



Training Standard

North County Technical Rescue Team

TOPIC:

Water Rescue

PURPOSE:

Water Rescue Operations present a significant danger to fire department personnel. These types of incidents are extremely dynamic and can easily have emergency personnel swept up by them. The safe and effective management of these operations require special considerations.

DEFINITIONS:

- **Current:** A concentrated flowing of water.
- **Downstream:** Where the water is going.
- **Helical Flow:** A circular, rolling flow of water near the banks
- **River Right:** The right side of the river as you look downstream.
- **River Left:** The left side of the river as you look downstream.
- **Strainer:** Anything that allows water, but not solid objects like boats and people, to pass through.
- **Upstream:** Where the water is coming from.

TACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS:

I. Arrive on Scene



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A. The Primary Assessment

1. Size up the incident
2. Broadcast report on conditions to dispatch
3. Establish Command
4. Request additional resources as necessary
5. Obtain reporting / responsible party for additional information

B. Documentation

1. Consider the use of a Water Rescue Tactical Worksheet to document actions at the incident

II. Pre-Entry Operations

A. Make the general area safe for operation

1. Assign Safety Officer
 - (a) Trained and qualified in Water Rescue
 - (b) First in Company Officer until delegated



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2. Establish perimeters
 - (a) Exclusion zone
 - (b) Support zone

B. Make the rescue area safe for operation

1. All personnel within 10' of the water must have the appropriate PPE
2. Hazard Assessment
 - (a) Footing
 - (b) Depth of water
 - (c) Current velocity
 - (d) Helical flow
 - (e) Objects floating down stream
 - (f) Strainers
3. Hazard Reduction
 - (a) Situational awareness
 - (b) Upstream spotter
 - (c) Downstream safety

III. Rescue Operations

- A. Assign Rescue Operations
- B. Assign Downstream Safety
- C. Assign Upstream Spotter
- D. Determine tactical priorities based on level of risk, low to high
 1. Reach
 2. Throw
 3. Row - boat
 4. Go - swim



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5. Helo – helicopter
- E. Assign additional positions as needed
 1. River Right, Division
 2. River Left, Division
 3. Rescue Group
 4. Rigging Group
 5. Rescue Swimmer
 6. Boat Operations
- E. Assign Medical Group
 1. Might be responsible for patient packaging



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- (a) Determine chief complaint
- (b) Treat immediate life threatening injuries
- (c) Perform appropriate and necessary interventions
- (d) Package in appropriate device

IV. Incident Termination

A. Preparation for termination

1. Personnel accountability
2. In the event of a fatality or serious injury
 - (a) Leave all equipment in place
 - (b) Contact agency having jurisdiction for investigation

B. Decontaminate all equipment and place back in service

C. Take water sample for testing if hazmat potential exists

D. Turn secured property back over to the responsible party

E. Terminate Command

1. Consider debriefing for rescue personnel

F. Complete all necessary documentation