

10.4 COLD WATER/ICE RESCUE OPERATIONS

- 10.4.1 Cold Water/Ice Rescue Operations shall be conducted with fire fighter safety and survival considered and rescue of survivable victims as a priority. Cold Water/Ice Rescue Operations for animals shall be conducted with fire fighter safety and survival as a priority.
- 10.4.2. The philosophy of operations for Cold Water/Ice Rescue, whenever possible shall include; **REACH, THROW, THEN GO**. The IC shall evaluate the circumstances and develop a strategy that utilizes reaching the victim(s) with poles or other devices first, utilizing throwable devices second, and finally, if necessary, deploying a trained fire fighter rescuer onto the ice or into the water utilizing various other tools to perform a rescue. The IC shall ensure adequate resources have arrived on the scene before implementing GO operations so as not to place the victim in further jeopardy or to unnecessarily risk fire fighter safety.
- 10.4.3 The IC shall ensure that adequate scene control is established soliciting assistance from police and other agencies as necessary so as not to allow untrained and unequipped would be rescuers from becoming victims. The IC shall ensure a **HOT ZONE** and a **COLD ZONE** is established. The **HOT ZONE** is defined as the area including the water and the corridor adjacent to the water where access is being made. The **COLD ZONE** is any area around the emergency scene where personnel are not directly in danger of being exposed to the ice or cold water or interfacing directly with the rescue operations. When possible, the IC should establish the **HOT ZONE/COLD ZONE** perimeter by utilizing barrier tape, cones, or other control devices.
- 10.4.4 The IC shall ensure that all fire department personnel operating at the scene of a Cold Water/Ice Rescue incident will wear proper PPE for each specific assignment. If necessary, a Safety Officer will be designated to assist with this task. Fire department personnel entering into the water or on onto the ice shall don the Ice Rescue Suit (IRS). Fire department personnel utilizing a boat shall at least don a PFD and should don an IRS if available. All other personnel operating within the **HOT ZONE**, including personnel from other agencies shall don a PFD. Personnel tending ropes shall also be required to wear gloves.
- 10.4.5 The IC shall "special call" an Underwater Recovery Team when a Cold Water/Ice Rescue is confirmed.
- 10.4.6 The IC shall consider expanding the incident management system to include at least the following key positions: a) Rescue Operations, b) Staging Division, c) Safety Officer, d) Planning (function) Officer, e) Accountability Officer, and f) Rehab Division.

- 10.4.7 The IC shall be responsible for assigning a member of the emergency response organization to conduct an interview of witnesses to determine the *number of victims, where they were last observed, description of clothing, and any other information* that might be helpful in completing an effective rescue. The member or members assigned for interview information shall become part of the planning function and may be assigned as the Planning Officer by the IC.
- 10.4.8 The Staging Division shall ensure incoming apparatus and other emergency vehicles are logged in and that access to the emergency scene is kept clear. The Staging Division should ensure apparatus in staging prepares their cab heaters to facilitate rehab for fire fighters and other emergency responders.
- 10.4.9 The IC shall ensure, or delegate to the Rescue Operations Officer, that a *FAST team is assembled in IRS for the rescuer or rescuers that become deployed* for the original mission.
- 10.4.10 Four basic signals shall be used between a deployed rescuer and the line tender(s):

ARM SIGNALS

- **STOP = Arm straight up with a fist.**
- **SLAKEN THE LINE = Wave arm up and down vertically.**
- **SLOWLY PULL & TAKE UP TENSION = Arm up making circular motion.**
- **RESCUER NEEDS HELP = Arm up sweeping side-to-side over the head.**

LINE-PULL SIGNALS

- **STOP = One Pull.**
- **SLAKEN THE LINE = Two Pulls.**
- **SLOWLY PULL & TAKE UP TENSION = Three Pulls.**
- **RESCUER NEEDS HELP = Four Pulls, Four Pulls repeated.**

WHISTLE SIGNALS

- **STOP = One Blast.**
- **SLAKEN THE LINE = Two Blasts.**
- **SLOWLY PULL & TAKE UP TENSION = Three Blasts.**
- **RESCUER NEEDS HELP = Four Blasts, Four Blasts repeated.**

- 10.4.11 Rescuers reaching a victim shall use due care when handling victims suffering from hypothermia. Coordination with EMS personnel is essential when transferring the patient from the **hot zone** to the **cold zone**.

- 10.4.12 No member of the fire department shall perform a high-risk task for which they have not been trained. Any assigned fire department rescuer, may, at anytime, decline participation in the rescue evolution due to extreme danger, physical or mental incapacity, or another serious safety issue.
- 10.4.13 Rescuers, after being deployed over ice or in the water shall be required to report to Rehab for re-warming and medical evaluation.
- 10.4.14 It is essential that the IC use the WTFD IMS Work Sheet for a Cold Water/Ice Rescue Operation. If necessary, the IC may designate a member of the emergency response organization to fill in the work sheet during the incident. The IC should anticipate at least all three fire companies, the police department, the ambulance association, and the medics, to be involved in this type of rescue operation. Coordination of all response agencies to facilitate a safe and effective rescue rests with the fire department incident commander.