

Subject:	ROPE RESCUE OPERATIONS
Section:	PPG# 4400.11
Chapter:	Operations
Effective Date:	7/1/98

1.0 POLICY

- 1.1** Members of Thurston County Fire District No.5 & 9 will be trained to the awareness level.
- 1.2** Career members of Thurston County Fire District No.5 & 9 will be trained to the Operations Level – Low/Steep Angle.
- 1.3** Members Thurston County Fire District No.5 & 9 when engaged in rope rescue operations shall comply with the requirements of this Policy.
- 1.4** All members engaged in rope rescue operations shall be properly trained and qualified by Thurston County Fire District No.5 & 9 to perform such activities.
- 1.5** Thurston County Fire District No.5 & 9 shall establish written guidelines for the use of life safety ropes, training and rescue operations utilizing harnesses and ropes.
- 1.6** Members engaged in rope activities, shall be provided and wear either structural fire fighting helmets and gloves, or helmets that meet ANSI Standard Z89.1, 1986 edition, Class A and B; gloves.
- 1.7** Records shall be maintained of inspections and repairs made to rope rescue equipment.
 - 1.7.1** Equipment shall be inspected after purchase and prior to placing in service, after each use, and at least semi-annually.
 - 1.7.2** Harnesses shall be inspected for worn or broken stitching, rivets worn out of holes, and damage from abrasion, cuts, or chemicals.
 - 1.7.3** Descending/ascending hardware shall be inspected for wear, cracks, distortion, sharp edges, and ease of operation.
 - 1.7.4** Equipment showing damage or wear that can affect employee safety, shall be either repaired prior to further use or retired.

2.0 RESPONSIBILITIES

- 2.1 The Assistant Chief of Operations shall be responsible for conducting all rope inspections and equipment rope rescue operations in accordance with rope inspections procedures established and recommended as adequate by the rope manufacturer to ensure that rope is suitable for reuse.
- 2.2 The Assistant Chief of Operations shall ensure that all repairs to life safety harnesses shall be done by an authorized manufacturers representative or the manufacturer.

3.0 GUIDELINES

- 3.1 Rescue ropes shall meet the following requirements: 305 06003 (5)
 - 3.1.1 Rescue ropes shall be constructed of rot-proof fiber with a melting point not less than 400 degrees Fahrenheit. 305-06003 (5) a
 - 3.1.2 They shall be of abrasion resistant construction. 305 06003 (5) b
 - 3.1.3 They shall have a minimum breaking strength of not less than 9,000 pounds. 305-06003(5) c
- 3.2 When engaged in rope activities, employees shall be provided and wear either structural fire fighting helmets and gloves, or helmets that meet ANSI Standard Z89.1, 1986 edition, Class A and B; gloves. 305-05005(4)
- 3.3 The manufacturer's recommended shelf life of rescue ropes shall be followed. If no shelf life is specified, ropes greater than six years old, whether used or not, shall be taken out of service or destroyed. 305-05005(6)
- 3.3 Life belts shall meet or exceed the strength requirements of ANSI. A10.14 - Requirements for Safety Belts, harnesses; Lanyards, Lifelines and Drop Lines for Industrial Use, Life belts shall be inspected after each use and not less than semiannually in accordance with manufacturer's instructions. 305-06003(3)
- 3.4 Equipment showing damage or wear that can affect employee safety, shall be either repaired prior to further use or retired. 305-05005(5) d
- 3.5 Class I safety harnesses shall be used for member's attachment to ladders and aerial devices. 305-02019(9)
- 3.6 Class II and Class III life safety harnesses *shall be* utilized for fall arrest and repelling operations. 305-02019(10-
- 3.7 Rescue ropes shall be used for rescue purposes only. 305-06003(4)

- 3.8** The destruction of a rope means that it shall be removed from service and altered in such a manner that it could not be mistakenly used as a life safety rope, This includes disposal or removal of labels and cutting into short lengths to be used for utility purposes. 305-02019(7)
- 3.9** Ropes used to support the weight of members or other persons during rescue, fire fighting, other emergency operations or during training evolutions shall be life safety rope. 3 02019(2)
- 3.10** Rescue ropes shall be padded when deployed over edges rough surfaces. 305-02019(11)
- 3.11** Life safety rope used for rescue at fires, or other emergency incidents, or for training, shall be permitted to reused if inspected before, and after, each such use in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions and provided: 305-02019 3
- 3.11.1** If the rope has not been visually damaged by the exposure heat, direct flame impingement, chemical exposure, or abrasion 305-02019(3) a
 - 3.11.2** If the rope has not been subjected to any impact load. 305-02019(3) b
 - 3.11.3** If the rope has not been exposed to chemical liquids, solids gases mists, or vapors of any materials, known to deteriorate rope, 305-02019(3) c
 - 3.11.4** If the rope used for rescue at fires or other emergency incidents, or for training, has been subjected to 5.12.1, 5.12.2 5.12.3, or fails the visual inspection, it shall be destroyed after such use. 305-02019
 - 3.11.5** If there is any question regarding the serviceability of the rope after consideration of the above, the safe course of action will be taken and the rope shall be placed out of service 305-02019 3 e
- 3.12** Rescue ropes shall be inspected after each use and no less than semi-annually in accordance with manufacturer, instructions. 305-06003 6
- 3.13** Equipment shall be inspected after purchase and prior to placing in service, after each use, and at least semi-annually. 305-05005
- 3.14** Harnesses shall be inspected for worn or broken stitching, rivets worn out of holes, and damage from abrasion, cuts, or chemicals.
- 3.15** Descending/ascending hardware shall be inspected for wear cracks, distortion sharp edges and ease of operation.
- 3.16** Rope used for training evolutions shall be designated a training rope and shall be permitted to be reused if inspected before and after each use in accordance with the

permitted to be reused if inspected before and after each use in accordance with the manufacturer'.

- 3.17** Records shall provide a history of each life safety a training rope. The minimum information to be reflected in t record of history of life safety and training ropes shall include Date of manufacturer, organization serial number, use list include inspectors name and space for comments. 305-02019(5)
- 3.18** Records shall be maintained of inspections and repairs made to rope rescue equipment. 305-05005(5)
- 3.19** A rope log shall be kept in the same compartment with the high-angle equipment. The rope log shall be used to keep track of each time a rope is used.
- 3.20** Rescue Ropes:
 - 3.20.1** Shall be the only ropes used for rescues at an incident site.
 - 3.20.2** Shall be exchanged for a new one at the conclusion of the incident.
 - 3.20.3.** Shall be exchanged with a written explanation of how the rope was used.
 - 3.20.4** Do not leave rope under tension for any extended periods of time unless necessary
 - 3.20.5** Remove knots as soon as possible.
 - 3.20.6** Be sure to pad all sharp edges.
 - 3.20.7** Alternate ends of the rope you use each time to increase its life.
- 3.21** A carabineer on a belt at your waist with the rope clipped in helps the rope back into the bag while stuffing.
 - 3.21.1** While handling a rope examine it for imperfections or abrasions.
 - 3.21.2** Avoid dropping any metal rescue equipment.
 - 3.21.3** Avoid shock loading a rope. Apply weight gradually when possible.

4.0 REFERENCES

WAC 296-305-05005

WAC 296-305-02019.

WAC 296-305-06003

NFPA 1983

[Statutory Authority: RCW 49.17.010, .050, .060. 96-11-067 (Order 94-27), §296-305-05005, filed 05/10/96, effective 01/01/97.]