

Bergheim Volunteer Fire Department

STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINES



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10.1 Article 1 - Purpose

The Bergheim Volunteer Fire Department is established solely as a non-profit, charitable, beneficial, patriotic, civic and educational association of its members. The Bergheim Fire Department is organized into subdivisions of membership:

1. Executive members are people who reside within the Bergheim Volunteer Fire Department coverage area, and donate a minimum of \$25.00 each year in money or services. Executive members may vote in the annual election of Board members.
2. Line members represent those members who volunteer to train and respond to emergency calls. Line members may vote in the annual election of Board members.
3. Honorary members represent those who live outside the Bergheim Volunteer Fire Department's geographical area of coverage and choose to contribute to the department financially, goods or service. Honorary members have no vote in the annual election of Board members.

10.2 Article 2 – Membership

10.2.1 Qualification for Membership

Any person who wishes to join the Bergheim Volunteer Fire Department as a member must submit a fully completed application; be 18 years of age or older; pass a background check; have a clear and valid Texas drivers license with a clear driving record; and be insurable under the SFFMA Fireman's insurance policy. Anyone wanting to join the Bergheim Volunteer Fire Department between the ages of 16 and 18 may join the Junior Cadet program.

10.2.2 Membership Restrictions

There are no restriction of membership based upon race, creed, gender, physical limitation or advanced age. Members are responsible for determining their own abilities at any given time. For example; Even though a firefighter has been checked out and certified to perform a task, if they decide for any reason they are not able perform the task safely at that time, they are to inform the senior member at the scene and they will be relieved of that task

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10.2.3 Membership Steps

Potential members must attend six consecutive Bergheim Firehouse meeting/training sessions. During this time, they are expected to develop an understanding of what is expected of a Bergheim Volunteer Fireperson and become acquainted with current members.

Potential members must complete an initial application and consent to a background check.

Potential members must perform a urine drug screen at an approved location, with a negative result prior to getting voted into the department. Drug screen results may not be any older than two weeks when presented to an officer. Any positive result will warrant an immediate dismissal, unless able to prove that the positive drug screen was the result of a prescribed medication.

Prior to performing additional steps, the results of the background check must indicate a clear and valid Texas driver's license with a clear driving record and prove to be insurable under the SFFMA Fireman's insurance policy.

The potential member must ask a current member (non-cadet) in good standing to nominate him or her to be a member of the Bergheim Volunteer Fire Department.

If the member in good standing agrees to nominate the potential member, the current member will arrange a date with the training officer and chief to perform the nomination during a future meeting where a minimum of 50% of the active membership is in attendance.

Applicant members must pass successfully complete the 100, 200, 700, and 800 NIMS courses prior to being eligible for nomination. All new members are placed in the Cadet Program (as described in BVFD SOG 21.0) once nominated.

10.2.4 Nomination Procedure

Both the applicant member and the nominating member will stand before and address the membership in attendance – a minimum of 50% of the active non- cadet membership.

The nominating member will introduce the applicant and speak for 3 to 5 minutes about the applicant. Suggested items to mention include;

- *How you know the potential member*
- *How long you have known the potential member*
- *Where the potential member lives*
- *How long the potential member has lived in the area*

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- *Any examples of why you feel the potential member should be recognized as a member of the Bergheim VFD*
- *Any specialties the potential member may bring to the department*
- *What the back ground of the potential member includes; where they work, their area of expertise, hobbies etc.*
- *If you know their family, you may wish to mention their family - with their permission*

The applicant will then field questions from the membership. When the membership's questions have all been answered, the applicant, other non- members, and cadets will be asked to leave the area far enough to not hear any discussion.

The nominating member will facilitate a discussion of the membership to include specifically the question; "Is there anyone present who is aware of any reason why the potential member should not be allowed to join the Bergheim Volunteer Fire Department?" This discussion is not to last longer than 5 minutes. If more than 5 minutes of debate is required no vote will be allowed, until a future qualifying meeting of the membership.

At the end of membership discussion, the nominating member will request a vote be held. A different member must 2nd the nomination for a vote. If the nomination is not seconded, no vote will take place.

If a vote is called for and seconded, the nominating member will ask all those in favor of allowing membership to the potential member to raise their right hands and be counted. Once the vote is tabulated, the nominating member will ask all those against allowing membership to the potential member to raise their right hands and be counted.

If the counted votes in favor are less than 50% (in case of a tie the count will be rounded to the nearest % in favor of the potential member) of the present membership the member will be informed of the less than 50% vote and informed they cannot be a member at this time and they may not repeat the nomination procedure after year from the date of the vote.

If the counted votes in favor are greater than 50% but less than 75% (in case of a tie the count will be rounded to the nearest % in favor of the potential member) of the present membership the potential member will be informed of the less than

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75% vote and informed they must repeat the nominating procedure after six weeks. They may choose the same or different nominating member.

