

**KCFPD #47**  
**OPERATING GUIDELINES SECTION 8**

**O.G. 8.1**  
**INCIDENT COMMAND SYSTEM**

The purpose of this O.G. is to implement and use the Incident Command System. The I.C.S. enjoys these special features: dividing the incident into smaller modules, improving span of control, safety enhancement, continuity of command, and system's management.

*Note: Federal regulations now require the use of the I.C.S. if the agency responds on any kind of hazardous materials incidents (SARA Title III).*

This O.G. references the following as models for implementing and utilizing the Incident Command System.

- (1) *"Fire Command"* N.F.A. Chief Alan V. Brunacini, Phoenix, Arizona Fire Department.
- (2) National Incident Management System (N.I.M.S.), U.S. Fire Administration, National Fire Academy.

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**O.G. 8.2**  
**INCIDENT COMMAND POLICY (I.C.S.)**  
**(Based on N.I.M.S.)**

The effective function of fire department units and members at operating incidents require clear decisive action on the part of an Incident Commander. This policy identifies the standard operating procedures to be employed in establishing Command and operating a Command Post. It also fixes responsibility for the command function of its associated duties on one individual at any time during the operation.

The Incident Commander is responsible for the Command function at all times. As the identity of the Incident Commander changes through transfers of Command, this responsibility is shifted with the title. The term "Command" in this policy refers jointly to both the person and the function.

***Command procedures are designed to accomplish the following:***

1. Fix the responsibility for Command on a certain individual through a standard identification system, depending on arrival sequence of members, companies and officers.
2. Insure that strong, direct and visible Command will be established as early as possible in the operation.
3. Establish an effective framework outlining the activities and responsibilities assigned to Command.
4. Provide a system for the orderly transfer of Command to subsequent arriving Officers.

KCPFD #47 will operate under the National Incident Management System (NIMS). This guideline provides the basic tenants for most incidents. Incident Management / Incident Command structures will expand and contract based on the needs of the specific incident. Not all positions are needed at all incidents, but there are certain elements that must be present in all commands.

**I. The Incident Command System**

**A. Incident Command**

• KCFPD #47 practice will be to establish **COMMAND** at all incidents, except for responses that are solely for medical assistance or public assistance or those that, in the experience of the first in officer do not justify command. Responses can evolve and Command may be established at any point in a call the did not previously warrant a Command designation.

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- The first arriving unit will establish **COMMAND**, and the ranking officer or member of that unit will serve as the initial **Incident Commander** to establish **COMMAND**.

- Any incident requiring or involving more than one company will have a more structured Incident Command System.

- NFPA 472 and OSHA 29 CFR1910 require an Incident Commander to direct and coordinate all phases of a hazardous material incident. The IC is ultimately responsible for all actions taken by all responders at the emergency scene.

**B. Unified Command**

- Unified Command allows agencies with different legal, geographic and functional authorities and responsibilities to work together effectively without affecting individual agency authority, responsibility, or accountability.

**II. Incident Commander**

**A. Pass Command**

- Circumstances may arise which require the initial commitment of the first arriving company (primary search, interior firefighting, etc). In these situations the Officer or senior member may “Pass Command”. Even if command is passed to a later arriving unit, the first officer or senior member is not relieved of the responsibilities relating to initial size-up and command decisions. The first arriving Officer or senior member is responsible for identifying the nature of the problem and directing all resources until command is established.

**B. Establish Command**

- If command is passed, the second arriving Officer or senior member is expected to establish command and assume all responsibilities of the Incident commander.

- The Incident Commander should perform a 360 view of the incident. When this is not feasible, the Incident Commander should direct others to perform this for **Command**, and request updates and information from other personnel.

- The initial Incident Commander shall remain in command and direct activities until command is transferred or the incident is stabilized and terminated.

- The Incident Commander will advise Dispatch of the command name. The command name will not change throughout the Incident. Command names shall be either: Kangley Command if in Station 88 response area or Palmer Command if in Station 89 response area. Special Commands may be established at the discretion of the Incident Commander: EG Headworks Command, Raver Command etc... Command names should be no more than 1 word.

- All communications with Dispatch are directed through the Incident Commander.

