CARVER FIRE DEPARTMENT

Standard Operating Guidelines

Section 4.19 – Dumpster Fires **June 15, 2013**

1.0 PURPOSE

The purpose of this guideline is to assure the efficient extinguishment of fires involving residential, commercial and industrial dumpster, while maintaining the highest level of safety for all responding personnel.

1.1 SCOPE

This guideline shall apply to all dumpsters that are on fire. For the purposes of this guideline, the absence of smoke or flames shall not constitute sufficient evidence that a fire condition does not exist.

1.2 SAFETY

01. Members engaged in firefighting operations and rescue shall wear full protective clothing and SCBA. Protective clothing should not be removed until the possibility of re-ignition has been removed and overhaul is completed.

02. Operate with the wind at your back, if possible.

03. Contents in the dumpster may be water reactive, explosive or an oxidizing agent.

04. Class A foam metered at .3 percent shall be used

05. Members engaged in firefighting operations need to be especially aware of personnel safety during overhaul operations.

06. PPE, tools, equipment, and apparatus may have to be decontaminated after an incident involving a dumpster.

1.3 OPERATIONS

01. Positioning of Apparatus

As with any emergency scene, apparatus placement at trash receptacle (dumpster) fires is crucial to the overall ease and success of the operation. Driver Operators shall position their apparatus at the direction of the on-board Officer or the IC on scene. Generally, the suppression apparatus is placed as close to the actual fire, as conditions safely allow.

Exceptions to the "rule" always exist, and circumstances may dictate otherwise, but in all cases, the IC on scene has the authority to manipulate apparatus placement.

The following items shall be considered when placing apparatus at a motor vehicle fire scene:

A. Position the apparatus uphill from the involved dumpster to prevent chemicals and contaminants (hazards) from running toward the apparatus.

B. Position the apparatus upwind from the involved dumpster to minimize smoke exposure to the apparatus operator.

C. Overall apparatus placement shall provide for a safe work environment for the fire crews working the incident.

D. Assure sufficient room for additional apparatus, ambulance etc.

02. Attack

A. The primary attack line shall be chosen by the riding Officer or IC at the scene. The line size and length are based on conditions at the scene such as size, type, and contents of the container involved, as well as the distance the fire apparatus can safely operate from the involved container, etc.

B. Additional lines may be deployed at the discretion of the IC. Size and length again, chosen by an Officer, based on fire conditions.

C. The primary attack line shall approach the container from the front and utilize a narrow fog pattern concentrated on the container for cooling purposes. At a safe distance, the water stream shall be directed to the main body of fire to facilitate a quick knockdown. Care should be taken to avoid "blowing" materials and contaminants from the dumpster during a direct attack. At that point, an indirect direct attack may be more effective.

D. Class A foam should be used at trash container fires and metered at .3 percent

03. Attack Guidelines

A. The IC should attempt to determine the contents of the dumpster.

B. Determine water supply and if additional assistance is needed.

C. If the dumpster is attached or against a building you may want to attempt to move the dumpster from the building, if possible.

D. If the dumpster is a part of an attached compactor unit, a fire suppression crew should be deployed to the interior of the building to protect the building from extension of the fire.

E. The minimum size attack hose line shall be 1-3/4". The fire should be attacked from the upwind direction.

F. Fire suppression ports on the container should be utilized whenever practical for extinguishment.

05. Containment

A. It may be necessary to control run-off if the contents of the dumpster are deemed hazardous materials.

B. Utilization of dikes, booms, and containment areas may be necessary. Hose lines, absorbent pads, sand, as well as other containment methods may be deployed .

C. The IC may activate the State Haz-Mat Team at his or her discretion based on the incident conditions, materials involved, etc.