If the counted votes in favor are greater than 75% (in case of a tie the count will be rounded to the nearest % in favor of the potential member) of the present membership the potential member will immediately be offered the privilege of taking the Bergheim Volunteer Fire Department's oath.

The chief will administer the Bergheim Volunteer Fire Department's oath. The applicant member will place his/her right hand on a bible and pledge to serve the Bergheim community by "Protecting our home in the Hills."

***I, (state your name),
swear that I will expand my knowledge and skills and use them to protect the people
and their homes in the hills of the Bergheim community
to the best of my and ability.***

10.2.5 Responsibility of Member

To remain a member in good standing everyone must attend 60% of the Bergheim VFD meetings, activities and functions in a revolving twelve-month period.

Exception to the 60% attendance rule shall include:

1. Members will be exempt from any meeting, activity or function if they are earning a living (making money to feed their family) during the time of the meeting, activity or function and they notify in advance the person who nominated them or the Bergheim training officer. These meetings, activities or functions will not be counted toward the total number of meetings, activities or functions used to calculate the 60% attendance rule.
2. Members will be exempt from any meeting, activity or function if they are serving in the military or working a military function during the time of the meeting, activity or function and they notify the person who nominated them or the Bergheim training officer in a timely manner. These meetings, activities or functions will not be counted toward the total amount of meetings, activities or functions used to calculate the 60% attendance rule.

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3. Members will be exempt from any meeting, activity or function if they or a family member is ill during the time of the meeting, activity or function and they notify the person who nominated them or the Bergheim training officer in a timely manner. These meetings, activities or functions will not be counted toward the total amount of meetings, activities or functions used to calculate the 60% attendance rule.

4. Members will be exempt from any meeting, activity or function if they are attending High School or College during the time of the meeting, activity or function and they contact the person who nominated them or the Bergheim training officer. These meetings, activities or functions will not be counted toward the total amount of meetings, activities or functions used to calculate the 60% attendance rule.

5. Members will be exempt from any meeting, activity or function if they are on vacation or living outside the Bergheim VFD response area during the time of the meeting, activity or function and they contact the person who nominated them or the Bergheim training officer. These meetings, activities or functions will not be counted toward the total amount of meetings, activities or functions used to calculate the 60% attendance rule.

Members will be responsible for reading and following all Bergheim Volunteer Fire Department's Standard Operating Guidelines. Members will sign a form declaring that they have received a copy, read, understand, and will follow all SOGs. This form shall be signed before the member is eligible to make emergency calls. These forms will be maintained in the personnel files for each member. As SOGs are amended, members will sign a form that they have read and understand the amended SOGs. From time to time the SOGs may be modified as defined in section 10.6. When SOGs are modified, the modifications will be made known to all members by either email or hardcopy. Specific changes will be identified. Members are expected to sign a form acknowledging the changes. These forms will also be kept in the personnel files.

Additionally all members are to sign the HIPPA Compliance Affidavit shown below and have a copy placed in their personnel file prior to making any emergency calls.

10.3 Article 3 - Termination of Members

Any member of the department may be terminated from the Bergheim Volunteer Fire Department due to misconduct. Termination is the most severe form of disciplinary

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action and is used when it is in the best interest of the BVFD to remove the member from its ranks. Officers may only recommend termination—only the Chief may terminate a member.

10.4 Article 4 - Voting at Meetings

Voting shall be counting of hands. Only the votes of members in good standing and not currently in the Cadet Program will be counted. There shall be no absentee voting.

10.5 Article 5 – Standard Operating Guidelines (SOGs) Amendment

Any of the SOGs By-laws may be revised, supplemented, removed, or added to at any time. Members may make recommendations for modifications in writing to the the Chief and/or Assistant Chief. Proposed amendments will be discussed at the next appropriate Officers' meeting. The Officers will vote on the proposed ammendments. A two-thirds favorable vote of all officers is necessary for adoption. Proxy votes will be accepted. If the proposed amendment is approved, the SOGs will be modified and emailed or handed out to all members. Members will be required to sign a form indicating that they have read and understand the amended SOGs.

10.6 Article 6 – Miscellaneous

All questions not covered by the By-laws shall be governed by *Robert's Rules of Order*, Revised .

The SOGs serve as Bergheim Volunteer Departments Rules and Regulations. Failure to follow the guidelines could result in disciplinary action as defined in the SOGs.

Any questions or clarifications regarding the content or meaning of the SOGs should be addressed with either the Chief or the Assistant Chief.

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**11.0 Complaints Of Sexual
Harassment**

11.1 Purpose

This SOG defines the procedures to file, investigate and resolve allegations and complaints of sexual harassment or misconduct, as defined by Bergheim Volunteer Fire Department (BVFD) policy.

11.2 Preface:

The BVFD will not tolerate sexual harassment or misconduct of any kind. Any member who engages in such activities is subject to disciplinary action, including suspension or termination from the BVFD.