- The Incident Commander is responsible for determining the incident priorities, conducting the on-going size up, initiating incident objectives and assigning tactical operations.

**C. Transfer Command**

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- The first arriving Chief Officer is expected to assume **Command or** work in an advisory capacity with the IC.

- The arrival of a ranking officer on the incident scene does not mean that **Command** is automatically transferred to that officer. **Command** is only transferred when the transfer of **Command** process has been completed. If a higher ranking officer wants to effect a change in the management of the incident, he/she must be present on the scene and then utilize the formal transfer of command procedure.

- **Transferring Command** can be done via radio **but** should be done after a face-to-face briefing if possible. The transfer should include the current situation, current unit locations, assignments, and a review of the command board. The IC will notify dispatch when the transfer of command is complete. It may be advantageous to have the officer being relieved to remain with the new incident Commander, in the role of IC Aide, Operations Chief, or Planning Section Chief since this officer established the incident action plan.

- The transfer of command should be utilized both as the emergency escalates and also in the demobilization process as the situation is being brought under control.

**D. Termination**

- Command should be terminated when the incident has de-escalated to a point where all units have returned to service.

- The Incident Commander should survey the incident scene to ensure that Command can be terminated safely and effectively.

- The same standard used to establish Command applies to terminating Command. As long as a unit or units are still on scene, Command should remain in place.

**III. Critical Functions**

**A. Responsibilities**

- The incident Commander is responsible for the following functions as required by the circumstances of the situations:

1. Assume Command – take an effective position and announce location of Command Post.
2. Initiate and Monitor personnel accountability.
3. Evaluate the situation (Size up).
4. Initiate, maintain and control the communications process.
5. Develop the overall incident objectives, strategies and assign resources.
6. Develop an appropriate organization.
7. Provide continuing Command within the framework of standard operation procedures.
8. Coordinate the transfer of Command.
9. Request and assign additional resources as required
10. Provide periodic updates.
11. Return resources to service.
12. Terminate Command.

**B. Command Post**

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- The Command Post should be located to show two views of the incident, if possible. Dispatch should be notified of the Command Post location.
- Aid 88, Rescue 89 and Command 89 are supplied with various tools for the Incident Commander.
- For larger incidents, or incidents extending beyond one operational period, the Incident Commander will need additional personnel as well as a Deputy Commander.

C. Resource Tracking

- The Incident Commander should establish an appropriate accountability level based on the needs of the incident.
- The Incident Commander should utilize the tactical command board to maintain resources and situation status.
- All command notes and worksheets will become part of the incident report.

D. Assignments

- Unless a Safety Officer is established, the Incident Commander is responsible for the safety of all personnel.
- The Incident Commander should appoint Command Staff, General Staff, Branch Directors, and Division/Group Supervisors as needed to maintain a manageable span of control.

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*Basic Fireground Tactical Considerations*

Rescue of occupants

Exposure protection

Confinement to room, area or building

Extinguishment of the fire

Overhaul / property conservation

Ventilation and Salvage may occur at any time during the operation

Secure, protect scene, preserve evidence if fire is of suspicious origin.

Investigation / determine cause

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**O.G. 8.3**  
**GENERAL EMERGENCY RESPONSE OVERVIEW**

***FIRE SCENE OPERATIONS***

The objectives of firefighting are the protection of life and property by the proper performance of rescue and the locating, confining and extinguishing of the fire. In incidents that do not involve fire, the protection of life, property and the environment are the primary goal. In order to accomplish these goals the following considerations must be addressed:

**A. *STRATEGY***

Strategy is the general plan of action decided upon to reach the objective. Usually this will involve one of four basic approaches.

***Offensive*** - an aggressive interior operation used when sufficient forces are available to immediately handle all operations for the magnitude of fire.

***Offensive/Defensive*** - primarily the same as Offensive, however, the magnitude of fire also requires exposure protection.

***Transitional*** - this involves an even greater volume of fire and is usually a holding type of action until additional resources are available. Such a situation is a doubtful confinement situation.

***Defensive*** - usually will involve heavy volumes of fire and extensive exposure protection. Operations will be from the outside.

**B. *TACTICS***

Tactics are the operations or action to implement the strategies of the Officer in command. These are the responsibility of the Company Officer to perform with their crew.

