CARVER FIRE DEPARTMENT

Standard Operating Guidelines

Section 5.08 - Orientation **June 15, 2013**

1.0 PURPOSE

This SOG is not a procedural document as much as it is a welcoming and explanatory letter that is given to our recruits to start them on the right path in the fire service. Thought not a true SOG, it is a document to help guide our new members going forward in their new life as firefighters. It is provided here in letter form as a part of the entire recruit training program package.

Congratulations, you have just committed yourself to front line duty in one of the worlds most honored but hazardous civilian occupations. It is the duty of every fire department to save lives and reduce injuries and property losses when fires occur.

You have just become a member of an organization rich in heritage of dedication, unselfish sacrifice and inspired human action that has been accumulated over three centuries. Each person in the fire service inherits the traditions of the past and in part, the firefighter's actions will shape the future of the fire department.

You as a Carver Firefighter will be one of the million and a half men and women who fight fires in 22,000 call and volunteer fire departments that protect the town, districts and wide open spaces that cover the area between the North Pole and the Gulf of Mexico.

You are engaged in a profession that is invited to disasters and disasters are news. It is not all rewarding and exciting. As a call firefighter, it will mean working two jobs and attending meetings and drills. Falling walls, fire and smoke and the discomforts of cold, snowy, rainy, and hot weather are all dangers involved in firefighting.

Because it will be a disaster situation, conditions are not always favorable. There is hard, fast work that will drain your energy and test your endurance. It is a job that will bring you in contact with people in emergency situations. You will not just fight fires but will work to prevent them. You will be called on to assist in cave-ins, building collapses, auto accidents, hurricanes, aircraft crashes, civil disturbances, freeing trapped persons and explosions.

The emergency list is unlimited. When people have an emergency situation, they think of the Fire Department first. You will become involved in situations that will test you psychological skills and diplomacy. You will be appreciated by some and scorned by others.

You are a public servant and because you are a firefighter, you will be expected to calmly evaluate the problem and bring it to a successful conclusion. You will come in contact with all types of people. You will know sincere thanks, human kindness, misunderstandings, sadness, helplessness and disappointment. You will see and know unrestricted emotion, destruction, foolishness, pain and death. From the first time you enter an emergency situation until your last day of service, the public will expect heroics from you. You will be a good neighbor, a hero to small children and respected person endowed with a traditional trust that will be tested many times.

You are no superman, but much of the public will expect you to be. In an emergency situation more will be demanded of you than you can sometimes achieve. Like any other person you have your limits. Accept them. Learn all you can from your training. Observe and study on your own. New and more complex hazards are created everyday.

Some you will learn about through your fire departments informational bulletins, some by reading the latest fire service literature, others the hard way. Firefighting is a constant learning job.

Your training began the first day that you walked into the fire station and it will continue until the last day you serve in the fire service. The education and training of a firefighter covers such a broad spectrum of subjects and is so diversified that you will never be able to say that you are completely trained.

How to Succeed in the Fire Service

If any aspect of your indoctrination is not clear to you, now is the time for you to ask your supervisor or the recruitment and selection officer specific questions concerning those areas in which your information is not complete. Like most other occupations there are certain codes of ethic and standards of behavior with which you will be expected to comply. If you sincerely desire to succeed in the fire service, the following suggestions will be important to you. They will broaden your personality by not only applying them to the fire department but also to your life situation. They will help you.

1. Learn and be sincerely interested in and dedicated to your job. What you are able to contribute to and receive from the fire service is only limited by your own degree of personal commitment. Learn to assume responsibility for duties that are specifically assigned to you. Do your best to analyze and profit by your mistakes and the mistakes of others.

You must forget your selfish interests. There is no job in the world which permits you to have unrestricted expression of selfish interest. In all jobs, in all associations and in all future contacts, you must learn to give up a little of your personal feeling for the cause of the group.

The fire department or fire company is not the product of one's individual effort, nor is it for the glory of a single firefighter. Cooperation means that each person is willing to work in the position assigned and perform the duties of that position in the most capable manner.

2. Be loyal to the department and to your co-workers. You are part of the department and it is a part of you. Criticism of the department is in fact a criticism of yourself, so endeavor to understand and be prepared to defend the policy and functions of the department. Be constantly aware that you are a representative of your fire department, so be certain that your dress and actions are a credit to this honorable position.

