

## Falmouth Fire-EMS Operating Guideline

### Severe Storm

**Purpose:** This Standard Operating Guideline outlines the responsibilities of Falmouth Fire-EMS before, during and after a Hurricane or severe storms (such as microbursts, thunderstorms, or ice storms).

#### Guidelines:

##### Emergency Operations Center (EOC)

If activated, the Emergency Operations Center will provide overall response coordination to manage hurricane or severe storm operations. Such an event would require coordination between all City departments. EOC standard operating guidelines are maintained in the EOC, for use by EOC staff and should be referred to as appropriate.

##### Fire Department Incident Command Post (ICP)

The Fire Department will establish an Incident Command Post for the storm where the IC will be responsible for directing the Fire Department response to hurricanes and severe storms. Depending on the size and duration of the event the ICP could be in the EOC or in another designated location. The IC should work with the Director of Emergency Management and other department heads to assist in developing an Incident Action Plan (IAP) for the event.

#### The IAP should:

- Identify hazard agents such as high winds, flooding, heavy rains, power outages, etc.
- Identify risk areas such as low-lying areas, frequently flooded areas, Treatment Plant needs, & the need to monitor winds on the bridges, etc.
- Include a schedule of events to within the following framework:
  - **Awareness status** - 72 hours to 60 hours before the onset of gale force winds
  - **Stand-by status** - 60 hours to 48 hours before the onset of gale force winds
  - **Response status** - 48 hours before the onset of gale force winds
- Ensure Falmouth Fire-EMS manpower status is evaluated against expected emergency events and schedules (e.g. when the storm is supposed to arrive) and that an appropriate staffing model for response personnel is planned and implemented.
  - Staffing may need to be increased prior to storm to assist with setting up shelters, preparing for evacuation, moving elderly in spare ambulances, or completing other tasks a listed below.
- Allow for the implementation attached Hurricane SOG Checklist.
- Include a communications plan to allow for advising the EOC of the status of the City and the capacity of the Department throughout the storm.

**The following should happen once open the EOC and/or ICP are opened.**

- The EMA director shall report to the EOC location.
- An assistant (scribe) shall be assigned to the EOC.
- A Chief Officer should be assigned to fill the IC position/Area Command (at either the EOC or ICP).
  - The IC will divide the Town into districts and apparatus will be assigned to calls by IC/Area Command (AC) to low hazard events in their area.
  - These districts may also be assigned a separate radio channel.
  - Prioritizing and “stacking” low hazard events will be the IC/AC’s responsibility. Ambulance 2 should remain available for priority calls.
- Central Maine Power should be contacted to identify a designated official for use by the EOC.
- A Public Works representative should be made aware of the opening of the EOC for coordination purposes and either provide a representative or a radio contact.
- The Police supervisor should be made aware of the opening of the EOC for coordination purposes and either provide a representative or a radio contact.
- An Incident Dispatcher should be assigned to the ICP.
- Once the ICP is opened all radio traffic should go through “Area Command”. The IC/AC will assign apparatus after Dispatch notifies the IC/AC.
- Operational periods should be established and a schedule created to rotate staff throughout the event.
- As soon as fire companies/police/public works start to close roads due to tree/wires the scribe should create and update a list of road closures. This person should also make sure that Portland Dispatch, the Incident Commander, and Web EOC (County EMA) has the most up to date information.

**Fire Department Operations**

In addition to responding to emergencies, Fire Department Operations may include the following which should be considered by the IC when developing the IAP. The IC should be aware of the “Saffir-Simpson Hurricane Wind Scale” (attached) when making operational decisions. Safety of responders is paramount and operations may be halted during dangerous wind conditions.

**Prior to Storm**

- Assisting with notifications of schools, businesses, etc. as requested.
- Assisting with closing schools and other facilities as requested.
- Assisting with restricting access to vulnerable areas.
- Assisting with opening and operating mass care facilities, shelters as needed.
- Assisting with identifying needed resources (tents, cots, extra food, water for FD and for evacuated residents, boats, sandbags, generators, lights, for example) and assist with obtaining such resources.

### **During Storm**

- The Duty Chief or Incident Commander will activate the call companies for storm stand-by. When the standby crews are assembled officers will need to look at who is available and make sure they are placed on apparatus appropriately so that we have balanced crews.
- All wire down calls that are checked by fire department personnel should be marked with yellow fire line tape if safe to do so, so that we can reduce the number of occasions we respond to previous locations.
- All wires will be considered live until proven otherwise by CMP.
- Members with proper training may cut phone & cable wires if this would allow opening of a road that may otherwise be inaccessible.
- Advise the EOC/IC of the status of town streets, town facilities, and fire department response capabilities.
- Continue to evaluate the capacity of the Town to handle the hazard agents – continue to determine best and safest routes to area hospitals, for evacuation if needed, etc.
- Assist with helping implement protective actions – some elderly persons may require assistance closing windows, for example, if sheltering in place is ordered. Others may need FD assistance if evacuation is ordered.
- Operations will stop once winds reach 75 mph (sustained).

### **After Storm**

- At some point in the event teams will be sent out to evaluate the town for additional road closures, wires / trees down and other items.
- Accurate payroll records and any expense receipts need to be maintained as this will help with reimbursement efforts.

These guidelines may be changed or altered by the Fire Chief at any time.