



GALENA FIRE DEPARTMENT  
Standard Operating Guideline  
**SALVAGE**

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**Purpose:** To reduce damage from fire, smoke, water, heat, cold, or weather during and after a fire or other emergency.

A firefighter's duty is not to simply put out the fire, but to make every effort to salvage a fire victim's belongings both during the fire and after the primary fire is extinguished.

#### **Understand the Impact of the Contents**

- The damaged contents of a building can present serious safety hazards.
- Hoarding
- High piled stock
- Non-palletized storage
- Stock on weakened shelves
- Wet material that absorbs water adding weight to the contents
- Unstable or reactive liquids, solids
- Etiologic or radioactive materials
- Opened or leaking tanks of liquid
- File cabinets, safes
- Heavy machinery especially if mounted above floor level
- Overhead hazards include signs, marquees, decorations, or roof mounted equipment.

#### **Salvaging Property**

The effective use of salvage covers and other available equipment is restricted only by the creativity and skill of the firefighting conducting the salvage operation. Various chutes and channels can be created for the removal of water, just as various types and sizes of salvage covers are available to protect property during and after the fire. Proper training in these techniques will ensure a successful salvage operation.

Salvage procedures require careful preparation before they are performed. The success or failure of salvage and overhaul can be directly attributed to a high degree of training and planning, and the extent to which firefighters follow appropriate safety guidelines.

#### **Salvage Safety Considerations**

- Routes - Establish clear routes or traffic lanes when hauling debris out of a structure
- Night-time operations require lights that should be placed to illuminate the working area
- Tripping hazards
- Holes
- Stairways and other danger areas
- Ensure that a water route is not creating negative salvage issues in other parts of the structure