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**C. *SIZE-UP***

Size-up is an ongoing evaluation of the problems encountered during the operation and how well the present strategies are doing. This process starts at the receipt of the alarm and continues until the fire is under control. Size-up may be carried-out many times and by many different people during the incident. The responsibility initially lies with the first Officer on the scene until relieved by a higher ranking Officer. Some factors involved in size-up are:

1. Time, location, weather, occupancy, street conditions and access
2. Building height, construction, size, location of fire
3. Water supply, available apparatus, exposures.

**D. *RESCUE***

Life-saving activities are placed ahead of firefighting when firefighters are not available to do both. A factor of judgement is present at this stage. The BEST life-saving measure may be a prompt attack on the fire which will stop the spread of the fire and its by-product.

Life hazard, visible upon arrival has to be dealt with. Immediate rescue without simultaneous and coordinated fire attack should only be attempted by engine companies in extreme cases.

Remember, rescue the victims in the most danger from the fire. These will be the victims that are closest to and above the fire. The loudest screaming victim may not be the one in the most perilous location.

Action that can protect victims until they can be removed includes:

1. Get hose lines between the fire and the occupancies.
2. Ventilation to draw fire, heat and smoke away from occupants.
3. Provide assurance to occupants by verbal contact and initiate rescue procedures.

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**E. *LOCATING THE FIRE***

An exterior survey of the structure and the area must be made upon arrival by all members. The conditions can tell much about the situation and location of the fire within the building, and about the building itself. If smoke is coming from the first floor, consider a fire in the basement or first floor. If a multi-story building, smoke may appear on top floors first, even if the fire is in the basement. If heavy smoke is visible throughout the structure and no fire can be found, consider walls and other concealed spaces.

An interior survey must also be made for visible fire, smoke or odor. Can heat be felt or fire heard? Where are the stairways? This type of information is vital and must be communicated to the Officer in charge as soon as possible by portable radio.

Do not stretch lines prematurely. It is important to locate the fire if at all possible.

**F. *CONFINEMENT***

Confining the fire means to restrain the fire from extending beyond the area involved upon arrival. Confinement of the fire must take into consideration, the intensity of the fire, as well as its anticipated or known direction of travel. In some cases this can be controlled until the line can be stretched.

*Some methods for this control follow:*

- \* In some situations, the mere closing of a door can confine the fire long enough to permit life-saving.
- \* Ventilation, IF PROPERLY COORDINATED AND DONE CORRECTLY, can confine the fire or limit its spread.
- \* CAUTION must always be used during ventilation so as not to cause the fire to extend or otherwise impede operations.

**G. *EXTINGUISHMENT***

Extinguishment is the phase of firefighting where the fire is actually put out. This involves the application of water at the actual seat of the fire. The water may be applied directly, where the stream strikes the materials that are burning, or indirectly through the use of water to generate steam

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which then extinguishes the fire. It must be remembered that this does not indicate that firefighting operations are finished. The process of overhaul must be still be completed.

**H. *OVERHAUL***

Overhaul is the process of searching for hidden or deep-seated fire and then extinguishing it. Overhaul involves removing burned and charred materials or structural members in order to make sure the fire is indeed out. A general rule-of-thumb is that if something has been charred, it will probably be removed in the rebuilding process and may very easily be covering hidden fire. **CAUTION AND GOOD JUDGEMENT MUST BE EXERCISED** during overhaul so as to minimize additional or unnecessary damage. Every effort should be made to use salvage covers, etc. to minimize damage and the mess produced during the removal of materials and structural members during overhaul.

**I. *VENTILATION***

Ventilation is the process of removing heat, smoke and other fire by-products from an area. This can be accomplished by using existing openings such as doors, windows, sky lights; making openings in the structure; or using forced or positive pressure ventilation.

Ventilation must always be closely coordinated with the placement and advancement of hose lines. If improperly coordinated or located, ventilation can cause additional damage and endanger members, as well as occupants.

***Vertical Ventilation*** - combustion by-products are moved vertically through the structure through openings in the roof.

***Horizontal Ventilation*** - combustion by-products are moved horizontally through a structure through openings such as doors and windows.

