

Operational Procedures Calm Water / Ice Rescue

A-042

Date 12-21-1998

I. Calm Water Rescue Purpose and Scope

- a) Purpose: To establish a safe and uniform method of operation at the scene of a water rescue involving calm water or ice only.
- b) Scope: This method is to be used by all personnel engaged in a calm water or ice rescue.

II. Response of Apparatus

- a) Dispatch for a water or ice rescue shall consist of a full response as follows:
 1. Ambulances 67-71, 67-72, Rescue 67-51, and the closest available engine.
 2. All personnel shall be committed to a quick, safe, and efficient rescue of a victim or victims in water or in ice.

III. Operations

- a) Safety - It is imperative that during any water or ice rescue, safety for emergency response personnel must be the first priority. It is mandatory that, as a minimum:
 1. All personnel operating at waterline or on ice during rescue incident must wear Type 3 Personal Flotation Devices (PFD'S)
 2. Rescue personnel in water or on ice performing a rescue of a victim shall don complete cold-water rescue suit, including tether line.
 3. The personnel of the Union Vale Fire District are not equipped or trained to conduct rescue operations in rapid moving or rough water conditions. The officer in charge must evaluate each and every incident and determine whether safe operations are possible with the capabilities of the personnel and equipment on hand. When additional resources are required (Example Divers, or Advanced Life Support ALS) the Incident Commander will request these resources through the Dutchess County Emergency Response Center.

IV. Strategy & Tactics

Tactics listed are in priority order with most desirable (safest) listed first:

Cold water suits

Used for unconscious victim rescue or as an aid to rescue of conscious victims.

Assign personnel so that two people are donning cold-water suits at the same time as throw rope is being deployed. This will avoid delays in either tactic

SOP Tactic 1 - Establish voice or PA system communication with victim.

Use hand signals to victim if noise levels are too high.

SOP Tactic 2 - Throw ropes.

Victim must be alert and conscious.

SOP Tactic 3 - Roof / Extension ladder

Used for ice rescues only

Victim may be conscious or unconscious

Spreads weight of rescuers over large area of ice

SOP for use of water / ice rescue equipment.

Throw rope - A rescue rope throw bag with 65 feet of polypropylene rope is available for use as a throw rope. Hand coils of rope are also available as needed.

Roof ladder or extension ladder - standard ladders carried on apparatus.

- a. Pushed out on thin ice ahead of rescuers
- b. Rescuers working with ladder must be in cold-water suits and tethered as required in #A-042 (under Operations-Safety)
- c. Ladder tethered to shore
- d. Ladder may be used as anchor point for rescuers grab unconscious victim.

Cold-water suits - rescue suit will easily float one person straddled across rescuer's legs.

- a. Remove shoes
- b. Don suit and zip enclosures fully
- c. Attach tether line to 'D'- ring on suit
- d. Perform rescue
- e. After use, wash, dry, and package suits according to instruction

V. Equipment Inventory and Storage Locations

A) Equipment Inventory

1) Cold-water suits/tether lines

a) UVFD currently has 2 cold-water rescue suits manufactured by Stearns. They are approved suits and are reliable when used recommended. When used correctly they will offer maximum protection from hypothermia and provide a measure of flotation. Purpose- to be used in all water or ice rescue situations.

b) Tether lines for suits will be stored in bag with suits- polypropylene rope 300' per tether line

2) Type 3 Personal Flotation Device, (PFD's)

3) 2- Rescue rope throw bags - (65' polypropylene rope per bag).

B) Equipment Storage Locations

Rescue truck 67-51

- a. (2) - Sterns cold water suits in storage bags
- b. (2) - Tether lines in storage bags (with suits)
- c. (6) - Type 3 PFD's (in bags with suits - 3 with each suit)

Other response vehicles

- a. EMS equipment (BLS) 67-71, 67-72
- b. Rescue truck 67-51
- b. Portable radios 67-71, 67-72
- c. Ground ladders from 67-11, 67-12, 67-13, 67-14