

Falmouth Fire-EMS Operating Guideline

SEARCH AND RESCUE

Objective: To safely locate, protect, and remove incident victims. This guideline establishes the steps by which Falmouth Fire-EMS Department will perform Search and Rescue operations and is intended to ensure optimum performance while maintaining the integrity of safety for all personnel.

General Information:

Definitions:

PRIMARY SEARCH – A Quick initial search of the immediate and adjacent fire areas. Limited only by fire intensity. Often done simultaneously while crews are attacking the fire.

SECONDARY SEARCH - A thorough, complete search of the affected fire building. Leave nothing unsearched. May be performed after the fire is under control or extinguished.

Guidelines:

1. Structural Fire Response (Commercial and Residential)

- a. After a PRIMARY SEARCH is completed, the Primary Search Officer shall communicate to the Incident Commander (IC):
"Primary Search, All Clear."
- b. Should a victim(s) be located, the Officer shall initiate rescue and notify the IC who will coordinate victim removal and treatment. Circumstances may exist where the victim is deceased and may need to be left where they are for investigation purposes. The IC will make the final determination of this. After a victim is brought out to safety the PRIMARY SEARCH should be completed.
- c. Again, once the search process is completed the Officer shall communicate "Primary Search, All Clear." The phrase "Primary Search All Clear" shall indicate that the primary search benchmark has been reached and shall be communicated by the IC to Fire Alarm.
- d. After the Primary Search is complete, the Company Officer will ask for further orders from the Incident Commander.

- e. In situations in which the fire is declared EXTERIOR by the IC, NO PRIMARY SEARCH WILL BE INITIATED. The declaration of the fire as exterior will indicate to Fire Alarm and all personnel that no primary search will be done.
- f. When the fire has been effectively controlled within the fire building and the entire building can be thoroughly searched, the Incident Commander will order that a SECONDARY SEARCH be initiated by selected fire companies. The Incident Commander will designate a Search Officer(s). The Search Officer will coordinate the secondary search and report the status of the search to the Incident Commander. It is preferred to have the SECONDARY SEARCH be performed by a crew different from the one that completed the PRIMARY SEARCH.
- g. Should a victim be located the Officer shall initiate rescue and notify the IC who will coordinate victim removal and treatment. Circumstances may exist where the victim is deceased and may need to be left where they are for investigation purposes. The IC will make the final determination of this. After a victim is brought out to safety the SECONDARY SEARCH should be completed.
- h. Upon completion of the SECONDARY SEARCH, the Search Officer will communicate to the Incident Commander: "Secondary Search, All Clear," in order to indicate that the secondary search benchmark is completed. This message will also be communicated by the IC to fire alarm.
- i. Multiple teams may be used to complete the PRIMARY SEARCH and SECONDARY SEARCH. When using multiple teams use radio designations that include numbers to help identify the teams. For example: Primary Search Team 1, Primary Search Team 2, etc.
- j. Once the assignment is complete the Company Officer(s) will notify the IC, give the IC a PAR (Personnel Accountability Report) and then report to REHAB or STAGING and await further instructions.

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