***Forced, Hydraulic or Positive Pressure Ventilation*** - ventilation can be assisted by the use of mechanical smoke ejectors or through the use of handlines on a fog pattern directed out windows or doors.

Ventilation is also very important to the ability of crews to advance and locate fires. By removing heat and smoke, crews may more easily, and with better visibility and safety, advance to the seat of the fire. It is also essential to enable crews to perform overhaul in a non-toxic atmosphere.

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**J. SALVAGE**

Salvage is a process that involves the limiting of damage to areas not directly endangered by fire. Usually this will entail some means of diverting water or debris from areas not directly involved in the incident.

***FIREFIGHTING FORCES***

The types of Officers found within most departments fall into two basic groups - line and staff. Line Officers are directly involved in suppression activities, Staff Officers are support personnel.

**A. LINE OFFICERS**

***Incident Commanders*** - overall responsibility to manage the incident. However, this would be impossible if it were not for the other officers who assist him.

***Sector Officer*** - primary responsibility is the supervision of only a portion of the entire operating companies.

***Company Officers*** - primary responsibility of overseeing their crews to assure that tasks that have been assigned to their company are carried-out and so reported to their Senior Officer.

**B. STAFF OFFICERS**

***Safety Officer*** - responsible for the overall safety of operations during an incident and training exercises.

***Training Officers*** - responsible for seeing that all members are involved and meeting all training requirements established by the Department.

***COMPANIES***

It is imperative that all members understand the importance of the company in overall department operations. The COMPANY is the basic fighting unit of suppression forces. It is essential that the company's integrity be established and maintained throughout all operations. This is the responsibility of not only the Company Officers, but also that of the firefighters assigned to that company and the Senior Officers overseeing the operation. This requires a strong degree of discipline and cooperation between all the members.

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*Company Officer* will establish the company from the personnel riding the apparatus. If no Company Officer is riding in the right front seat of the vehicle, whoever is riding in that position must take over the Officer's responsibility. There are specific functions that must be carried-out by the company and must be accomplished if operations are to be successful.

If insufficient personnel are on the apparatus upon arrival to the scene to adequately carry-out assignments and additional personnel are available on the scene to help complete assignments, the Company Officer will advise these personnel of their job and position within the company.

*For all operations, the minimum number of members in a company will be three:* the Vehicle Operator, the Officer, and one Firefighter. The ideal number of members in a company will be four: the Vehicle Operator; the Officer, and two Firefighters. If additional personnel are available, a maximum of number of six members will make-up an engine company and four members on an aid car.

Again, it is the responsibility of all involved within the company to maintain its integrity. This means Officers will not give orders to individual members of a company, but rather the Officer and those members who are operating independently of the Officer will report back to their Officer when the assignment is completed.

***SECTORING AN INCIDENT***

Sectoring an incident is a process where the tactical operations are broken into smaller, more manageable sub-sections. Depending upon the exact circumstances involved, there are various ways to accomplish this end. The simplest fashion of sectoring is the assignment of engine and ladder company operations.

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***Examples of a sector may include:***

- \* Interior Sector
- \* Exterior Sector
- \* Fourth Floor Sector
- \* Rear Sector
- \* Central Street Sector
- \* Roof Sector
- \* West Sector
- \* Landmark (stream) Sector

***Other sector uses:***

- \* Water supply
- \* Air supply
- \* Recovery
- \* Staging
- \* EMS

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**O.G. 8.4**  
**COMMAND POST**

The first-in Company Officer will establish a Command Post. The Command Post should be in front of the fire structure, away from apparatus, safe from the effects of fire and smoke. With views of at least 2 sides of the structure. (Set up as if you were going to take a complete picture of the structure.)

All non-essential personnel will stay clear of the Command Post.

Sector Officers shall keep the Incident Commander at the Command Post informed of progress and activities within their sector.

Request for additional personnel or apparatus shall be made to the Command Post.

Those acting as aides to the Incident Commander should report directly to the Command Post. This will include Chaplains, executive level officers or others selected to be Incident Command Aides.

Helpful materials or supplies:

- \* Command brief cases
- \* Traffic vests marked for Incident Commander and Sector Officers.

