

Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Service

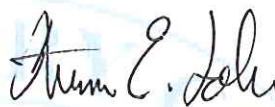
Fire Chief's General Order

Rescinded on 7/22/15 NUMBER: 13-13

December 3, 2013

TO: All MCFRS Personnel

FROM: Fire Chief Steven E. Lohr



SUBJECT: Rescind Sec. 4.X. Basement Section, Policy #24-07 AMII
SOP for SAFE STRUCTURAL FIREFIGHTING OPERATIONS

Effective immediately, MCFRS is rescinding Sec. 4. X. Basement Fires in Single Family, Duplex, and Townhouse Structures, on pp. 39-40 of the SOP for Safe Structural Firefighting Operations Policy #24-07 AMII, as amended, dated 12/1/05.

- All other sections of the *SOP for Safe Structural Firefighting Operations*, as amended by *FCGO 11-03, Rapid Intervention Company (RIC) Amendment* (amending the SOP's Secs. VII, VIII, and IX), dated 2/1/2011, and *FCGO 11-04, All-Hazards MAYDAY Procedure* (amending the SOP's Sec. III), also dated 2/1/2011, remain in effect.
- When units locate a basement fire, they must use **the most direct means to access and attack the fire**. The point of entry by the first engine must be announced, as required in **Sec. IV. d. (p.13)** of the SOP.
- Additional units will then adjust their tactical assignments, if necessary.

For further clarification, please contact Operations Division Chief Goldstein.

Attachment: SOP For Safe Structural Firefighting Operations, Sec. X



MONTGOMERY COUNTY FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE POLICY AND PROCEDURE

Subject SOP FOR SAFE STRUCTURAL FIREFIGHTING OPERATIONS	Number 24-07AMII
Originating Department MONTGOMERY COUNTY FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE	Effective Date 12/1/05

2. **Officer.** Establish a Command Post and assume Command of the incident scene, in accordance with Section 4.VI. of this SOP, and the MCFRS *Incident Command System*.
3. **Equipment.** Wear appropriate identifier vest, and have immediate access to full PPE and SCBA.

X. BASEMENT FIRES IN SINGLE FAMILY, DUPLEX, AND TOWNHOUSE STRUCTURES

- a. Effective size-up and communication at a basement fire are critical to the success of this operation. The location and extent of the fire, the type of building construction, and points of access to the basement must be determined early. If the fire is known to be in the basement, the first arriving engine officer must quickly determine if there is an exterior access to the basement by checking for a basement entrance visually, or based on reports from other **units**. An exterior door most often will be in the rear of the structure.
- b. When attacking a basement fire, the objectives are to protect the primary search, and to keep the fire from extending vertically by containment and extinguishment.
- c. Normally, the first due engine **crew** will stretch the first line to the first floor to contain the fire, and protect the occupants and searching firefighters by closing the basement door and/or using a hose stream aimed at the ceiling over the stairway. **THIS HOSE STREAM MUST NOT BE DIRECTED DOWNWARD INTO THE STAIRWELL.** The officer advancing this line must carefully size up the structure's integrity when determining whether the line should be positioned at the top of the stairs, or from a position closer to the entrance door. The first due **unit officer** must notify the **IC** when this hose line is in place, and confirm that the **crew** is maintaining its position on the first floor.
- d. The **IC** will direct the second or third due engine **crew** to advance a hose line to the exterior basement doorway for attack. The **IC** will ensure that the engine **crew** with the attack line at the exterior basement entrance does not begin the attack until the first line is confirmed to be in position and ready, and the first due engine **crew** has confirmed that it is not advancing down the basement stairs.



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- e. If the first due engine crew's position becomes untenable and it cannot hold its position on the first floor, the crew must notify Command so that any crews operating above it can evacuate before the engine crew's withdrawal. The engine crew will then take a position outside, normally at the main entrance, and attempt to prevent the fire from extending to the rest of the dwelling from that location until the basement fire can be knocked down. The IC will also consider removing the crews from positions above the basement once the primary search is completed, even if the basement fire is not under control. The first arriving engine officer and/or the IC will also consider taking this position initially (and delaying the primary search) during fires in heavily involved basements, especially in dwellings of lightweight construction.

- f. Basement fires sometimes must be extinguished with the first attack line advanced down the interior stairs, if an exterior entrance into the basement is not accessible, or if there is no exterior entrance at all. The first due engine officer must first determine if it is safe to descend the basement stairs for a direct attack on the fire by evaluating the structure's stability, the life hazard, and the fire and heat conditions at the top of the stairs. If attack will begin through the interior basement stairs, the officer will transmit this information to the IC, who will then ensure that no other hose lines are advanced through, or operated into, any exterior basement openings from opposing positions.

- g. If the interior basement stairs cannot be used for an attack, and there is no outside basement entrance, the IC will direct crews to other available alternatives.

Sec. 5. **Implementation and Enforcement.** The Fire Chief is the implementation and enforcement authority for all policies and regulations of the Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Service.

Sec.6. **Effective Date.** This policy is effective on December 1, 2005.

Approved:

Thomas W. Carr, Jr., Chief
Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Service
SOP Safe structure ff ops 24-07AMII bf wp 11-14-05

12/1/05
Date

APPROVED AS TO FORM AND LEGALITY,
OFFICE OF COUNTY ATTORNEY
BY Robert O. M... ..
Montgomery County Attorney
DATE 12/1/05