

SPOKANE COUNTY FIRE DISTRICT 8

Standard Operating Procedures

130.03.03
LOW ANGLE ROPE RESCUE
OPERATIONS (LARRO)



Adopted: 12/20/16
Reviewed: 11/18/21
Revised: 11/18/21

Approved: 

Purpose: To establish guidelines for conducting low angle rope rescues. Because of the infinite number of potential sites and situations that could be encountered, this procedure will not define a specific evolution to use, but will give guidelines to follow for conducting safe and effective operations.

References: WAC 296-305-05113
WAC 296-305-02019
NFPA 2500
Spokane County Fire District 8 Rope Rescue Manual, 2015
SCFPD 8 Memo #05-14.1-15

Procedure:

1. Fire District 8 engages in Low Angle Rope Rescue Operations. These are considered to be Non-Technical Rope Rescue incidents, consisting of a slope of 40 degrees or less.
2. Fire District 8 does not engage in Technical Rope Rescue, also known as High Angle Rope Rescue, but can provide support to a technical rescue team in these incidents. A Technical Rope Rescue shall be considered as any rescue involving a slope greater than 40 degrees.
3. While responding to any incident that may involve rope rescue a technical rope rescue team response will be requested via SREC or Fire Comm.

Initial Actions:

1. Initiate Command.
2. Perform a scene size up in order to determine what the rescue entails.
3. Provide site control and scene management to prevent any additional accidents.
4. Establish Command.
5. Declare over the radio that the incident involves rope rescue.
6. Determine Mode of Operation: Rescue or Recovery.
7. Perform a Risk/Benefit analysis.
8. Request additional units/resources as appropriate.

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9. Request the dispatch of a technical rescue team or additional resources if appropriate for the incident.

Operational Actions:

1. Operations will be based on the incident action plan developed on scene by the Incident Commander (IC) and within the scope of practice outlined in NFPA 1670, Chapter 5; and the Spokane County Fire District 8 Rope Rescue Manual.
2. The IC shall initiate operations to gain access to any patient(s) by the least risk inducing method. The methods utilized, in order of least risk to highest risk are:
 - a) Walk down.
 - b) Walk down with a hand line.
 - c) Walk down with a prusik hitch self-belay to a static line.
 - d) Rescuer is lowered via lowering system.

Organizational Actions:

1. Organizational standards with regards to training, certification, and roles and responsibilities:
 - a) Only personnel trained to 2500 Operations-Level and applicable NFPA 2500 qualifications can engage in rigging any rope system at a non-technical rope rescue incident.
 - b) Personnel trained to NFPA 2500 Operations-Level and applicable NFPA 2500 qualifications can function in the following:
 - i. Rescue Group Supervisor,
 - ii. Rigging Group Leader,
 - iii. Edge Team Leader,
 - iv. Safety Officer in a non-technical rope rescue incident.
 - v. Personnel must also have NFPA 1670 Technician level training and meet applicable NFPA 1006 qualifications to perform these roles in a Technical rope rescue (slope greater than 40 degrees).
 - c) Personnel not trained to NFPA 2500 are limited to providing assistance for the Support Team.
 - d) Rope logs are to be completed as directed.
 - e) It is recognized that these skills are perishable skills; therefore, Thursdays shall be dedicated to maintaining and enhancing rope rescue skill sets by each engine company.