

Safety and Health Program

A-018

Date Amended: 01/16/2008

It is the intent of the Union Vale Fire District, and the goal of this program, to place the safety of our officers and firefighters as a priority and provide, to our utmost ability, for the safety of our personnel. This will be done by developing, implementing, monitoring, and evaluating a safety and health program.

1. ORGANIZATIONAL STATEMENT

The Union Vale Fire District is located in the County of Dutchess and was duly organized as a Volunteer Fire District on September 9, 1952, by charter adoption.

The Union Vale Fire District is organized to save lives, suppress and control fires, and provide other services such as rescue, fire, & arson investigation, public fire education and other activities as deemed in the best interest of the fire district or the citizens of our community.

Membership in the fire District shall be comprised of active, social, life, and honorary. Active membership is further divided into interior structural firefighters and non-interior structural firefighters.

It is the responsibility of each member to cooperate, participate, and comply with the provisions of this safety and health program, and to perform their assigned duties in a safe manner that does not present a hazard to themselves or others.

A training program will be developed as a minimum guideline, under section two of this program, in the following categories:

- Interior Structural Firefighters
- Entry Level Training
- In-Service Training
- Non-Interior Structural Firefighters
- Entry Level Training
- In-Service Training
- Fire Officers
- District Training Officer

Guidelines and standard operating guidelines (S.O.G.s), for dealing with specific hazardous situations, will be developed, implemented, and used by the members of this district.

Safety officer shall be appointed by the chief and shall continue in that position until relieved of those responsibilities. The safety officer shall be trained in emergency scene safety. If a safety officer is not available at emergencies when the incident commander deems that this staff position should be activated, an appropriate officer or firefighter shall be assigned to this position until relieved by the safety officer.

The chief or his designee shall establish a record collection system for such records as injuries, illnesses, deaths, exposure to toxic products and infectious diseases, membership training, maintenance/inspection of equipment, apparatus, facilities, and other areas as deemed appropriate.

2. TRAINING AND EDUCATION

The following training guidelines are the minimum requirements to maintain active membership in the district and additional training courses may be developed and/or implemented by the chief or his designee.

All training provided to members shall be developed and delivered with consideration for the members' safety as a priority, and where appropriate, specific safety information shall be incorporated into the curriculum.

All active members, including those who joined prior to July 1 of the current year, must attend either the 8-hour OSHA training class, or a class that incorporates the OSHA training like Firefighter I, Scene Support or EMT, every year. Failure to complete the OSHA refresher training, or its equivalent, annually will result in suspension as an active member in the Union Vale Fire District. This requirement must be met by November 30th; the members who have not meet the OSHA requirement by November 30th will be presented to the Board of Fire Commissioners to be dropped from the District active membership roll.

INTERIOR STRUCTURAL FIREFIGHTERS

Newly appointed members shall be trained for all anticipated assignments prior to being assigned to perform them. Prior to performing firefighting duties, the newly appointed member shall complete the NYSOFP&C Firefighter 1.

In addition, other training courses, as identified by the chief, for new and existing members may be required of membership.

The District Training Officer should complete a course in instructional techniques and be knowledgeable in the subject material he/she is assigned to instruct. Individuals having special knowledge, skills, or abilities can be utilized as special instructors, without completing a course in instructional techniques, under the general direction of the training officer.

Officers should complete additional courses in subject areas as determined by the chief to be appropriate for their level of responsibility. As an example, such courses could be in strategy, tactics, building construction, preparing for command, command management, firefighter safety, hazardous materials, incident command, and others.

Additional membership training should include, but not be limited to, such items as the fire incident command system, standard operating procedures, evacuation from hazardous area procedures, right to know information, and special hazards of the community.

NON-INTERIOR FIREFIGHTERS

Newly appointed members should be trained in tasks that they would be expected to perform prior to being permitted to perform them. Examples of these activities could be setting up lights, connecting to a water source, placing ladders, assisting with tools and equipment and other such duties as deemed appropriate by the chief. All newly appointed members should complete the NYSOFP&C Scene Support Operations

Existing members shall receive refresher training, at least annually, in the duties they are expected to perform.

3. VEHICLES & EQUIPMENT

Refer to Vehicle Operations Policy (Section was removed because the Vehicle Operations Policy is more comprehensive)

4. PROTECTIVE CLOTHING AND EQUIPMENT

Protective clothing for all firefighters shall be provided commensurate with their responsibilities. The personal protective clothing shall be OSHA and/or NFPA approved. The equipment shall be used when firefighters are exposed to the hazards it was designed for and as required by standard operating procedures.

Each member should be trained in the maintenance and use of their personal protective clothing and shall have the responsibility to see that it is maintained.

