim sling.
7. Secure the victim to the transport device or to your front connection, then signal for recovery. Protect the victim during all phases of rescue.

Back Up Crew

1. Don ice rescue suit (IRS) in station, complete en route.
2. Ensure correct accessories are available based on incident. (Victim sling, traction soles, flippers, ankle weights)
3. Obtain anchor/tether line and secure to land anchor for immediate hook up if necessary.
4. Attempt land based rescue if possible via throw bags or reach poles.
5. Watch for distress signs or signals from Entry Crew and remain ready for immediate assistance.

Line Tenders

1. Don SWS in station, complete en route. Shore crews should also be equipped with warm headgear, water proof gloves and boots and ice cleats as necessary.
2. Assist entry crew with suits and anchor placement.
3. Act as line tender, ensuring entry personnel are prepared for rescue.
4. When signaled, move lines to egress corridor and retrieve line at a rate of 1 foot per second.

Additional Personnel - (From Rescue Company or additional responding companies)

1. Assist Driver/Operator in deploying rescue boat.
2. Ensure scene is sufficiently lighted.
3. Take crowd and hazard control zone measures.
4. Assist/prepare for medical care of victims and rescuers.