

15.21 Scope:

Our area is prone to heavy thunderstorms and/or tornadoes. In any emergency, this Department must have a basic plan of attack to preserve or lessen the effect of the storm on life and property. Storm periods can be divided into three basic phases: storm preparations, storm period, and post storm period. It is essential that Department members understand terminology used by the National Weather Service. Watches indicate that weather conditions are conducive for the formation of storms and the public should expect bad weather. Warnings indicate that a storm is in progress and that persons should take immediate cover.

15.2101 Storm Preparation:

While under the storm watch, members should expect threatening weather. Members' families should be prepared for threatening weather. Stations should be prepared to respond for emergencies associated with storms. Specialized equipment such as emergency or standby generators should be inspected, tested and operationally ready.

Winter Storms – If the Township has declared a Snow Emergency, personnel are encouraged to remain at all three of the fire stations and provide personnel, equipment and apparatus in an emergency. This request can be made by the OIC if deemed necessary.

During the daytime hours that the career staff is available, they shall be deployed to the three stations to provide a driver for proper apparatus response or another firefighter for any emergency in that section of the Township.

15.2102 Storm Period:

During any storm, members must care for and provide shelters for their family. This should be done prior to the storm period, as there normally are requests for assistance from the Fire Department. If the winds exceed 50 mph or conditions place the firefighters and equipment at risk, vehicles should not leave the station unless absolutely necessary. Keep radio traffic to a MINIMUM.

15.2103 Post Storm Period:

Equipment shall be placed back in service as soon as possible. Damaged or broken equipment must be reported to the appropriate company officer. A report of damage shall be prepared and submitted to the Fire Chief indicating the damage and any loss that occurred. In most cases, the station should operate independently, one for each section of the Township. Incident numbers are not critical during significant storm damage, and shall be obtained at a later time. The vehicle officer should keep a written log of activities and locations served.

15.2104 Tornado:

A request for the Fire Department after a tornado presents a unique challenge. Buildings may be partially damaged or destroyed creating a collapse hazard. The first priority shall be to conduct a search for possible victims in buildings, structures, or vehicles that have been struck. A minimum number of firefighters shall be used to conduct searches. Any persons found should be removed from the building if possible and their injuries assessed and treatment rendered to the ability of the crews on the scene. Persons may have to be treated where they are found. Department crews must also be aware that ambulances may not be available due to their demand elsewhere in the community, or they may have been hit by the tornado and disabled. An Incident Command Post shall be established to control

resources. The Command Post may be located in the Emergency Operation Center located in the Municipal Bldg. or one of the stations.

15.2105 Utility Control:

All utilities shall be controlled as soon as possible to prevent any unwanted escalation of the situation. It will be imperative that we work closely with all effected utility companies to assist us with controlling the situation. Natural gas must be shut off at the meter or in the street as broken gas lines in the building can cause an accumulation of gas in pockets or areas. Electricity must be controlled to prevent electrical equipment from arcing and introducing ignition sources into the building causing fires. Water must be shut off as accumulation of water in lower areas or on floors can drown trapped occupants or contribute to collapse of the building killing all occupants and rescue personnel. Once utilities have been controlled, this must be communicated to command.

15.2106 Rescue:

The rescue of endangered occupants will be of the utmost concern. Rescues in heavily damaged or partially collapsed structures will require careful consideration. Shoring equipment, lifting equipment, or even heavy equipment may be required to facilitate rescue. The rescue should be carried out, if possible, with medical personnel present to care for trapped victims. Rescue methods used will vary with the situation; however they will be carried out with safety of the firefighters in mind and so as not to compromise the safety of any endangered occupants. If needed and available, request the Township of Spring Fire Department to be dispatched for their collapse rescue equipment and personnel.

15.2107 Securement:

All buildings shall be secured after they have been searched. Buildings shall be marked or identified in some way that they have been searched so as not to waste time and resources researching buildings.

15.2108 Fires:

Fires as a result of storms shall be combated as outlined by our emergency operation procedures for that occupancy.

15.2109 Mutual Aid:

In the situation of a Township wide severe storm, it may be necessary to request Mutual-aid from area agencies to assist us with the tasks that must be completed in a timely manner. Mutual-aid assistance should be requested when it appears that additional resources will be needed beyond the capabilities of our agency. A staging area should be set up and an officer from a mutual-aid company assigned to be in charge of the staging area. The Incident Commander can then request the resources from staging and direct them to the area where they are needed.