11.3 Procedure

The Chief or Assistant Chief will investigate all allegations of sexual harassment or misconduct.

11.3.1 Any member who feels he/she has been the target of sexual harassment or misconduct shall submit a written or emailed complaint to their respective supervisor or to any Officer if the complaint involves a supervisor. The complaint should contain the following information:

- a. The name on the individual(s) involved
- b. A description of the alleged action
- c. The date, time and place the action occurred
- d. The names of anyone who may have seen or heard the actions
- e. What the member did to try to stop the action
- f. If the actions continued after the member tried to stop them

11.3.2 The Chief and/or Assistant Chief shall review the complaint as soon as possible and shall:

- a. Discuss the complaint with the individuals involved to resolve the matter through three (3) steps; mutual agreement, mediation, or Chief/Assistant Chief's decision.

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b. The Chief and/or Assistant Chief will be the speaker for the Board and shall be responsible for all communications. At NO time will any member of the Officers discuss the details of the complaint with others unless absolutely necessary for the resolution of the complaint.

11.3.3 All discussions will be recorded by the Officers, and any agreements will be witnessed and signed by the involved parties. At any time, the member who files the complaint may stop the procedure by notifying his/her supervisor or any Officer in writing and asking to dismiss the complaint. In addition, the member shall report, in writing, any threats, additional harassment or similar actions that result from the complaint.

11.3.4 Any of the three (3) methods listed below may be used to resolve the complaint. The Chief or Assistant Chief shall review each of the methods with the involved parties as soon as possible after the complaint is filed.

11.3.4.1 Mutual Agreement is the resolution of a complaint through face-to-face discussion between the members of their expectations and desired outcome of the complaint. Mutual agreement is most effective if all parties are able to discuss the complaint and agree to a solution.

a. If involved members can reach agreement during discussion with the Chief Officers, the complaint will be dismissed.

b. The Officers will document the agreement.

c. A signed, sealed copy of the agreement will be placed in the member(s) personnel file(s)

d. No further action will be taken

11.3.4.2 Mediation is similar to mutual agreement, except the Chief or the Assistant Chief act as mediators to help understand and resolve the complaint. As mediator, the Chief or the Assistant Chief should not offer solutions or recommendations unless asked to do so by the involved parties. Mediation can be effective if the Chief or the Assistant Chief act as referee and keep the nature of the discussion focused on the complaint and a satisfactory resolution.

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- a. If members cannot reach a mutual agreement, the Chief or Assistant Chief shall schedule a face-to-face meeting with all involved parties.
- b. The Chief or the Assistant Chief shall hear from all parties about the facts of the complaint.
- c. Each party shall be given a chance to state their expectations of the outcome of the meeting and what, if any, disciplinary action they feel is appropriate for the circumstances.
- d. The meeting(s) may continue until the complaint is resolved through mutual agreement or compromise, or until any member wishes to stop, or if the Chief or the Assistant Chief feels that further discussion is not productive.
- e. If the involved members reach agreement during mediation, the complaint will be dismissed. No further action will be taken

11.3.4.3 The Chief's or Assistant Chief's decision is the final method used to resolve the complaint and shall be used when (1) the complaint cannot be resolved through mutual agreement or through mediation, or (2) when any of the involved members is unwilling or unable to discuss the complaint in a face-to-face meeting, or (3) if the Chief or the Assistant Chief feels it is in the best interest of the Department to resolve the complaint by their decision.

- a. After reviewing the complaint with all concerned members, the Chief or the Assistant Chief shall thoroughly investigate the facts of the complaint, including interviews with named witnesses, to determine the disciplinary action to be taken.
- b. The Chief or the Assistant Chief shall notify all involved parties with their decision.
- c. A signed copy of the agreement/disciplinary action will be placed in the member(s) personnel file(s).

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- d. Any involved member who disputes the decision of the Chief or the Assistant Chief may appeal the decision by following the complaint and appeals procedure.

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**12.0 Disciplinary
Action**

12.1 Purpose

This SOG will define the Bergheim Volunteer Fire Department (BVFD) policy on disciplinary action and establish departmental due process.

12.2 Guidelines

It is recognized that in order to maintain high standards of conduct, professional demeanor, morale, uniformity, and enforcement of rules and regulations, a means of discipline and disciplinary action is necessary. It is the policy of the BVFD that certain members of BVFD will be granted disciplinary authority consistent with their rank and position over members of the BVFD.

It is the policy of the BVFD that all members are expected to comply with the BVFD's standards of behavior and performance consistent with the SOGs and that any noncompliance must be remedied and will be subject to progressive disciplinary action, or in some instances, suspension and/or termination.

12.2.1 Any member who feels aggrieved and wishes to file a complaint against a fellow member of the department and/or supervisor shall have that right without fear of reprisal or intimidation.

