

Safety Officer

A-029

Date: 02-24-1998

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this standard operating procedure is to specify the duties and responsibilities for a fire department safety officer.

ASSIGNMENT:

The fire chief shall make the assignment of fire department safety officer.

The fire chief shall have the ultimate responsibility for the fire department safety and health program. The safety officer shall assist the fire chief in this responsibility. The safety officer shall report directly to the fire chief.

In the absence of the safety officer, one of the line officers (as safety officer) shall perform the duties and responsibilities of the position that require immediate attention. This includes duties and responsibilities at the scene of incidents.

QUALIFICATIONS:

The safety officer shall be a experienced fire department member in good standing.

The safety officer shall have and maintain knowledge of current federal, state, and local laws regulating occupational safety and health applicable to the fire service work environment.

The safety officer shall have and maintain knowledge of current potential safety and health hazards involved in fire fighting and other related activities.

The safety officer shall have and maintain knowledge of the current principles and techniques of management of a safety and health program.

The safety officer shall have and maintain knowledge of the current health and physical fitness factors that affect the fire service work environment.

AUTHORITY:

The safety officer shall have the responsibility to identify and cause correction of health and safety hazards. The safety officer shall have the authority to cause immediate correction of situations that create an imminent hazard to personnel.

At an emergency incident, when activities are judged by the safety officer to be unsafe and to involve an imminent hazard, the safety officer shall have the authority to alter, suspend, or terminate those activities. The safety officer shall immediately inform the incident commander of any actions taken to correct imminent hazards at an emergency scene.

When non-imminent hazards are identified, the safety officer shall develop actions to correct the situation within the administrative process of the fire department. The safety officer shall have the authority to bring notice of such hazards to whoever in the fire department has the ability to cause correction.

RECORDS AND DATA MANAGEMENT:

The fire department shall maintain records of all accidents, occupational deaths, injuries, illnesses, and exposures.

The safety officer shall manage the collection and analysis of this information.

The safety officer shall identify and analyze health and safety hazards and shall develop corrective actions to deal with these hazards.

The safety officer shall ensure that records are maintained on:

- (a) fire department safety and health policies
- (b) periodic inspection and service testing of apparatus and equipment
- (c) period inspection and service testing of personal safety equipment, including protective clothing
- (d) periodic inspection of fire department buildings and facilities

LIAISON:

The safety officer shall submit recommendations on safety and health to the fire chief.

The safety officer shall provide information and assistance to officers and fire fighters in surveying the district to identify and report safety and health hazards that could have adverse effects on fire department operations.

The safety officer shall maintain a liaison with other officers regarding recommended changes in equipment, procedures, and recommended methods to eliminate unsafe practices and reduce existing hazardous conditions.

RULES, REGULATIONS, AND PROCEDURES:

The safety officer shall develop, review, and revise rules, regulations, and standard operating procedures pertaining to the fire department safety and health program for implementation by the fire chief.

The safety officer shall periodically report to the fire chief on the adequacy and effectiveness of and compliance with the safety-related rules, regulations, and standard operating procedures.

The fire chief shall define the role of the safety officer in the enforcement of the rules, regulations, and standard operating procedures.

ACCIDENT PREVENTION:

The safety officer shall develop and manage an accident prevention program that addresses the items specified in this section. The participation of the safety officer in this program may include direct participation, review, or supervision.

The accident prevention program shall provide instruction in safe work methods to fire department members.

The accident prevention program shall be coordinated with the training and testing of fire apparatus driver/operators.

The accident prevention program shall provide for the periodic inspection and service testing of all safety equipment.

APPARATUS AND EQUIPMENT:

The safety officer shall assist and make recommendations regarding the testing of new equipment and its acceptance or approval by the fire department.

The safety officer shall assist and make recommendations regarding the service testing of apparatus and equipment to determine its suitability for continued service.

The safety officer shall periodically survey operations, procedures, equipment, and facilities with regard to maintaining safe working practices and procedures and report recommendations to the fire chief

ACCIDENT INVESTIGATION, PROCEDURES, AND REVIEW:

The safety officer shall develop procedures to assure that emergency medical treatment and transportation to medical facilities are provided for members injured on duty. The safety officer shall also ensure that occupational injuries and illnesses are treated at the most appropriate medical facilities.

The safety officer shall investigate, or cause to be investigated, all occupational injuries, illness, exposures, and fatalities involving fire department members and all accidents involving fire department apparatus, equipment, or facilities.

The safety officer shall develop and submit corrective recommendations resulting from these investigations to the fire chief.

The safety officer shall develop accident reporting and investigation procedures and shall periodically review and revise these procedures.

The safety officer shall review the procedures employed during any unusually hazardous operation. Whenever it is determined that incorrect or questionable procedures were employed, the safety officer shall submit corrective recommendations to the fire chief.

INCIDENT SCENE SAFETY:

The safety officer (and Captains) shall respond to emergency incidents that involve a high risk to personnel. The fire chief shall define criteria for the response of the safety officer.

At the scene of high-risk incidents, the safety officer shall identify and mitigate safety hazards in accordance with the provisions of the fire department safety and health program.

The functions of the safety officer at high-risk incidents shall be integrated with the command structure, and the safety officer shall report to the incident commander.

The safety officer shall routinely observe operations at the scene of emergency incidents to ensure that safety regulations are being followed. When necessary, the safety officer shall recommend corrective actions to the fire chief.

The safety officer shall be involved in the process of post incident critiques in order to review the safety factors involved in emergency incidents.

TRAINING AND EDUCATION:

The safety officer shall ensure that training in safety procedures relating to all fire department operations and functions is provided to fire department members. Training shall address recommendations arising from the investigation of accidents, injuries, occupational deaths, illnesses, and exposures, and the observation of incident scene activities.

The safety officer shall cause safety supervision to be provided for training activities, including all live burn exercises.

The safety officer shall develop and distribute safety and health related materials for the education of fire department members.