3. Be aggressive in the pursuit of all education and training opportunities. You are never fully trained. The achievement of each educational objective only reveals the path to the ever-increasing body of knowledge with which a firefighter must be familiar if he is to excel in the challenging profession.

4. Be cautious. Guard your speech both on and off duty. As a member of the fire department it is expected that you may possess information which should not be revealed. Handle privileged communication as such, but always be willing to discuss the purposes, functions, history and traditions of the fire service. Since you are expected to be knowledgeable in the areas of fire prevention, fire protection and fire fighting, be certain that the opinions which you express are those of the fire department.

5. Be the type of person who inspires confidence and respect. Do this by being honest, fair and trustworthy in all your dealings with others. Be able to accept criticism graciously and accept praise, honors and advancement modestly. You must assume that your activities are being observed and evaluated by those charged with this responsibility and that your performance as seen by your supervisors will place you in some rank or order for promotion.

Training

From now on it will be a constant learning process to keep up with the changing conditions and challenges that you will face. Your promotional advancements and efficiency will depend on how much you put forth in the pursuit of learning. Your ability to work under emergency conditions will be guided by your training. Confidence is gained when you learn the job well.

Training will consist of classroom study and drilling. Drilling will be the practical applications of the classroom techniques and theories and the rehearsing of pre-fire planning or courses of action. Drilling is the act of rehearsing any action or procedure in a safe manner until it can be performed without error or hesitation. Drill and study may be monotonous and tiresome to you, but they are a part of the game and are necessary in order to perfect the fundamental and execution of your job. They are also very much a part of your own protection and safety. Without drill, precision and perfection are unobtainable and success impossible. The mental satisfaction of good teamwork and saving property or lives will more than make up for all the tedious study and exhaustive drills. Remember, firefighters function simultaneously at three levels.

1. Firefighters are students of the position to which they aspire.

2. Firefighters are executors of the position to which they are assigned.

3. Firefighters are teachers of those with whom they interact.

Teamwork

The firefighter is called upon in many different kinds of emergencies. In many of these emergencies time will be important. The difference between the saving of a life or the controlling of the fire will depend on time. You will have no control over delayed alarms but you will have control in responding quickly, safely, and in being prepared to do the job. You will be taught individual basic techniques in the handling of axes, pike poles, power tools and other equipment. To get the job done properly, safely and quickly and to save time on some decision making, fire departments generally have certain basic procedures planned prior to an emergency situation, such as rescue and first aid methods, forcible entry methods, hose, layouts, ladder procedures, etc., that require group or team action. The precision of this operation requires teamwork, the smooth working together of individuals to accomplish a task that is important to the total operation. To work together under conditions where the safety of one member is dependent upon the action of another requires teamwork. The precision of the operation will require teamwork. To accomplish the goal of your job will require teamwork. How the emergency is resolved will depend on teamwork. Every good team has confidence. Confidence is belief in yourself and in your team. Studying and drilling as a team will develop confidence. The strength of the team is the combined strength of each firefighter who composes the team. It is possible to evaluate the strength of a team by evaluating the firefighters. Team spirit is the enthusiasm developed through satisfactory teamwork. How you function to relieve the emergency will be based on your ability as a part of the team. Do not always resent correction and criticism from leadership because you may not understand the reason.

If you are criticized, it may be because you are a unit of the team and others see great potential in your ability. Everyone must work for a common end - the saving of lives and the prevention and extinguishment of fire. You are not only a part of the team but it is also your team. Your contribution is important to its proper function. This means that every member must be obedient to the orders and plans which are formulated. Teamwork is based on the following factors.

1. All members must have a common desire for a successful team
2. Each member must contribute to the team
3. Members must have two-way communication

Rules to Follow

1. Do not speed while responding to fires!
2. Red lights require a written permit from the Fire Chief.
3. Red lights may only be mounted or displayed at dashboard level or below
4. Red lights are to be used only within the bounds of the Town of Carver while responding to the fire emergency.
5. Do not park your vehicles too close to the fire scene, make sure there is room for responding fire trucks, etc.
6. Do not follow fire trucks out of town.
7. Do not enter a house if you are not needed inside.
8. Do not make comments about somebody's house or property, you represent the Fire Department, so act accordingly.

YOU ARE EXPECTED TO

1. Learn the Town's streets and roads.
2. Learn the fire departments trucks and equipment.

3. Learn the fire departments procedures.
4. Follow orders at a fire scene.
5. ***THINK SAFETY!***