12.2.2 Members filing complaints will follow those guidelines as delineated in the SOG's.

12.2.3 Any member disciplined by an officer and/or supervisor with disciplinary authority shall have the right to appeal such discipline. Any member appealing any discipline rendered upon him/her shall have the right to a final appeal to the Chief or the Assistant Chief.

12.2.4 The Senior Officers of BVFD have the duty to hear any final appeal and to render a fair judgment. The Senior Officers retain the right to sustain, revoke or amend any discipline rendered. However, the Chief or the Assistant Chief has sole authority with regards to the termination of a member from the BVFD. Any judgment rendered by the Chief or the Assistant Chief is final.

12.2.5 The progressive disciplinary procedure described in the SOGs of the BVFD shall be applied fairly to any member who is experiencing a repeated offense or a series of unrelated problems or offenses involving job performance and/or behavior.

12.2.6 In cases involving serious misconduct, such as a violation of the law (over and above a normal moving violation) or the SOGs of the BVFD, the violating member

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is subject to disciplinary procedures up to and including termination. The appropriate officer and/or supervisor may disregard the progressive disciplinary procedures and if appropriate, suspend the member immediately and recommend termination of the member. In no case shall a supervisor/officer terminate a member. Recommendations for termination shall be immediately forwarded to the Chief or the Assistant Chief who shall, after review, have the authority to uphold or suspend the action. The action against the member is then presented to the Chief or the Assistant Chief for final disposition.

12.2.7 A period of two years during which a member experiences no disciplinary action will nullify any previous violation or incidents for purposes of implementing the disciplinary procedures contained in this policy.

12.3 Types of Disciplinary Action:

There are six different levels of disciplinary action depending on the severity of the offense and/or the number of offenses:

- Counseling
- Oral reprimands
- Written reprimand
- Relieved of duty
- Suspension
- Termination

12.3.1 Counseling is a training method to improve performance or to correct unsatisfactory behavior of a member. Counseling shall consist of an informal, but thorough, explanation of the unsatisfactory performance and suggestions for improvement. This is the mildest form of disciplinary action, and should be regarded as instruction.

12.3.2 Oral Reprimand is a verbal disciplinary action for minor infractions of the BVFD rules. It may also be the disciplinary action taken for a first offense if the supervisor determines it is the only disciplinary action required by the offense. Oral reprimands shall consist of a formal, thorough review of the unsatisfactory performance and suggestions for improvement. Oral reprimands should be recorded and filed in the BVFD personnel files.

12.3.3 Written Reprimand is a formal disciplinary action taken for repeat infractions of the BVFD rules. It may also be the disciplinary action taken for a second offense of certain infractions, if the supervisor determines it is the only disciplinary action required by the offense. Written reprimands shall consist of a formal thorough

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review of the infraction and suggestions for improvement. Written reprimands shall be recorded and filed in the BVFD personnel files.

12.3.4 Relieved of Duty is a formal disciplinary action for major infractions of the rules, such as fighting, willful insubordination or when the supervisor feels it is in the best interest of the BVFD for the member not to remain on duty. Being relieved of duty may be a temporary removal from operations or removal from suppression activities. A supervisor who relieves a member from duty shall submit all charges and recommendations in writing through the chain of command to the Chief or Assistant Chief for approval and possible further action. Relieved of Duty reprimands shall be recorded in the BVFD personnel files.

12.3.5 Suspension is a formal disciplinary action for major infractions of the rules, or when the supervisor determines it is in the best interest of the BVFD for the member to not participate in any BVFD activities. A member who is suspended shall turn in all BVFD property BVFD within 48 hours and will not be allowed to participate in any BVFD activities during the term of the suspension. The member suspended will lose all claims to said equipment but will have it returned to him/her to resume their duties based on the BVFDs needs and resources. The length of the suspension should be determined by the circumstances of the infraction. During an emergency any officer or incident commander may suspend a member from duty at that time subject to immediate filing of written charges through the chain of command to the Chief or the Assistant Chief who shall approve/disapprove the action. Suspension may be the recommended course of action suggested in any charges forwarded through the chain of command to the Chief. Only the Chief may suspend a member, with cause, at any time. Suspension shall be recorded in the BVFD personnel files. During suspension, the member is not allowed to attend calls or training.

12.3.6 Termination is the most severe form of disciplinary action and is used when it is in the best interest of the BVFD to remove the member from its ranks. Officers may only recommend termination—only the Chief may terminate a member. A member who is terminated shall return all BVFD property within 48 hours and will be prohibited from further association with the BVFD. A supervisor who recommends termination shall submit all charges in writing through the chain of command to the Chief who shall approve/disapprove the recommendation. If approved the recommendation shall be forwarded immediately to the Chief or the Assistant Chief for further review and presentation to the membership.

12.3.7 All forms of disciplinary action (including verbal counseling) shall be documented in the member's personnel file and kept on record.

