

# SPOKANE COUNTY FIRE DISTRICT 8

## Standard Operating Procedures

### 70.01.01 FIRE CAUSE DETERMINATION



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

Approved:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J. J. Paul".

**Purpose:** The determination of the cause of any fire is essential for fire prevention, insurance purposes, and arson crime detection. For these reasons, the determination of cause is a primary objective at any fire scene, coequal in importance with the actual fire suppression.

**References:** N/A

#### **Procedure:**

1. Fire Scene Preservation.
  - a) All personnel at the fire scene shall be attentive to the preservation of the fire scene as originally found, within the limits allowed by efficient and effective fire suppression.
  - b) Particular care is to be exercised in the preservation of apparent or probable areas of fire origin.
  - c) The Incident Commander is responsible for fire scene preservation.
2. Cause.
  - a) Cause or probable cause of each fire is to be documented on the Fire Report completed by the company officer. Additional information, if available, will be added to the fire investigation report.
3. When to call for the Spokane Valley Fire Department Fire Investigator
  - a) Spokane Valley Fire Department investigator should be called for the following:
    - i. Any fire resulting in more than \$10,000.00 in damage.
    - ii. Any fire where the origin may be considered suspicious in nature.
    - iii. Any explosion.
    - iv. Fire resulting in injury or fatality to a citizen or firefighter.
    - v. A fire where the Incident Commander has reasonable suspicion that a crime occurred.

Generally, a fire investigator response is not required at small fires that cause no significant damage or where there is no suspect and there are no witnesses to the fire. The Incident Commander and/or Company Officer should however, obtain statements from any bystanders or witnesses to the fire.