



ABINGTON TOWNSHIP FIRE DEPARTMENT

OG – 300-102

Rapid Rescue at Hazardous Materials Incidents

1.0 PURPOSE

To identify the actions to be taken when arriving on the location of a Hazardous Materials (Haz-Mat) incident when a victim needs to be rescued.

- 1.1 Fire Company personnel will follow the procedures in this guideline when arriving on the location of a Haz-Mat incident and a victim experiencing a medical emergency or who has come in direct contact with chemicals or vapor from the incident needs to be rescued.
- 1.2 Responders will follow this procedure only when there is a high probability that the victim will survive. This can be determined by estimating the dose and exposure time of the chemical (when this information is available). Thirty, (30) minutes or more exposure of a chemical at IDLH Level may mean that irreversible harm has occurred.
- 1.3 Responders using this procedure should be trained in the proper donning and use of the personnel protective clothing indicated below.

2.0 RESPONSIBILITY

The responsibility to ensure that the above actions are taken in an appropriate manner are defined as indicated below:

- 2.1 Company Members (CM)
- 2.2 Company Officers (CO)
- 2.3 Document Control Administrator (DC)

3.0 PROCEDURE

- 3.1 Emergency decontamination should be set up immediately.
- 3.2 Air-monitoring equipment should be used to help determine the presence of a Haz-Mat
- 3.3 If at all possible, in Level "B" Chemical Protective Clothing (CPC) with Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA) should be worn by Operations certified personnel, making rescues in accordance with 29CFR 1910.120.
- 3.4 When CPC is not immediately available and the person to be rescued meets the criteria listed in Section 1 of this procedure structural firefighting clothing (SFC) with SCBA may be used when the following conditions are met.
 - 3.4.1 Contact with splashes of extremely hazardous materials is unlikely.
 - 3.4.2 Total atmospheric concentrations do not contain high levels of chemicals toxic to the skin, and there are no adverse effects from chemical exposure to small areas of unprotected skin.
 - 3.4.3 The SFC ensemble is worn complete with SCBA, hood, helmet, gloves and boots and all closures have been properly sealed.
 - 3.4.4 The SFC ensemble should meet the NFPA 1971 Standard on Protective Ensemble for Structural Firefighting requirements.

- 3.5** SFC does not take the place of Chemical Protective Clothing; personnel using SFC in place of CPC must understand that they are at greater risk of exposure while operating in an environment containing hazardous materials than when wearing CPC.
- 3.6** Responders should not remain in the Hot Zone for more than fifteen (15) minutes.
- 3.7** Emergency Decontamination of victims and response personnel must occur immediately after rescues have been completed. (*See Emergency Decontamination Guidelines*)
- 3.8** After decontamination SFC should be removed and isolated until it can be thoroughly decontaminated and tested to ensure that the contaminate has been removed and that the SFC has not been damaged as a result of the exposure.
- 3.9** Every attempt should be made to safeguard the modesty of victims, do not allow press or people not directly involved in the decontamination process to be present in the decontamination area(s).
- 3.10** Used PPE must be properly disposed of and equipment should be decontaminated before being placed back into service.
- 3.11** The Fire department OIC should initiate a Haz-Mat team response whenever this procedure is activated.
- 3.12** The Fire department OIC should become familiar with the June, 2003 report issued by the titled "Risk Assessment of Using Firefighter Protective Ensemble with SCBA for Rescue Operations during a terrorist Chemical Incidents".

4.0 RECORDS

4.1 Master Document Listing