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12.4 Notification

Members shall receive written notification of any disciplinary action above counseling. Members shall acknowledge written disciplinary actions by signing the file copy of the reprimand, suspension or termination. The supervisor shall note any refusal to sign in the file. If a member refuses to sign he/she may be subject to further disciplinary action.

12.5 Appeal

Any member has the right to provide a written reply on any disciplinary action and shall be included in the file, attached to the disciplinary action report. The member may also appeal the disciplinary action.

12.6 Scope of authority

Officers/supervisors may take appropriate action up to the limits of authority defined in their respective rank.

12.7 Suggestion for Officers/Supervisors:

Officers/supervisors should determine if the infraction was caused by willful intent, negligence, lack of training, or ignorance of the rules. While ignorance is not an excuse, the supervisor should understand the reason for the infraction before determining disciplinary action. Get all sides of the story. There may be other reasons, which influenced the member's behavior. If possible reach a mediated solution to the problem rather than arbitrary disciplinary action. Many times, open discussion and understanding the cause of the unsatisfactory behavior will prevent further infractions of the rules.

Another officer should witness all disciplinary actions. This prevents future confusion about the contents or delivery of the disciplinary action.

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**13.0
Safety**

13.1 Purpose

The purpose of this SOG is to stress the importance of safety in all Bergheim Volunteer Fire Department (BVFD) emergency, non-emergency activities and routine.

13.2 Scope

The well-being and safety of all persons is BVFD's most important priority. Every firefighter within the BVFD will do his/her utmost to ensure safety. Likewise, the safety of members operating on the fire ground as well as the training ground is as equally important. Members who become injured at an operation only compound the complexity and severity of incidents. Therefore all BVFD members must operate at all times in a most prudent and sensible manner to minimize the risk of injury and maximize the degree of safety.

The existence of these written guidelines is not intended to limit any member in the exercise of sound and mature judgment or initiative in taking the action a reasonable person would take in extraordinary situations that may arise in the fire service. Much by necessity must be left to the training, experience, initiative, integrity, and discretion of the members of the BVFD.

13.3 Guidelines

The Chief and Assistant Chief will appoint Safety Coordinator for the BVFD. In the absence of a delegated Safety Coordinator, the Incident Commander, by virtue of position, will assume duties of Safety Coordinator or assign another member.

It will be the duty of the Safety Coordinator/Captain/Lieutenant/Incident Commander or senior member on scene to monitor all firefighting operations at a scene. The Safety Coordinator must be alert to the possible dangers that may exist at an operation and report them to the Incident Commander. In the absence of a delegated Safety Coordinator, the Incident Commander, by virtue of position, will assume duties of Safety Coordinator or assign another member. Vested in the Safety Coordinator is the authority to remove members from the scene or cease a particular operation when they feel that operations are being conducted in a dangerous manner or when a situation worsens and the safety of members is at risk.

Every officer, by virtue of position, is also delegated the tasks of monitoring for unsafe practices and situations that may arise. All parties (Safety Coordinator, Incident Commander, Officers, and senior members) are responsible for communicating any and all unsafe practices or hazards to all involved for obvious safety factors. Command

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Staff members will evaluate the information issue appropriate commands. This shall in no way relieve the Officers or Acting Officers, or the firefighters themselves of the responsibility to operate at a scene in a safe manner.

It will remain the responsibility of the Officers and Acting Officers to ensure that the firefighters under their immediate supervision are outfitted, equipped, and operating in a safe manner as outlined by these guidelines and by all other BVFD guidelines. It is incumbent upon them to enforce BVFD policy with regard to safety at all times.

Any member of the BVFD who is injured while in performance of their duties must immediately notify an Officer as defined by BVFD SOG 47.0. The Officer will also notify the Assistant Chief and have the official fire report reflect such injuries. It is the responsibility of the injured firefighter, as soon after medical treatment has been rendered, to make an accident report with the Assistant Chief for further processing.

Members in poor health, physically incapable or otherwise injured, or who are mentally unprepared shall not participate in activities that may jeopardize the safety of others or their own. If at any time during an activity a member becomes overexerted, ill, mentally or physically unable to carry out assignments, he/she will notify the Incident Command, Officer, Acting Officer, or senior member immediately.

The safety of all members is as important as operating equipment in a safe manner and within their operational limits. Never use equipment or tools other than what they were intended to be for. Members shall never use equipment for which they have not received proper training. If a member is asked to operate equipment that they have not received adequate training or that they feel are incapable of operating safely, the member should make the Incident Commander aware.

It is imperative to drive/operate fire apparatus in a safe manner with due regard to the environment, road conditions, speed, time of day, and neighborhoods. See BVFD SOG 31.0 for Apparatus Driving Policy.

During cold and freezing weather, ice forms and slippery conditions develop quickly, presenting additional hazards to the fire scene. Drivers should ensure that engine brakes are disabled during these conditions.

