

Day to Day Duties of a Firefighter

RESULTS FROM A NATIONWIDE JOB ANALYSIS SURVEY

A Job Analysis Survey is used to determine what duties, qualities and traits firefighters are expected to exhibit.

- A. **INITIAL RESPONSE TO INCIDENTS:** Tasks occurring between the receipt of an alarm and initial firefighting or emergency scene activities.
 - a. Makes preliminary evaluation of incident based on alarm information received (e.g., alarm type, structure type, etc.).
 - b. Proceeds to assigned apparatus upon receipt of call for service.
 - c. Dons personal protective equipment before and at emergency scenes.
- B. **WATCH DUTIES:** Stands watch to receive incoming alarms and information, answers phones, and monitors access to the station house.
 - a. Receives notification of alarms, multiple alarms, EMS alarms, and other significant emergencies through the dispatch office.
 - b. Notifies station personnel (over public address or through use of signals) of incoming alarms and required response (e.g., everybody goes, truck only, engine only, etc.)
 - c. Answers department and outside phone.
- C. **ON-SCENE COMMUNICATION:** Communicates at the emergency scene to ensure appropriate coordination of apparatus and personnel.
 - a. Receives information (e.g., regarding the assignment of personnel and apparatus) from the officer in command upon arrival at the emergency scene.
 - b. Communicates with other fire personnel at emergency scene about conditions, size-up, etc.
 - c. Relays orders from superior officers at emergency scene.
- D. **DRIVING:** Drives apparatus (engine, truck, ambulance, etc.) to and from, and positions apparatus at, emergency scene.
 - a. Obtains knowledge of traffic laws and street conditions in order to operate the apparatus safely and expeditiously.
 - b. Obtains knowledge of most direct and expeditious routes and studies them prior to incident response.
 - c. Selects most direct and expeditious route to alarm site.
 - d. Maneuvers and positions apparatus at incident scene.
- E. **PUMP OPERATIONS:** Connects or hooks up apparatus to fire hydrant and operates pumps to supply water in appropriate pressure and volume – using couplings, hoses, spanner wrenches, and other tools.
 - a. Opens and flushes hydrant to ensure it is functional.
 - b. Fills hose with water by hydrant pressure.

- c. Engages pumps.
 - d. Monitors control panel (e.g., water temperature, oil pressure gauge, fuel gauge, hydrant pressure).
 - e. Connects and lays supply line from supply to the apparatus.
 - f. Notifies officer of any problems that occur while pumping.
 - g. Shuts down pump when ordered to by officer.
- F. **HOSE (AND EXTINGUISHER) OPERATIONS:** Stretches line or uses extinguisher to deliver water, foam, and other extinguishing agents to emergency scene.
- a. Determines type (size) and number of lengths of hose needed for operation.
 - b. Pulls hose out of hose bed.
 - c. Determines proper nozzle and nozzle setting.
 - d. Connects hoselines to nozzles.
 - e. Connects to standpipe when necessary/appropriate.
 - f. Flakes out or dekinks hoseline prior to charging or during extinguishment to ensure proper operations.
 - g. Locates seat of fire or other hazard (e.g., gas leak) by observing, smelling or listening for smoke, sound, flames, gas, vapors, etc.
 - h. Operates ladder pipe on aerial ladder to apply water to structures on fire.
 - i. Uses extinguisher to extinguish, contain and/or control incident.
- G. **MECHANICAL LADDER OPERATIONS:** Stabilizes ladder trucks and elevates and operates aerial ladders in order to rescue victims, provide access for ventilation, operate master stream devices, etc.
- a. Stabilizes elevating apparatus using wheel chocks, stabilizing pads, stabilizing jacks and outriggers.
 - b. Operates ladder from ground controls or from platform controls, while watching for power lines, trees and other overhead obstructions.
 - c. Climbs mechanical ladders to perform search, rescue and other operations.
- H. **MANUAL LADDER OPERATIONS:** Carries, raises, extends and climbs manual ladders to perform search, rescue and other operations.
- a. Determines manual ladder type and size needed at incident scene.
 - b. Determines proper placement of manual ladder at scene.
 - c. Raises and positions manual ladder at incident scene.
 - d. Anchors and secures manual ladder (i.e., tying off) at scene.
 - e. Climbs manual ladder to perform search, rescue, and other operations.
- I. **FORCIBLE ENTRY:** Pries open, cuts, or breaks down doors, or otherwise enters structures, vehicles, aircraft and other entrapments in order to search for and rescue victims and provide access to the emergency scene – using axes, halligan tools, hooks, rabbit tools, battering rams, sledge hammers, power saws and other tools.
- a. Determines best location for forcible entry.
 - b. Cuts through surfaces using power saws and other power tools.
 - c. Gains entry into structures using axes, sledge hammers, battering rams, halligan tool and other forcible entry tools.

