

Bethel Fire Department

Company Safety SOG

G-001

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy/ SOG is to begin the conversation of Safety in the company/ department. Begin because the conversation on safety should never end. The nature of this job begins with risk and ends with risk. From training properly to returning to the station and putting equipment back in service, even traveling home, involve some level of risk. The fire service preaches the absolute need and value of Risk Assessment. 'Risk little to save little/ risk a lot to save a lot' is the mantra and the guardrails for which the fire service must work inside. Establishing a safety conscious work environment is the key to keeping risk down to levels that the firefighter can work in to accomplish the goals the Bethel Fire Department has established. Keeping this Risk Potential down increases the ability to affect the curve of what is doable over what is risked. A new recruit un-practiced in the use of equipment or operations like how to wear an SCBA (Self Contained Breathing Apparatus) is much more likely to make a big mistake that could result in injury and even death. Once this happens, the other members of the company become more likely to encounter much higher risk levels in their attempts to deal with the added problem that comes from non-trained personnel. Risk for any situation is based on the weakest link in the evolution.

To accomplish this requires a continuous dedication to following all safety rules that are laid down throughout the SOGs for the department and those that are specific to each piece of equipment as well as situational safety dictated by the incident, training evolution, or everyday business. This is accomplished through training, that is training like we work. It is the repeated opportunities to think and act in a real-life manner that develops that muscle memory that makes safety stay at the forefront of all operations from walking into the station door to walking out at the end of any event safely.

The individual that will be dedicated to the safety aspects of all the department does and insure it is always at the front of training is the Company Safety Officer (CSO). The CSO has eyes and ears on every activity in which the department is involved by On-Scene Safety Officers (SSO).

POLICY

Training activities and requirements are dealt with in SOGs in section C.

Company Safety Officer:

Safety is the focus of this SOG and begins with the appointment of a Company Safety Officer. This officer is not required to act as safety on scenes except if need arises such as direction given to the On Scene Safety Officer. Therefore, the position can be assumed by any other company officer who can then act in their original role for that officer position. The CSO is responsible for the safety environment in the company overall. This includes incorporation of a Safety Officer in every event or incident conducted by the company. For instance, a training event will have an instructor(s) to conduct the training and also an individual dedicated to nothing else but safety of the company. This can be the CSO or another member. This individual will ensure that a proper safety briefing be included in all non-emergency events like training. They will ensure that all safety rules and procedures are followed and will do nothing else but watch the activity and correct safety mistakes. The CSO will make sure that proper equipment safety, training, and maintenance is done on each and every piece of equipment. This includes vehicles. The CSO shall hold periodic safety briefs and lectures for the entire department as needed or a minimum of 2 times per year.

On Scene Safety Officer:

The On Scene Safety Officer will be any member assigned to that position on arrival at any scene/ incident. They are also appointed at any event the department conducts. They shall be appointed by the CSO or the Incident Commander. The OSSO can be the CSO or any other member that has had some training in on scene safety. This will hold true for all events conducted by the company.

This individual will ensure that a proper safety briefing be included in all non-emergency events like training and fund-raising. They will ensure that all safety rules and procedures are followed and will do nothing else but watch the activity and correct safety mistakes. They will add comments to any review of an event at the after-action discussion concerning safety.

This SO can shut down all activities immediately either at the task end such as a Fire Team or at the Incident Command (IC) for the entire event. However, they must be prepared to justify that position.

General:

- It is highly recommended that the CSO take the Fire College course on Safety Officer. Then they can return and teach the OSSO properly.
- On bigger scenes and events, especially with activity occurring in multiple locations, multiple OSSOs may be used and will be responsible for their location which could be a couple miles or floors in the same building.
- All members of the Bethel Fire Department shall place safety at the front of their thinking at all times.
- All members shall pay very close attention to each SO and do as instructed.

- Accountability tags will be maintained by all members and 1 set turned over to the IC on arrival while reporting for assignment. The second will be used if entering an IDLH (Immediately Dangerous to Life and Health) environment.
- Proper Personal Protective Equipment shall be worn on every evolution including eye protect, gloves appropriate to the situation, head protection, and the proper outfit as available.
- If a member has not had training on any piece of equipment, and knows it's safety precautions, they shall not operate that equipment, tools, or vehicles.
- If a member has not had training on fireground operations, interior fire operations, extraction, rescue, first response, or any other evolution conducted, they shall not participate in those activities and will report to the IC for a general assignment.
- All members shall conduct themselves under NIMS protocols on every evolution conducted by the department whether on scene of a big event or conducting a fund raiser.

FINAL INTENT

Being a Safety Officer is so much more than just collecting Accountability Tags. It is about understanding the aspects of accidents, stopping unsafe activities, or seeing potential future problems. Firefighters should work in teams so each one has the other's back. The SO has the backs of everyone. They watch the entire evolution from the activities of the fire ground personnel to the conditions of the event. They pay attention to anything that will increase the risk in the situation such as a leaning wall, failing support structures, downed electric wires, and so many others. Their sole responsibility and focus must be exclusive to the safety of all. The SOs will question everything and not be shy about bringing issues up to be corrected, or being forceful when a situation requires it. Any safety breach will be listed on the written fire report to record the information and to work on correcting this going forward.

It is not possible to list all safety rules and regulations that must be observed here. It is, none-the-less, critical that the CSO seek out, learn and disseminate all safety information they can acquire. It is also critical that all members are trained properly for all class situations that might be encountered including Firefighter 1.

It is the responsibility of all members to read, understand and follow this Standard Operating Guideline.

Fire Chief

Date

Printed Name