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**O.G. 8.5**  
**INCIDENT COMMAND SYSTEM**  
**BRIEFCASE INVENTORY**

In order to facilitate the I.C.S., certain resource materials are needed by the Incident Commander. The following inventory may not include all of the support material needed, however, it provides a solid starting point.

***Materials and Books***

I.C.S. aluminum folder  
D.O.T. guide book  
Chem-card manual  
Fire equipment resource inventory of entire county  
Map book of response area

***Procedures - Policies***

HazMat Clean-Up policy  
HazMat memo of understanding (who does what)  
HazMat checklists (3)  
Red Cross Burn-Out Assistance Program  
Procedures: fire response, accidents, deaths  
Crime Scenes  
Bomb Search

***Forms (six of each in separate manila envelopes)***

I.C.S. worksheets  
Obstructed hydrant notification form  
Out-of-service tags (red)  
Fire incident report forms  
Fire investigation authorization form

***Binoculars***

***Pens/Pencils/Marking Pens***

This does not constitute a complete list of items to be carried, but serves as a recommended starting point. For maximum usefulness, a regular inventory of the brief case must be conducted.

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**O.G. 8.6**  
**HAZARDOUS MATERIALS**  
**PROCEDURAL GUIDELINES CHECKLIST**

***INITIAL RESPONSE***

1. ***Size-Up / Identification***  
Approach from upwind and upgrade  
Observe from safe distance  
Use binoculars if necessary  
Examine shipping papers or I.D. numbers  
Examine placards/labels  
Interview drivers, conductors, dock managers, etc.  
Refer to D.O.T. Guidebook or Firefighters' Handbook of Hazardous Materials
  
2. ***Isolate Area***  
Avoid contact with materials - fumes, dust, etc.  
Eliminate or avoid ignition source (no smoking or use of highway flares)  
Determine if larger evacuation is necessary to keep people away from chemicals  
Establish control line at safe distance
  
3. ***Rescue Injured People if Prudent***  
Identify all people who might have been injured or exposed
  
4. ***Notification and Technical Help***  
Alert Dispatch Operators or 9-1-1 to begin notification  
State Agencies  
Federal Agencies: NRC (1-800-424-8802)  
Industry: CHEMTREC (1-800-424-9300)  
Emergency Medical Advice: Poison Control Center (206) 526- 2121

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5. ***Useful Information***

Your name, agency, location and call-back number  
Type of material involved, amount spilled and how spilled  
Hazard involved (health, environment)  
Actions underway  
Injuries, contamination, exposure  
Responsible party

6. ***Establish Incident Command***

Determine who is the Incident Commander  
Set up field Command Post at safe location  
Tell dispatcher exact location of Command Post  
Establish communications with off-scene help  
Pass Command as appropriate  
Brief new Commander

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**O.G. 8.7**  
**HAZARDOUS MATERIALS**  
**PROCEDURAL GUIDELINES CHECKLIST**

***COMMAND / COMMAND POST***

1. ***Establish Incident Command***  
Clearly identify yourself as Commander  
Make sure Command Post is at a safe location  
Establish unified Command, if appropriate, with agencies on scene  
Identify lead state agency, if any
  
2. ***Determine the Hazard***  
Check placards, shipping papers, etc.  
Use reference books and off-scene help (i.e., CHEMTREC)  
Determine downwind, downstream and downslope exposures  
Identify ignition sources  
Determine wind speeds and direction  
Use available detection and equipment
  
3. ***Notification and Technical Help***  
State Agencies  
Federal Agencies: NRC (1-800-424-8802)  
Industry: CHEMTREC (1-800-424-9300)  
Emergency Medical Advice: Poison Control Center (206) 526-2121
  
4. ***Assign Team Responsibilities***  
Evacuation  
Rescue  
Traffic and crowd control  
Containment  
Fire suppression  
Public information  
Communications

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Safety Officer

Emergency medical

5. ***Evaluate Control Line and Revise, if necessary***

Use tape, rope, fire-hose, etc. and allow for a margin of error.