- d. Pries open doors in structures using pry bars, halligan tools, bolt cutters and other tools.
 - e. Removes locks or hinges from doors using sledgehammers, battering rams, axes or other forcible entry tools.
- J. **VENTILATION:** Opens or breaks windows, chops or cuts holes in roofs, breaches walls or doors, and aims fog stream out of window or hangs fans in windows or doors to remove heat, smoke and/or gas from structures or entrapments.
- a. Determines best location for venting structure based on location of hazard and fire personnel, roof type, and building construction.
 - b. Opens windows and other points of entry manually or by using pry bars, halligan tools, and other tools, to ventilate structure.
 - c. Breaks windows and other points of entry using axes, ladders and other tools, to ventilate structure.
 - d. Cuts open walls, roof and other structures to ventilate structure.
 - e. Uses fans for positive and negative pressure.
- K. **SEARCH:** Searches assigned area in order to locate victims and to obtain further information about incident, following standard search procedures.
- a. Determines search procedure or strategy needed to accomplish objectives.
 - b. Searches structures for seat of fire, or other hazard, and extensions.
 - c. Searches floor or area of fire, or other hazard, for conscious and unconscious victims, sweeping assigned search area with arms, legs or tools.
 - d. Work together as a team/company to maintain personnel accountability.
- L. **RESCUE:** Assists, hoists, carries or drags victims from emergency area by means of interior access (stairs, hallways, etc.) or, if necessary, by ladders, fire escapes, or other means of escape – using rescue harnesses, ropes, backboards and other equipment. Extricates victims from vehicles, aircraft, cave-ins, collapsed buildings or other entrapments in order to save lives – using shovels, torches, drills, pry bars, saws, jacks, jaws, air bags, and other equipment.
- a. Evacuates persons from incident scene due to risk of fire, explosion, exposure to hazardous chemicals, etc.
 - b. Hoists or lowers victims or fire personnel using ropes, knots and rescue harnesses.
 - c. Drags or carries victims from emergency scenes.
 - d. Places victims onto stretchers, backboards, baskets, etc.
 - e. Digs to free victims trapped in tunnels, pipes, excavations, cave-ins or other entrapments using shovels, picks, spades and other equipment.
 - f. Conducts water rescues (i.e., river rescue, using boats) in accordance with established guidelines.
 - g. Rescues drowning victims using life-saving techniques.
- M. **SALVAGE:** Moves and covers furniture, appliances, merchandise and other property; covers holes in structures; stabilizes damaged structural components; and redirects or cleans up water in order to minimize damage – using plastic and canvas covers, ropes, staple guns, mops, squeegees, and other tools.
- a. Spreads salvage covers over property.

- b. Moves furniture and other objects to protect from water or other damage.
 - c. Tears down weak and dangerous structural components (e.g., floors, walls, roofs, overhangs and stairs) using hooks, axes, saws and other tools.
- N. **OVERHAUL:** Opens up walls and ceilings, cuts or pulls up floors and moves or turns over debris, in order to check for hidden fires which could rekindle or spread – using hooks, axes, saws and pitchforks.
- a. Checks and searches open areas, walls, open structures for fire extension.
 - b. Searches for and extinguishes any hidden fires by looking, feeling or smelling for fire and smoke.
 - c. Opens ceilings, walls, etc., to expose hot spots and other hazardous conditions with axes, pike pole/ceiling hook, etc.
 - d. Removes and extinguishes burned or smoldering debris from buildings.
- O. **CLEAN-UP/PICK UP:** Picks up, cleans and returns equipment to vehicle and rolls or folds hose, so that the company can go back in service.
- a. Backs lines out of structures.
 - b. Rolls and holds hoses after use and returns them to appropriate vehicle.
 - c. Determines that all hoses used during response to incident are present and accounted for.
 - d. Cleans and returns all tools, equipment, supplies and property in usable condition to appropriate vehicles.
 - e. Cleans the apparatus.
- P. **EMERGENCY MEDICAL CARE:** Performs thorough patient evaluation and intervenes with the appropriate medical care for persons requiring medical care and/or requesting assistance with medical care.
- a. Assess and prioritize patient according to medical and/or injury.
 - b. Intervenes with oxygen therapy or assisted ventilations, using oxygen adjuncts when appropriate.
 - c. Identifies life-threatening bleeding and intervenes appropriately.
 - d. Identifies the pulseless, apneic patient and administers cardiopulmonary resuscitation.
 - e. Evaluates the patient's responsiveness (awake, alert and oriented vs. unresponsive) based on the patient's response to verbal and painful stimuli.
 - f. Determines whether patients need emergency or non-emergent transport.
 - g. Works to maintain the patient's well being, emotionally as well as physically.
 - h. Assesses the patient's vital signs using a watch, stethoscope, and sphygmomanometer.
- Q. **EQUIPMENT MAINTENANCE:** Checks, cleans, and maintains personal gear and equipment to ensure proper and safe operation.
- a. Places turnout gear on or near apparatus.
 - b. Checks extension ladders.
 - c. Checks medical equipment.
 - d. Checks the condition of generators, blowers, lights, cords and fans.
 - e. Checks hose on apparatus (proper bedding and amount).
 - f. Checks and maintains power equipment.

- c. Maintains basic knowledge of chemicals and other hazardous materials.
- d. Attends routine training drills and sessions.
- e. Participates in physical fitness sessions.
- f. Attends specialized training sessions (e.g., CPR certification, special schools, etc.).
- g. Reviews internal fire department bulletins, memos, etc. to remain aware of departmental updates.
- h. Reads professional journals and publications (e.g., Fire Command) to be aware of current developments in the fire service.