

## **FIREGROUND ACCOUNTABILITY SYSTEM**

### **Purpose:**

To maintain an accurate documentation of exposure times in hazardous environments and also to insure the safety and well being of all firefighters.

- ✚ **INCIDENT COMMANDER** - The highest ranking officer on the fireground who has assumed responsibility for all fire department actions, at the time of the incident, and works with EOC personnel when needed
- ✚ **SAFETY OFFICER** - Appointed by the incident commander (or at the time may be the incident commander) and is responsible for correct and accurate documentation of all exposures and rest time; may have appointed assistant to work staging areas. Reports to the incident commander.
- ✚ **AREA COMMANDER** - Assigned by the incident commander and may command any of numerous areas on, or off, the fireground itself. Assists in whatever capacity needed and reports to the incident commander.

### **Guideline:**

All firefighters are equipped with two (2) engraved accountability tags. The accountability tags are used to identify and account for each firefighter who enters the fireground, and to track their entry into interior sectors or rehabilitation sectors.

#### These tags should be used as follows:

Upon arrival at the fireground, one of the tags shall be removed immediately and placed on the key ring on the apparatus the firefighter is responding on. This tag documents that you are, or have been on the fireground. This enables the fireground safety officer to keep count of the number of personnel used at the scene.

Upon your entry into a hazardous environment, the second tag shall be pulled and given to the appointed safety officer or IC. The first in company should pull both tags, if they know they will encounter a hazardous environment before the arrival of a safety officer or IC. This action will document your time of entry and time of egress, for possible medical review at a later date. The maximum number of entries into a hazardous environment without rest time shall be limited to two (2). When you egress for the second time, you will be given your tag and you should then proceed to the rest and recuperation area give, the officer your tag and then rest and refresh yourself while waiting further orders. Under most circumstances, the minimum time spent in R & R shall be 30 minutes. This shall enable us to keep a fresh crew in rotation and thus make our Department more efficient.

Once the incident commander has officially ended the incident the safety officer should have no tags and all rings should be placed back on the apparatus. If a tag is left either place, then someone left without picking up his or her tags or he or she is still on the fireground somewhere and a search and rescue effort shall then be put into effect.

The safety officer, his assistant, and the area commanders shall then make a full report to the incident commander who will file all documentation after review.

## **CONCLUSION**

The safety and health of all firefighters is the reasoning behind this system. Accurate documentation can and will help in the future. However, this system will only work if we make it work for us. The cooperation of all firefighters is needed and appreciated.