6. ***Decontamination***

Assign decontamination Team and Officer

Check people and equipment

Set-up decon procedures

7. ***Establish Staging Area for Medical Treatment***

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**O.G. 8.8**  
**HAZARDOUS MATERIALS**  
**PROCEDURAL GUIDELINES CHECKLIST**

*EMS / MEDICAL SECTOR*

1. At incident scene:
  - Be aware of dangers
  - Take proper precautions to protect yourself when handling casualties
  - Coordinate actions with the Incident Commander
  - Coordinate support activities as required with response agencies present
2. Confirm health hazard
3. Investigate toxic levels of materials involved
4. Seek antidote options
5. Confirm evacuation area perimeters (includes establishment of triage area as required)
6. Coordinate with hospitals involved
7. Ensure no etiological agents are involved
8. Coordinate with Reception and Care Coordinator regarding medical services required by evacuees.
9. Decontaminate personnel/equipment as required
  - Hospital
  - Ambulance
10. Help question/examine responding personnel on state of health. Treat as required.
11. Work with State Health Division and Department of Environmental Quality to address environmental health/sanitation impacts.
12. *Note: News releases are to be made by an authorized Public Information Officer. Check with Incident Commander.*

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**O.G. 8.9**  
**SUPPORTING SPRINKLER SYSTEM**

This operational procedure of the Department will be the following for fire involving buildings with sprinkler systems which have the Fire Department connections. The first engine company arriving at the scene will be responsible for connecting to and supplying water to the sprinkler system if needed. Officers will be responsible for knowing which buildings contain sprinklers.

- A. If no fire is showing and flow alarm is not sounding, do not charge lines unless ordered by Officer in charge.
  
- B. If it is obvious that a fire is in progress and the water flow alarm is sounding, charge system and maintain 150 lbs. engine pressure.
  - 1. Be certain the sprinkler system shut-off valve is open and the sprinkler system is functioning. If the valves are closed, open them; if the valves are red tagged, do not open them.
  - 2. Remember, a 1,000 G.P.M. pumper can supply about 40 heads. It is not advisable to maintain other lines when assisting a sprinkler system.
  
- C. ***Shutting-Off Sprinklers***
  - 1. Shut-off sprinklers only on order of the Officer in Charge
  - 2. Sprinkler shut-off may be accomplished in two ways:
    - a. Use wedges or plugs
    - b. Closing shut-off valve. The Firefighter assigned to shutting off the valve shall remain at valve until the valve is turned on again and the system is in working condition. If necessary, the system can be charged without delay if it is discovered that the fire has spread to other areas.
  
- D. ***Putting Sprinklers Back Into Service***
  - 1. At no time will this Department secure from a fire at a building containing sprinklers without restoring service or seeing that a watchman is on-duty until the system can be restored.
  - 2. Sprinkler heads will be replaced and the system valves open again. Most buildings with sprinkler systems have spare heads and wrenches located near the shut-off valves.

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E. ***Reports***

Any malfunction or deficiency or any sprinkler system will be reported to the Fire Chief Senior Officer or Fire Marshal and also noted on the fire reports.

F. The agents for the affected building must be advised to notify their sprinkler company after any sprinkler flow, malfunction or temporary repair work.

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**O.G. 8.10**

**BOMB THREATS AND BOMB EXPLOSION**

***Bomb Threats***

The Fire Department will not respond unless:

**A. *Called to the Site by a Police Agency***

1. Units responding shall respond Code Red and shall stop at a safe distance, at least 1,000 feet from the site. No radios shall be used in the immediate area.
2. The Senior Officer shall report to the Police Command Post and ascertain what help is needed. All other fire personnel will stay at staging area unless otherwise directed.
3. Fire Department members may be requested to assist with evacuation, crowd control, search team, or to standby for fire control and on-site emergency medical treatment.
4. At no time shall an apparatus be left unmanned and at no time left without enough manpower to operate same.

***Bomb Explosion***

The Fire Department shall respond:

- A. All apparatus responding to a bomb explosion shall treat the response as a fire call with emphasis towards on-site emergency medical treatment.
- B. Radios shall not be used within a 1,000 feet radius to insure not detonating other explosives.
- C. Police shall be notified, and as soon as the scene is secured, turned over to the police.

