



GALENA FIRE DEPARTMENT
Standard Operating Guideline
FIREFIGHTER REHABILITATION

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Purpose: To insure that no member of the Galena Fire Department will be required to continue emergency operations beyond safe levels of physical or mental endurance. To establish a reasonable procedure to lessen the risk of injury resulting from extended field operations under adverse conditions. This policy is in no way intended to diminish initial aggressive emergency operations.

This SOG shall apply to all emergency operations and prolonged training exercises where strenuous and/or prolonged physical activity or exposure to the rigors of firefighting exist, and in situations where the intensity of the fire or other emergency incident is compounded by excessive heat or cold exists. Rehab is a requirement, not an option.

It is the responsibility of the Incident Commander to ensure safety of personnel at all times, as well as to recognize the importance of firefighter rehabilitation as a significant remedy to firefighter illness, injury and possible death, during and after an emergency incident.

Responsibility for Establishing a Rehabilitation Sector

It is the responsibility of Command to make an early determination of situations requiring the implementation of a Rehab Sector in order to protect the health and safety of operating personnel based on the following:

- Where a moderate to long working time is envisioned.
- Where personnel are operating under adverse temperature or weather conditions.
- Where a moderate to large manpower force is indicated.
- Any other incident where Command deems necessary.

Responsibility of Company Officers

Company Officers are responsible for keeping crewmembers together as much as reasonably possible, on the fire scene and when entering and exiting the Rehab Sector

It is the responsibility of every company officer to continually monitor the condition of all crewmembers for signs of stress or fatigue. When these conditions are noted, the officer shall request reassignment of the company to the Rehab Sector. The "two air bottle rule" or 30-45 minutes depending on weather conditions and degree of exertion of work time is recommended as an acceptable level prior to mandatory rehabilitation. The command structure shall be utilized to request relief and reassignment of fatigued crews. When assigned, the company officer and entire crew will report to the Rehab Sector Commander as a team.

Establishment of Rehabilitation Sector

If EMS is not already responding or on scene, Command will notify dispatch to page out an EMS Unit for the exclusive purpose of establishing and coordinating a Rehabilitation Sector.

Command shall coordinate with EMS to determine options for a suitable placement of the rehab sector. Some considerations include:

- An area outside the incident perimeter or hazard zone.
- An area that allows for ambulance staging.
- Good access for ambulances, utility vehicles, (SCBA bottles, equipment, etc.), mobile canteen, shelter, etc.



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- Sufficient area to incorporate both a treatment area, rehab area, and firefighter holding area.
- An area which allows prompt reentry back into the emergency operation upon completion of rehab.
- Protection from extreme weather as reasonably possible.

Responsibilities of the Rehab Sector Commander

Once the Rehab Sector is established, EMS will designate a 'Sector Commander' with a radio designation 'Rehab'. The Rehab Sector Commander will maintain sole contact with the Incident Commander via radio throughout the incident.

Recommended maximum criteria for rehabilitation:

- Normal operations: 30 minutes in turnout gear with SCBA.
40 minutes in turnout gear without SCBA.
20 minutes of very strenuous work, even if no turnouts or SCBA is used.
- Extreme Conditions: 20 minutes in turnout gear with SCBA.
30 minutes in turnout gear without SCBA.
15 minutes of very strenuous work, even with no turnouts or SSBA used.

The EMS personnel in the Rehab Sector are responsible for maintaining the standards of NFPA 1584 and regional EMS criteria for vital sign parameters as it relates to firefighter rehabilitation. These include the following criteria:

- Pulse Rate: 60-100 beats per minute.
- Respiratory Rate: 12-16 breathes per minute.
- Blood Pressure: <140-160 systolic and <90-100 diastolic.
- Peripheral Capillary Oxygen Saturation (SpO2): 95-100 SpO2.

Vomiting, nausea, dizziness, light-headedness, or extreme pale skin color may indicate serious heat exposure.

The Rehab Sector Commander is responsible for ensuring that crews are placed on the list for reassignment as soon as they are able to actively participate in further operations.

The Rehab Sector Commander shall update Command periodically throughout the operation with pertinent information, including the identity of personnel/companies in Rehab and available for reassignment, plus the status of any personnel detained for medical reasons.

Firefighters and Officers in the Rehabilitation Sector

While assigned to rehab, each crewmember shall:

- Cooperate with the medical examination
- Hydrate and nourish in preparation for reassignment
- Check his/her SCBA and personal protective equipment for serviceability
- Standby within the Rehab Sector while awaiting further assignment

When all crewmembers are refreshed, rested, medically cleared, and all SCBAs and personal protective equipment have been deemed serviceable, the Company Officer shall report to the Rehab Branch Officer as available for reassignment.

The Rehab Sector Commander shall release companies to specific assignment as directed by Command, provided that personnel have medically cleared. Companies may be reassigned to incident operations, other sectors, or released from the scene, per the Incident Commander.