Members shall follow all safety practices and protect themselves with appropriate PPE when dealing with Emergency calls involving bodily fluids, communicable diseases, or airborne pathogens as defined BVFD SOG 14.0.

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Any time a member assigned to perform a task where vehicular traffic can be present Safety Vests shall be worn. During night time operations each member should carry and use flashlights.

Members shall stay hydrated during all hot weather activities. Officers and acting officers will ensure members are rotated into rehab to ensure rehydration occurs as defined in BVFD SOG 44.0.

Under no circumstances will “freelancing” be allowed in any BVFD operation. All operations will be conducted in accordance with the Incident Command System and the BVFD chain of command.

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**14.0 Infectious Control
Guidelines**

14.1 Purpose

The purpose of this SOG is to establish an infectious control policy for all Bergheim Volunteer Fire Department (BVFD) members who have the potential to be exposed to blood or other infectious materials.

14.2 Scope

The goal of infectious control is to prevent transfer of infection from the patient to emergency response members and their families, while simultaneously educating BVFD members about infectious hazards in the workplace. The dangers faced by emergency response personnel are not always obvious. The hazards of AIDS, hepatitis, and other communicable toxins are invisible but very dangerous.

14.3 Vocabulary:

Normal Flora - Microorganisms in man that assist the body in maintaining health equilibrium by preventing overgrowth of harmful bacteria.

Bacteria - Organisms that need certain conditions for growth, reproduction and maintenance of life.

Virus - A packet of genetic material surrounded by a protein covering. Unable to grow or reproduce outside the living host.

Infectious - illness resulting from the invasion of the body by a bacteria, virus, fungi, or parasite. The term infectious only means caused by a pathogen

Communicable - is a disease that can be readily spread from one person to another under certain conditions. A disease can be infectious but not communicable

14.4 Guidelines

The infectious control policy of the BVFD applies to all personnel who have the potential for occupational exposure to blood or other infectious materials.

All personnel will wear disposable latex gloves, face shield, and mask, as appropriate when making contact with patients of a trauma or medical call where airborne pathogens, disease, blood, or other bodily fluids may become necessary and unavoidable.

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Any uniform items that become soiled from bodily fluids must be sanitized immediately upon return to the fire station and before next emergency call.

BVFD is not qualified in the handling of chemical, biological, or radiation type hazardous material. All personnel will stay clear of any suspected hazardous materials caused by intentional release, leaks, or the like.

BVFD will provide training to all personnel and will assure that all members receive education on precautionary measures, epidemiology, and modes of transmission. Members will also receive training regarding the location and proper use of personal protective equipment, work practices, and precautions to be used in handling contaminated articles and infectious waste.

14.4.1 Infectious Diseases Most Commonly Encountered

Meningitis: Meningitis is difficult to determine in the prehospital environment. This infection can be due to a virus, bacteria, or tuberculosis, and involves an inflammation of the cover linings of the brain. Signs and symptoms can be fever, headache, stiff neck, and/or altered mental status. Most forms of meningitis are not contagious, however meningococcus meningitis is highly contagious and can be lethal.

Tuberculosis (TB): TB is bacteria not a virus and is spread by droplets in the air that are expelled by an infected individual. Risk for exposure is dependent on the following: amount of time spent with the infected individual, the ventilation present at the time of exposure, and prevention measures used. All healthcare workers should receive a TB skin test (PPD) on an annual basis. Signs and symptoms of TB include: weight loss, night sweats, swollen lymph glands, and a cough that may be productive or nonproductive and persistent for 2-3 weeks.

Syphilis: Syphilis is a bloodborne disease caused by bacteria. Syphilis is a sexually transmitted disease, but may also be bloodborne. Signs and symptoms include a primary lesion or chancre may appear 3 weeks after exposure. 4-6 weeks later other symptoms may appear such as rash on soles of feet and palms of the hands. This may progress into a latent phase if not treated. Testing for the exposure would include a blood test.

Hepatitis B: Hepatitis is a term which means inflammation of the liver. This disease is transmitted by blood to blood contact, sexual contact, or indirect contact with a contaminated object. Needle stick injuries present the greatest risk

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for infection with hepatitis B (6-30%). The incubation period for this disease is up to six months. Signs and symptoms begin with flu-like illness and then may or may not progress into common signs of yellow skin and itching, dark urine, which colored stools. There are two vaccines available to prevent Hepatitis B (Recombivax HB and Engerix-HB). The vaccine is given in a series of three doses. A titer test should be performed 1-2 months after completion of the vaccine series.

Hepatitis C: Hepatitis C is another bloodborne disease and can be transmitted via blood-to-blood, sexual contact, or indirect contact with a contaminated object. This disease begins with signs and symptoms of fatigue, loss of appetite, malaise, headache, and nausea. The time frame from exposure to development of the disease can be as long as 200 days. There is no vaccine to protect against hepatitis C and there is no cure for this disease. Approximately 60-85% of infected persons develop long-term chronic liver disease.

