

Subject:	EMERGENCY FIREGROUND SIGNAL
Section:	PPG# 4400.36
Chapter:	Operations
Effective Date:	6/12/03

1.0 POLICY

- 1.1 It shall be the policy of McLane/ Black Lake Fire Department to maintain a system by which to notify personnel of the need to immediately ABANDON a structure or area for protection of their personal safety. The system shall have the ability to quickly communicate this need under any emergency scene condition and also provides for the secondary or back-up means of emergency notification.
- 1.2 All personnel shall be aware of such a system and the need for immediate action on their part to ABANDON any structure or hazardous area and quickly account for all personnel operating in the structure or hazardous area.

2.0 DEFINITIONS

- 2.1 **Abandon:** To immediately exit the structure or hazardous area due to safety concerns for emergency personnel, without regard for removing hoselines or any other equipment.
- 2.2 **Evacuate:** To remove occupants of a structure or hazardous area in an organized and usually pre-planned manner.
- 2.3 **Withdraw:** To exit the structure or hazardous area, removing hoselines and emergency equipment due only to a change in strategy. (Offensive to defensive, etc.)
- 2.4 **Emergency Traffic Tone:** A high/low tone generated over the primary operational frequency which indicates emergency radio traffic is to follow.

3.0 PROCEDURE

- 3.1 When in the opinion of any personnel operating on the scene, the ABANDONMENT of the structure or hazardous area becomes necessary, he/she shall immediately notify the Incident Commander or Fireground Safety Officer of the need to ABANDON. When in the opinion of the Incident Commander or Fireground Safety Officer, a structure or hazardous area must be ABANDONED, the following process shall occur:
- 3.2 The Incident Commander shall:
- Announce “All units operating at XXXX incident, ABANDON the building”.
 - Activate the Emergency Traffic Tone if so equipped and then repeat the message.
 - Notify CAPCOM of the ABANDONMENT procedure and request the frequency be restricted to “Emergency Traffic Only”.
- 3.3 All emergency vehicle operators at the scene shall respond by sounding the apparatus air horn for a continuous 10-second blast.
- 3.4 Personnel shall immediately ABANDON the structure or hazardous area. Hoselines and emergency equipment shall be left behind, unless it is needed to facilitate a safe retreat. All crew will report to their Division Supervisor immediately.
- 3.5 Following the ABANDONMENT procedure, the Incident Commander shall:
- Institute a PAR of all Divisions and/or Teams to ensure ABANDONMENT of the structure is complete and all emergency personnel are accounted for.
 - When satisfied that ABANDONMENT is complete and all personnel are accounted for, notify Capcom “ABANDONMENT is complete, we have a PAR, normal radio traffic may be resumed”.

4.0 GENERAL INFORMATION

- 4.1 ABANDON should not be confused with either of the following two terms:
- *Withdraw*: To exit the structure or hazardous area, removing hoselines and emergency equipment due only to a change in strategy. (offensive to defensive etc.)
 - *Evacuate*: To remove occupants of a structure or hazardous area in an organized and usually pre-planned manner.
- 4.2 The ABANDONMENT signal should only be used when the ABANDONMENT of a structure or hazardous area is deemed necessary. To ensure that the ABANDONMENT signal is recognizable, at the scene, air horns should only be used in short bursts – distinguishable from the 10-second air horn blast used in an ABANDONMENT signal.
- 4.3 The ABANDONMENT signal should be limited to a single 10 second burst in order to limit communication disruption due to radio congestion and excessive noise levels.
- 4.4 If ABANDONMENT is not complete the Incident Commander will retain the emergency use of all frequencies to repeat this procedure and initiate search and

rescue of all unaccounted for personnel.