

Yakima County Fire District 12– Standard Operating Guidelines

SOG 4-4 – High Angle / Rope Rescue Operations

1. General

1.1 Purpose. The purpose of this Standard Operating Guideline is to provide guidelines and procedures for high angle and rope rescue operations. During high angle and rope rescue operations, judgment, experience, training and coordination are a necessity. High angle and rope rescue operations are a last chance solution to a rescue problem. They are a high-risk undertaking that places the victim and the rescuers in jeopardy. Therefore, when a decision has been made to perform a rope rescue, it shall be performed only by qualified personnel.

1.2 Scope. This Standard Operating Guideline shall apply to all members of Yakima County Fire District 12

1.3 Enforcement. Enforcement of this standard operating guideline is the responsibility of the District's officers. Any person deviating from the provisions of this guideline may be required, at the discretion of the officer in charge, to submit in writing, within five (5) calendar days, an explanation for such deviation to the requesting officer who will forward the explanation up the chain of command for further review.

2. Incident Response

2.1 The standard response to any high angle or rope rescue incident shall be an engine, rescue and command officer.

2.2 Upon receiving confirmation that a rope or high angle rescue is necessary, the alarm shall be upgraded to a residential structure assignment and the Tactical Rescue Team shall be requested to respond to a Level Two staging area.

3. Operations

3.1 Prior to initiating a rope or high angle rescue, the first arriving unit's size up should answer the following questions:

- Can the victim(s) be safely removed by other means (i.e. aerial ladder, ground ladder, etc.)?
- What is the victim(s)' location?
- What injuries have the victim(s) suffered?
- Is the victim(s) suspended or supported?

3.2 The Incident Commander shall appoint a Rescue Group Officer. This will normally be the company or chief officer that responds with the high angle or

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rope rescue team. This individual shall select the means and techniques to be used during the rescue attempt, after conferring with the Incident Commander.

3.3 After conferring with the Incident Commander, the Rescue Officer shall determine the number of personnel needed to attempt a given rescue or extrication. Each rescuer shall be on a separate rappel line, with a separate belay line (safety line) for each rappel line.

3.4 All non-essential personnel shall remain outside the rigging and operations area.

3.5 The Incident Commander may assign a Support Group to assist with equipment movement. This group should contain a member of the high angle or rope rescue team.

4. Safety

4.1 Responsibility for incident safety rests with the Incident Commander. The Incident Commander shall appoint a Safety Officer as conditions dictate.

4.2 Each member of the high angle or rope rescue team is responsible for maintaining a high level of knowledge and training to enable them to make an informed assessment of the involved risks in any high angle or rope rescue situation.

4.3 Each member of the high angle or rope rescue team shall exercise every safety precaution to afford the highest degree of safety to themselves and/or victims that is commensurate with the hazards of the situation in which they are operating.

4.4 The Rescue Officer is responsible to insure that no maneuver is attempted that would place a member of the high angle or rope rescue team in unusual jeopardy or peril, or that would exceed the capabilities of the equipment.