

SPOKANE COUNTY FIRE DISTRICT 8

Standard Operating Procedures

90.05.05
CIVIL DISTURBANCE



Adopted: 12/20/16
Reviewed: 11/09/22
Revised: 11/09/22

Approved:

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

Purpose: To provide guidelines during times of civil disturbances.

References: WAC 296-305-05001 (12)

Procedure:

1. Spokane County Fire District 8 personnel, equipment or apparatus, shall not be used in activities related to quelling mob action unless such action is specifically authorized by the Chief of the District.
2. The Fire Chief, or his/her designee, shall be the judge of the degree of Fire District participation and implementation of civil disturbance procedures during any such activities.
3. Members in areas not affected by civil disturbance activities will continue with their normal duties/activities.
4. First arriving unit when encountering a situation classified as a civil disturbance will notify dispatch in normal size-up manner. Dispatch will be directed to notify Police/Sheriff of the situation.
5. Members responding to incidents involving weapons (domestic violence, shootings, and other acts of violence) shall stage/standby until the scene is declared secured.
6. Definitions.
 - a) Civil Disturbance: Any mob action related to acts of arson, violence, riot, rebellions, insurrection, or other unlawful action by various organized or unorganized groups.
7. Responsibility.
 - a) Fire District members/employees shall be responsible for acting with good judgment, tolerance and tact so as not to precipitate violent mob reaction. During periods of civil disturbance, individual members may be subjected to unusual stressful verbal abuse. Self-control and restraint are of the utmost importance for preventing escalation of a marginal incident into a destructive long-term mob action.
 - b) In an emergency situation the on-duty 820 officer shall arrange for security of affected fire stations to prevent vandalism and injury to personnel and equipment.

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- c) In an emergency situation the on-duty 820 officer shall institute necessary measures to ensure station security. In all others it shall be the Division Chief of Support Services.

8. Guidelines.

- a) Equipment carried exposed on running boards and sides of apparatus shall be placed in compartments, top storage areas or in crew cabs. Equipment in crew cabs shall be covered. Equipment on some apparatus may have to be stored in available open compartments and covered.
- b) Fire Apparatus Protection:
 - i. Hose bed covers shall be in position. The rear flap shall be secured down, if provided.
 - ii. Hydrant wrenches should be carried towards the front portion of the load out of sight.
 - iii. Apparatus without hose bed covers shall have a tarp over the hose bed and top basket to protect equipment and hose.
- c) Aid/Medic Units Protection:
 - i. Rear doors shall be locked from the inside to prevent unauthorized entry. The remaining doors shall be locked when leaving the apparatus.
- d) Personnel Protection:
 - i. Members shall respond wearing full protective turnouts. Except for the officer and driver, helmet face shields or goggles shall be in the covered position.
 - ii. To prevent vandalism to private vehicles, it may be necessary to direct arriving members/employees, e.g. reporting to work, callback, etc. to fire stations out of the disturbance area and exchange crews via fire district transport.

9. Emergency Response/Operations.

- a) Unless otherwise authorized by the Fire Chief, initial response within known civil disturbance areas shall consist of an 820 Officer, and/or command staff, and an Engine Company. The Engine Company will not engage in any activity that will aggravate the situation or put personnel in serious danger of injury, but will standby until cleared into the scene by law enforcement.

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- b) A report of a civil disturbance by the first-arriving unit will signal all subsequent arriving units to stand by in a designated base area, unless otherwise directed.
- c) Whenever possible, hand lines shall be taken directly off of hydrants. Apparatus will be hooked to a hydrant as a last resort. thus keeping the apparatus mobile.
- d) Due to possible false reports by activists, personal identification of sender may be required.
- e) Rescue and extinguishment should be the prime objectives of the Incident Commander. Overhaul should be limited to those efforts that prevent rekindle. Salvage operations may have to be curtailed due to possible mob action.
- f) Apparatus and personnel should be returned to quarters as quickly as possible.
- g) Members should be alert to transmit information regarding hostile acts against apparatus and personnel. In the event of mob activity at the emergency scene, it may be necessary to withdraw and delay extinguishment operations until security forces secure the area.
- h) Avoid unnecessary conflict (personal communication or physical contact) between District personnel, rioters, or bystanders. Primary responsibility is the protection of life and property.
- i) Provide protection for hydrants, suction and hose lines. If necessary, protection for apparatus, tools, equipment, hydrants, hose lines, and other operating facilities shall be provided by police or other enforcing personnel.
- j) During civil disturbance situations, responses into or out of the area should be non-siren.
- k) Fire Station Protection:
 - i. Stations within or adjacent to the areas of civil disturbance shall keep doors and windows locked.
 - ii. Activities outside the station shall be minimized to those necessary to provide emergency response.
 - iii. Available outside illumination shall be utilized.
 - iv. Available protective devices for doors and windows shall be placed in position.
 - v. When vandalism or mob action is directed against fire stations or personnel, it shall be immediately reported to the on-duty 820 Officer.
 - vi. On-duty employee possession of firearms of all kinds are strictly prohibited at any time in fire stations, apparatus and/or Fire District

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property. This restriction shall not apply to firearms that are locked and secured in privately owned vehicles of on-duty personnel that are parked on Fire District property and shall not apply to Fire District personnel who are commissioned police officers.

10. Radio Codes.

- a) Police may be summoned by using plain English (clear text) or by using code numbers.
 - i. Code 6 summons police to your location in a suspected emergency or violent situation.
 - ii. Code 13 summons police to your location in a no code situation.
 - iii. Code 99 summons the nearest police unit to your location code and is reserved for life threatening or potentially harmful situations.
 - iv. Codes are used to maintain a degree of privacy and reduce the potential of escalating the incident.
 - v. The Company Officer should provide a reason, when possible, after calling Code 13. No details are needed for Code 99.