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**O.G. 8.11**  
**HOSE LAYS - PUMPING**

*Note: Procedures for each operation will be a function of training.*

**A. *Forward Lay (street to the scene)***

This procedure will be used when the following situations exist:

1. When the fire scene cannot be reached with preconnected lays from the paved street.
2. When the first-in apparatus has **any** doubt that the fire can be handled by the water in its tank.

**B. *Reverse Lay (scene to street)***

This procedure will be used when one of the following situations exists:

1. When the first-in apparatus did not do a Forward Lay and additional water is needed.
3. When the first-in apparatus did a Forward Lay but did not have amount of sufficient hose.

**C. *In-Line Pumping***

This procedure shall be used when one of the following situations exists:

1. Over 1,000 feet of hose has been laid-in.
2. Any time that more pressure is needed at the first engine.

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**O.G. 8.12**  
**Emergency Fireground Signals**

**Purpose:** To establish a clear and effective method of notifying all personnel at an emergency scene of the need for **immediate abandonment** of the building or hazard area.

**Definitions:**

**Abandon:** To immediately exit the building or area due to safety concerns for emergency personnel, without regard to equipment or hose lines left in place.

Abandonment should not be confused with the following two terms:

**Withdraw:** To exit the building or area with equipment and hose lines, due to a change in strategy (i.e., offensive to defensive; interior to exterior).

**Evacuate:** To remove the occupants or residents of a building or area.

**POLICY:**

1. It shall be the policy of King County Fire Protection District #47 to maintain a system by which to notify personnel of the need to abandon a structure or area for their safety. The system shall have the ability to quickly communicate this need under emergency conditions, and in addition provide a secondary means of notification.
2. All personnel shall be aware of such system and the need for immediate action on their part to abandon the structure or hazard area and to account for themselves.
3. Such abandonment signals shall be used whenever building collapse or partial collapse is imminent, immediate explosion hazard is noted, water supply is lost to interior operations, or any other reason deemed necessary by the Incident Commander.
4. This policy shall supersede all previous policies and memorandum related to this subject.

**PROCEDURE:**

1. When, in the opinion of any firefighter operating on the scene, an abandonment of a building is necessary, he/she shall immediately notify the Incident Commander of the need for abandonment and the reason therefore. When, in the opinion of the Incident Commander or

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Fireground Safety Officer, a structure, a portion of a structure, or area must be immediately abandoned for the safety of personnel, he/she shall:

- a: Contact the Communications Center by radio, advising "Emergency Traffic".
  - b: Advise that the structure, portion of the structure, or area must be abandoned (while personnel should use the proper terminology, i.e. "abandon", they should also use plain English in describing the nature of the emergency).
2. The Communications Center shall do the following:
- a: Transmit three (3) alert tones
  - b: Repeat the abandonment message as received from the Incident Commander or Safety Officer on primary, tactical, and all other appropriate radio channels.
  - c: Restrict the air for emergency radio traffic only related to the abandonment.
3. Fireground apparatus operators who are attending any of the engine/ladder/aid companies operating at the incident shall activate the HI/LO siren for 10 to 15 seconds in duration, with a 5-second pause, then repeat this three (3) times.

NOTE #1: The procedures listed above shall only be done when a full abandonment is required of the building or area. If a partial abandonment is necessary, this shall be coordinated by radio and face-to-face.

NOTE #2 The HI/LO siren shall not be used for emergency response or any purpose other than as the abandonment signal.

4. All persons in the abandonment area, upon hearing the radio signal and/or audible abandonment warning devices, shall immediately abandon, leaving hose lines and other equipment in place unless needed during the retreat. All personnel shall immediately report to their supervisors to be accounted for and report as a crew to the person holding their passport for "roll call." In the event that personnel cannot locate the person holding their passport following an abandonment, they shall report directly to the incident command post for accounting.

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5. The Incident Commander shall institute a fireground roll call to ensure that all personnel have abandoned the appropriate area. The Incident Commander may repeat the abandonment warning (radio,sirens) if it is deemed necessary.
6. The Incident Commander shall advise the Communication Center when normal fireground radio traffic may resume.
7. If the Incident Commander is operating in a jurisdiction with a different abandonment signal, it shall be his responsibility to assure that his personnel are aware of such fact and what the abandonment signal is that will be used.