



# STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINES FOR ROPE GUIDED SEARCH PROCEDURES

*“NAME OF FIRE DEPARTMENT*

**PURPOSE:**

To afford all fire department members a clear and unified roped guided search system guideline when operating at incidents when deployed.

**POLICY:**

The guidelines listed below will define the procedures to be utilized by the members of the “Name of Fire Department when deploying the “Name of Fire Department’s Search Rope System to conduct large area searches. All members will be responsible to follow these operational guidelines as written. This policy shall not preclude any member from deploying a search rope or personal rope during fire suppression activities.

**SEARCH ROPE SYSTEM:**

The search rope system shall comprise of the following:

1. Main rope bag with 200’ of 3/8” Kevlar rope. The rope is preset with knots and a ring at twenty five (25) foot intervals. The ring is toward the exit and the knot is toward the interior. The knots increase at the rate of one knot per twenty five feet.

1 ring & 1 knot = 25’ (feet)

1 ring & 2 knots = 50’

1 ring & 3 knots = 75’

1 ring & 4 knots = 100’

1 ring & 5 knots = 125’

1 ring & 6 knots = 150’

1 ring & 7 knots = 175’

2. Two (2) individual search bags with 25’ of Kevlar rope on a self-retracting spool. Each bag is marked with the appropriate company identification and an additional line number of #1 or #2. (e.g. ““NAME OF. T-2 #1”)
3. A company identification tag. (e.g. ““Name of Fire Department Search Line Truck 2”) This tag shall be located at the anchor point end of the rope.

## **GENERAL GUIDELINES:**

1. A search line shall be deployed any time that conventional search procedures will not be advantageous to the operation. The following occupancies shall require the use of a search line, Large Private Dwellings, Warehouse, Large Retail Establishments, Assembly Occupancies, Industrial Occupancies, Educational Facilities and Hi-Rise Occupancies (Commercial and Residential). A rope guided search may be deployed at the discretion of the Incident Commander, Company Officer, or member assigned to the search operation.
2. Rope guided large area searches shall not be conducted with less than four (4) members assigned to the search team. In the event of limited manpower, rope guided searches may be performed with a three (3) member team.
3. Anchor points shall be established outside of the hazardous environment prior to commencing a search operation. Anchor points shall be substantial objects that can not be moved. When operating in Hi-Rise occupancies, the anchor point shall be established in the stairwell, one floor below the floor being searched. Anchor point shall be established approximately 3' above grade to ensure that the rope is easily identifiable.
4. All entry points from where a search rope is being deployed shall be illuminated

## **INCIDENT COMMANDER:**

1. The incident command system shall be utilized per department policy.
2. The incident commander or his designee shall maintain a log sheet and perform five (5) minute time checks. The checks shall request the following information from the search team leader: location, distance on the line and air bottle status of the team members.

## **SEARCH TEAM / MEMBERS & POSITIONS:**

The following positions shall be adhered to at all times a large area search is conducted.

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|--------------|--|
| Position #1: | <i>Team Leader.</i> This member will be the company officer or member in charge of the search team. This member will be the lead position responsible for carrying the main search line bag, a thermal imaging camera and a hand tool.   |
| Position #2: | <i>Line Tender.</i> This member will follow the Team Leader and be assigned the main search line. The responsibilities will be to assist in keeping track of the team's position on the line, keep the line taut during searches off of the main line and maintain communications with team members. |
| Position #3: | <i>Search #1:</i> This member will follow the line tending member and be assigned individual search line #1. The responsibilities will be to perform searches off of the main line to the right side of the line and carry a personal light and hand tool.   |
| Position #4: | <i>Search #2:</i> This member will follow the member assigned as Search #1. The responsibilities will be to perform searches off of the main line to the left side of the line and carry a personal light and hand tool.   |

In the absence of a 4<sup>th</sup> firefighter, the position of the Line Tender shall be eliminated. The duties of the line tender shall be assumed by the Team Leader in addition to his pre-assigned responsibilities.

*For further information please contact Englewood Fire Department*