HIV (Human Immunodeficiency Virus)/AIDS (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome): HIV is a virus, which attacks the immune system and destroys its ability to fight infection. Persons infected with HIV are considered to be communicable from the time of infection. HIV that progresses to the later stage is termed AIDS. HIV is transmitted blood-to-blood contact, sexual contact, sharing IV drug needles, and infected mother to her infant. The time of infection to the time of development of this disease is two to ten years. Currently, there is no vaccine or cure for this disease. Common signs and symptoms of HIV are initial infection-fever, general malaise, flu like symptoms, swollen lymph glands followed by a phase in which no symptoms are present. Symptomatic phase- continued fatigue, chronic diarrhea, fever with night sweats, and swollen lymph glands. Progression into AIDS-pneumocystis carinii pneumonia, kaposi's sarcoma, CMV infection, and dementia. Most HIV infected persons are at high risk for TB.

14.4.2 Patient Handling Procedures

Communicable diseases can be transmitted in several ways (Direct, Indirect, and airborne):

- Body fluids in the form of saliva, sputum, blood, urine, vomit, and fecal matter. First Responder's must limit exposure to these fluids and minimize risk of infection by wearing PPE.

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- Open sores, wounds, or any unnatural opening of the skin is a transmission point. Members must note these high-risk areas on both the patient and themselves and not allow any direct contact. Consider proper PPE.
- Airborne particles of diseased materials may be encountered. A proper protective mask should be placed on them as well as attending First Responder. Consider other indicated PPE.
- Transmission can also occur through food, water, houseflies, ticks and mosquitoes.
- The provider's eyes can be an area prone to the receipt of foreign matter. Using the provided eye shield at all times during patient contact should protect them.

Note: Providers should wear the proper facemask covering both the mouth and nose, eye shields, disposable gowns and medical gloves. All open sores or wounds should be properly dressed at the start of the shift; and at any time that patient contact may be suspected, should be redressed.

14.4.3 Decontamination Procedures

All personal protective equipment will be properly disposed of. Soap should be provided for additional scrubbing to insure proper decontamination.

Upon completion of each response, any disposable equipment should be discarded in the proper disposal containers. Filled portable suction containers should be given to ambulance service for proper disposal.

Re-usable equipment (i.e. Blood Pressure Cuffs, Stethoscopes, etc.), should be disassembled, cleaned with disinfectant solutions, rinsed with water, then rinsed with 70% alcohol. All equipment should be dried completely prior to returning to service.

Stretchers, splints, and backboards should be cleaned with laundered cloths or paper towels wet with the properly diluted disinfectant solution after each patient use. The inside of the apparatus that soiled equipment is stored should be cleaned and disinfected on a regular basis.

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**15.0 Equal Membership
Opportunity**

15.1 Purpose

The purpose of this SOG is to ensure that equal membership opportunity exists within the Bergheim Volunteer Fire Department (BVFD).

15.2 Scope

These guidelines pertain to all BVFD members and applicants.

15.3 Guidelines

It is the policy of the BVFD to provide equal membership and advancement opportunity, and to administer its personnel practices without discrimination or harassment on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, disability, marital status, sexual orientation or any other unlawful criterion or circumstance(s). BVFD prohibits and will not tolerate any such discrimination or harassment.

BVFD is committed to a work environment in which all individuals are treated with respect, dignity and fairness. Each individual has the right to work in an environment that is free of discriminatory practices, including harassment, as such; the following guidelines pertain to all personnel.

BVFD provides equal opportunity for all applicants and members. BVFD does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age disability, sexual orientation, marital status, or veteran status. This policy applies to all areas of membership including recruitment, training, promotion, and social and recreational programs.

It is prohibited for BVFD to fail or refuse to make a member, to separate membership, or to otherwise discriminate against any person with respect to compensation, terms, conditions or privileges of membership (including training) because of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age disability, sexual orientation, marital or veteran status. Likewise, it is prohibited to limit, segregate, or classify members in any way which would deprive or tend to deprive any person of membership or firefighter opportunities because of any of these criteria. Notwithstanding the above, certain activities are not prohibited where a bona fide occupational qualification for the position can be determined.

All members of the BVFD are expected to be exemplary and outstanding citizens of the community. Even at times that a member is not in uniform or at an incident the member

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represents the BVFD. Morals and personal beliefs are taken into consideration in the membership process. In short, a person that the normal, reasonable person would wish to mentor or emulate would be the perfect person for membership.

Failure to follow these guidelines will result in disciplinary action as defined in BVFD SOG 12.0.

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**16.0 Complaint
Policy**

16.1 Purpose

The purpose of these guidelines is to assist the Fire Chief and Senior Officers in conducting a thorough and impartial investigation of any complaint including but not limited to discrimination and harassment allegations within the Bergheim Volunteer Fire Department (BVFD).

16.2 Scope

These guidelines apply to all BVFD members and applicants.

