



Jackson Hole Fire/EMS Operations Manual

Developed by: _____
Rusty Palmer, Interim Chief

Approved by: Michael L. Shidner
Teton Emergency Responders Association

Approved by: Rusty Palmer
Rusty Palmer, Chief

Approved by: [Signature]
Emergency Services Council

Title: **Carbon Monoxide
Emergencies**

Division: 16

Article: 9

Revised: 7-19-06

Pages: 3

PURPOSE

To establish a procedure for locating and mitigating carbon monoxide hazards.

POLICY

Fire/EMS shall respond to and investigate all reports of possible carbon monoxide incidents occurring in occupied spaces.

SECTION I - GENERAL

Carbon Monoxide (CO) is an odorless, colorless and tasteless gas that is deadly. It is a by-product of combustion. Many appliances such as wood stoves, furnaces, kitchen stoves, water heaters, automobiles, etc., can produce carbon monoxide. When an appliance malfunctions, vent system fails or is improperly installed, or unusual conditions exist, carbon monoxide may be vented into areas where people are present. Carbon monoxide poisoning may be difficult to diagnose. Symptoms are similar to that of the flu, which may include headache, nausea, fatigue and dizzy spells from low level exposure and convulsions, unconsciousness, and death from high level exposure.

SECTION II - DISPATCH

1. Emergency or non-emergency responses to reports of carbon monoxide shall be determined by the following criteria:
 - a. **Emergency Response:** Caller indicates or suspects any signs or symptoms or carbon monoxide poisoning. In this event, the dispatcher will advise the caller and all occupants to evacuate the building and await the fire department's arrival. The closest engine company will be dispatched.

- b. **Non-Emergency Response:** Caller has a carbon monoxide detector activation or suspects there may be carbon monoxide present in the building. The Battalion Chief on call, or a fire inspector will be dispatched.
- c. Any time the dispatcher feels the caller is in jeopardy, he/she can immediately initiate an emergency response, even if the initial dispatch was considered non-emergency.
- d. All emergency responses shall require full protective clothing and Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA).
- e. All non-emergency responses shall require full protective clothing, but no SCBA unless the situation calls for them.

SECTION II - OPERATIONS

1. Once Fire/EMS personnel arrive on the scene, they should first interview the occupant(s) to determine the following:
 - a. If any occupants are or have been feeling ill.
 - b. The number and location of any CO detectors which have been activated.
 - c. The location of combustion equipment/appliances.

Note: This interview should take place outside of any suspected contaminated areas.

2. After the interview, zero the CO meter in fresh air and comply with all start-up procedures as recommended by the manufacturer of the metering equipment.
3. Take the first reading just inside the doorway to determine initial CO level.
4. **If a reading of 35 ppm or greater is detected:**
 - a. The building or effected area shall be evacuated immediately and full turnout gear and SCBA shall be utilized during the investigation.
 - b. Personnel shall begin monitoring the lower levels of the building then proceed to the higher levels.
 - c. Be sure to check all areas especially, areas that include utility spaces, kitchens, and attached garages.
 - d. Ventilate the building by opening windows and doors, setting ventilation fans or positive pressure ventilation.
 - e. Do not allow the building to be reoccupied until the source is identified and shut off, and CO levels are below 4 ppm.
 - f. Appliance service personnel should be contacted by the occupant to check the proper operation of appliances.
5. **If a reading of 10 ppm or less is detected:**
 - a. Inform the occupant(s) that our instrument did not detect an elevated level of CO at this time.
 - b. Recommend occupant(s) check their CO detector per manufacturer's recommendations.
 - c. Advise the occupant(s) to reset the CO detector (if applicable) according to the manufacturer's instructions.
 - d. Inform the occupant(s) that, if the detector re-activates or they feel there may be a problem, to call 911.
6. **If a reading above 10 ppm and below 35 ppm is detected:**
 - a. Any reading above 10 ppm shall be considered an above normal reading.
 - b. Occupant(s) shall be informed that an elevated level of CO has been detected.
 - c. If it is determined that an appliance is malfunctioning and thereby producing CO, it shall be shut down and Lower Valley Energy shall be notified to respond.
 - d. Once the premises has been ventilated and reduced to a safe level of CO, it may be occupied, at the discretion of the occupant(s).

- e. Advise the occupant(s) to reset the CO detector (if applicable) according to the manufacturer's instructions.
 - f. Inform the occupant(s) that, if the detector re-activates or they feel there may be a problem, to call 911.
7. Advise occupants of findings and further actions which may be necessary.