

Falmouth Fire-EMS Operating Guideline

Water Emergencies

Objective:

To provide guidelines for response to water emergencies.

General Information:

Falmouth Fire-EMS is bordered on the East by the Ocean, and also encompasses numerous bodies of water throughout the town. While water emergencies are not that common, they are possible and Falmouth Fire-EMS crews must be prepared.

Guidelines:

Cold Water Emergency

Falmouth Fire-EMS will respond to reports of a cold-water emergency with the district engine, an ambulance and a chief officer or duty officer. If there is reported or confirmed extrication needed, a 2nd due engine/tower is requested to respond to the scene. If our members are entering water or ice to perform a rescue a dedicated ambulance should be dispatched and assigned to rehab.

A. Role of District Engine:

- a. Scene Safety.
 - i. Protect the scene from oncoming traffic.
 - ii. Light up the scene
 - iii. Put out cones to alert other vehicles
- b. Establish Command (if not done yet)
- c. Investigation
 - i. Investigate the scene if not done yet.
 - ii. Determine number of potential patients
 - iii. Check for hazards
 1. Scene Hazards
 2. Vehicle Hazards
 3. Patient Hazards
 - iv. Determine if more resources are needed.
 1. Call dispatch for more resources if needed.
 - v. EMS
 1. Provide patient care if needed and trained.
 - vi. Extricate Victims using Reach –Throw-Row-Go.
 1. Reach for the victims. If they can be rescued by extending a hand do so. If not;
 2. Throw a line or ring to the victim. Pull them to safety if possible, or;

3. Row a boat if available to get to the victim(s). If this is not possible then;
4. Go to them if trained to do so. For water use PFD's. For cold water or ice rescue don a Cold Water Rescue Suit.
 - a. Rescue teams in Cold Water Rescue Suits work in minimum crew sizes of two (2).
 - i. If a crew of two (2) is going out on the ice or water than a rescue crew of two (2) needs to be on shore in cold water rescue suits.
 - b. Bring the victims to safety by tying rope onto them and using crew members on shore to help pull them to safety.

B. Role of 1st Ambulance

- a. Patient Care
 - i. Investigate & triage if necessary
 - ii. Treat patients
 1. Request assistance through command if needed.
 2. Consider the need to warm patients.
 - iii. Transport Patients.
- b. Documentation
 - i. Patient Care Report
 - ii. IMC Report

C. Role of 2nd Ambulance

- a. Rehab for Fire-EMS providers
 - i. Set up rehab area for responders
 - ii. Treat / Re-warm responders as needed.
 - iii. Transport responders to hospital if needed.

D. Role of Chief Officer / Duty Officer

- a. Establish Command if needed.
- b. Ensure overall scene safety.
 - i. Consider appointing a scene safety officer.
- c. Transfer Command if needed and already established.
- d. Assist Engine Company and EMS as needed.
- e. Call for more resources as needed.
- f. Ensure IMC report if completed.

E. Role of 2nd Due Engine/Tower (if needed):

- a. Assist the crews on scene as needed.

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