Self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA) shall be of the positive pressure type. SCBA shall be used in accordance with Dept. S.O.G.'s. All breathing apparatus shall be maintained and tested according to the manufacturers recommendations. Each member expected to use SCBA shall complete training in its use, prior to using the equipment at an emergency incident. Repairs will only be done by persons trained to do so.

Personal alert safety devices shall be provided and will be used at all times the breathing apparatus is in use and tested prior to their use.

Life safety rope, harnesses, and hardware for rescue operations shall be purchased and maintained for that purpose, with an examination of same for deterioration on a regular basis. It shall be the policy that if the rescue rope is used it shall be examined and, if necessary, downgraded or destroyed.

Members, who operate power driven tools and equipment, shall wear eye, face, and hearing protection appropriate for the tool or equipment they are using.

Safety standards applicable to the operation of tools and equipment will be adhered to at all times.

5. EMERGENCY OPERATIONS

All training evolutions and emergency operations shall be conducted in as safe manner as is practical and in a manner to recognize and prevent accidents and injuries. Live fire training should be conducted using NFPA 1403 as a guideline.

A safety officer position shall be activated when, in the opinion of the Incident Commander on-scene, the emergency has reached a level that requires additional safety precautions. In the absence of a safety officer, the incident commander shall assign a trained officer or firefighter to fulfill this responsibility. A safety officer may have additional duties at the emergency scene if personnel are limited.

A personnel accountability system will be developed and utilized at all incidents, such as structure fires, hazardous materials incidents, multi-vehicle accidents, grass/brush fires, where personnel may have to be quickly accounted for.

Special hazards may require special safety precautions. The special hazards shall be described along with the special precautions to be taken in S.O.G.'s. In addition, the S.O.G.'s should be distributed to members for inclusion in their training book. The development of these S.O.G.'s shall be an on-going process and be reviewed annually for additions and changes.

EMS personnel and/or an ambulance will be dispatched automatically to all emergencies where their services may be needed.

An adequate number of personnel will be available at the scene of any incident to safely conduct emergency operations. If an insufficient number of Union Vale Fire District personnel respond then Mutual Aid will be requested to provide additional personnel.

The fire district shall provide an adequate number of personnel to safely conduct emergency scene operations. To allow for at least a team of two to enter interior structural fires and a two-man safety team remain outside, it is recommended that an operational engine be staffed with at least four firefighters within 5 minutes after arrival at an emergency.

The Incident Command System shall be established and used at all alarms to which the Fire District responds. All members shall be trained in the use of the system.

The incident commander shall be responsible for overall safety of the firefighters and each officer shall monitor the safety of his/her sector/task.

6. FACILITY SAFETY

Fire stations shall comply with all applicable codes and be inspected annually for compliance. In addition, a safety evaluation should be conducted at least quarterly for items that affect members' safety and the person performing the safety evaluation should use a checklist.

Smoke detectors shall be installed in the meeting room, and other areas as recommended by the safety officer.

7. MEDICAL

All new members shall have a medical examination by a licensed physician, as determined by the Fire District, prior to membership. The components of the examination shall include urinalysis, gross vision, pulmonary function, an NIDA equivalent five-panel drug test with chain of custody and any other area identified by the physician that may restrict the candidate's ability to perform the functions of a firefighter. The district shall identify any additional physical requirements that the candidate shall meet. Existing members that develop heart disease, epilepsy, or emphysema shall have certification to perform as a structural firefighter by a physician and in addition, a medical evaluation of the individual shall be conducted on an annual basis. If the firefighter's physical condition has changed, a medical reevaluation by a physician may be requested. Any other forms of physicians that may require additional medical follow up may also be utilized. The safety officer shall assist the chief in the development of medical guidelines for firefighter's after consultation with a physician and commensurate with **OSHA 1910.156** requirements.

Costs for physicals shall be borne by the Fire District.

While it is the member's responsibility to stay physically fit to perform the duties of a firefighter, the Fire District will strongly encourage each member to stay physically fit, through a variety of methods, including scheduling activities that will promote the fitness of all members.

8. MEMBER ASSISTANCE

The district has developed a member assistance program; establish a referral listing for assistance, and guidelines for the referral including the confidentiality of the records of referral.

Should the performance or actions of a firefighter compromise the safety of himself/herself, other firefighters, or the general public in performance of official duties, it shall be referred to the Chief for review. Recommendations regarding the individual shall be made to the Fire District for review and action.

Under no circumstances shall a fire district member act in the official capacity of a firefighter when the consumption of alcohol or other substances may affect their ability to perform in a safe manner.

It shall be the policy of the Union Vale Fire District to promote a "Drug Free Emergency Service." An Anti Drug Abuse Education & Prevention Program should be developed and available resources for its implementation identified.

A critical incident stress program should be developed and available resources for its implementation identified.