

**WILDLAND FIRES**

**Purpose:**

To establish guidelines that will provide the Incident Commander and personnel with a safe and effective way of handling fires involving trees, brush and/or ground cover.

**Guidelines:**

- A. Report on Conditions.
  - 1. Determine actual location of fire (including size).
  - 2. Direction and characteristic of fire travel.
  - 3. Type of fuel burning (light grass, heavy brush).
  - 4. Exposures.
  - 5. Action being taken by first arriving unit.
- B. Request additional equipment as needed.
- C. Determine plan of action based on priorities and resources available.

**Safety:**

- A. All members shall wear necessary protective clothing in accordance with the hazard.
- B. Safety rules for operating vehicles "off road".
  - 1. Have a means of escape should your position be overrun.
  - 2. Avoid commitment of units on narrow roads in heavy brush areas.
  - 3. It is not uncommon for heavy vehicles to become stuck off road.
  - 4. Before taking a unit "off road", you must know the location and direction of fire travel.
- C. A means for escape shall be made known to all fire personnel working in brush areas. Stay close to burned area.
- D. All personnel should know in which direction and location the fire front is traveling.
- E. Do not allow fire personnel to become exhausted. Provide rest periods. Frequency will be dependent upon topography and weather conditions.
- F. Be alert to the possibility of downed electrical wires; there may be energized fences as a result.
- G. Do not go downhill to attack a fire.

**Control:**

- A. Base all actions and strategy on current and expected behavior of fire.

- B. Structural protection and life safety take priority over extinguishment of brush.
- C. If offensive attack (direct attack) is indicated, choose an anchor point and hit the head of the fire, if possible. If that is not possible, establish an anchor point and start on the flanks and work toward the head.
- D. If the fire is a large, hot, fast moving one, then a direct attack may not be possible. In such cases, an indirect and/or parallel attack may be utilized by cutting a fire line a distance ahead of the fire (or utilizing natural fire breaks, such as highways) to halt the progress of the fire.
  - 1. This may require writing off losses (structures, etc.) in the path of fire.
  - 2. Indirect attack is commonly used in conjunction with back-firing techniques.
- E. Different methods of attack may be used simultaneously according to the situation.
- F. If assigned structural protection, keep hose lays flexible enough to be able to quickly break away in the event of being overrun.

**Command:**

- A. Fires requiring the coordination of two (2) units or more, should have the Incident Command System put into effect.
- B. Establish a Command Post in accordance with 1500.2.
- C. The Incident Commander has responsibility for the entire operation. He also has responsibility for assigning (on an “as needed” basis) the following positions during brush fire operations:
  - 1. Operations
  - 2. Support
  - 3. Sectors/Division.
  - 4. Liaison positions between various agencies.
- D. If an area evacuation is warranted, be guided by 1500.1.