16.3 Guidelines

Conduct prohibited by these policies is unacceptable in the firehouse and in any work related settings outside the firehouse, such as during emergency response calls, business trips, and company related social events.

BVFD prohibits retaliation against any individual who, in good faith, reports discrimination or harassment or participates in any investigation of such reports. Retaliation against an individual for reporting harassment or discrimination or for participating in an investigation of a claim of harassment or discrimination is a serious violation of this policy and, like harassment or discrimination itself, will be subject to disciplinary action.

BVFD strongly urges the reporting of all incidents of discrimination, harassment, or retaliation, regardless of the offender's identity or position. Individuals who believe they have experienced, or who are aware of, conduct that they believe is contrary to BVFD's policy or have concerns about such matters should bring the matter to the attention of either their immediate supervisor or the Chief or Assistant Chief. If for any reason an individual believes that a complaint cannot or should not be raised through those channels, he or she should feel free to bring it to the attention of any member of the Governing Board for investigation/resolution.

Early reporting and intervention has proven to be the most effective method of resolving actual or perceived incidents of harassment. Therefore, while no fixed reporting period has been established, BVFD strongly urges the prompt reporting of complaints or concerns so that rapid and constructive action can be taken. Any member of the BVFD membership who believes that they have experienced harassing or discriminatory conduct have an obligation to pursue this complaint procedure. A member's failure to fulfill this obligation could affect his or her rights in pursuing further disciplinary action.

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The availability of these complaint procedures does not preclude individuals who believe they are being subjected to harassing conduct from promptly advising the offender that his or her behavior is unwelcome and requesting that it be discontinued.

Any reported allegations of harassment, discrimination or retaliation will be investigated promptly. The investigation may include individual interviews with the parties involved and, where necessary, with individuals who may have observed the alleged conduct or may have other relevant knowledge.

Confidentiality will be maintained throughout the investigatory process to the extent consistent with adequate investigation and appropriate corrective action.

If a person submits a complaint regarding harassment and request to remain anonymous, an investigation will be conducted and the request to remain anonymous will be honored, to the degree feasible under the circumstances, but anonymity can not be guaranteed. However, the person who registers the complaint needs to understand that failing to openly participate in the investigation may hinder the process of resolving the allegations.

Officers are required to respond to allegations of harassment in any of the following situations:

- A member believes he/she is being harassed or discriminated against and has brought it to a member of the Command Staff's attention.
- Any Officer has observed the behavior; or
- If the behavior was brought to the Officers attention by another source.

Senior Officers are to take prompt and/or corrective action upon receiving knowledge of any improper conduct as prescribed below:

1. Immediately take a preliminary statement from the member alleging harassment or discrimination, including the nature of the conduct and when it occurred. Everyone who has personally observed the conduct, he/she should document the observations in writing.
2. Take the information to the Chief or Assistant Chief, who will initiate a prompt and complete investigation. The investigation will include obtaining detailed statements from the complainant, the alleged harasser, witness and any other persons who may have relevant information.

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3. All persons who are questioned and/or involved in the investigation will be informed that any member has a right to make a complaint; that they should not discuss the investigation; and that retaliation of any form, including but not limited to negative comments about the complaint, will result in discipline up to and including termination.

4. After the investigation is completed, should the evidence support a conclusion that prohibited conduct took place, the Chief will determine the appropriate action to be taken: (1) to ensure the harassment ceases; (2) to correct the effects on the member; and (3) to ensure that the harassment does not reoccur. Depending on the nature of the conduct, this may include:

- A written warning that all improper conduct must cease immediately, and that further conduct of similar nature will result in immediate termination
- A written warning
- Remedial training
- Termination

Whether or not the investigation discloses prohibited conduct, the accused harasser will be informed that retaliation against the complainant will result in disciplinary action.

The Chief will notify the complainant concerning the results of the investigation. If it has been determined that conduct prohibited by the policy occurred, the complainant will be informed of the action already taken or to be taken. The complainant also will be requested to notify the Chief if any additional conduct of a similar nature occurs.

All inquiries, allegations, and/or findings against the accuser will be held in their personnel file until their resignation, transfer, or termination.

Misconduct constituting harassment, discrimination or retaliation will be dealt with expeditiously and appropriately. Responsive action may include, for example, training, referral to counseling and/or disciplinary action such as warning, reprimand, withholding of a promotion, temporary suspension, or termination, as BVFD Senior Officers believe to be appropriate under the circumstances.

Individuals who have questions or concerns about these policies should feel free to contact the Chief or Assistant Chief.

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All complaints and/or allegations will be considered serious and will be handled expeditiously and investigated within a reasonable amount of time. Every complaint or allegation will receive a response from the Chief.

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**17.0 Drug and Alcohol
Policy**

17.1 Purpose

The purpose of this SOG is to establish an alcohol and drug policy that communicates that alcohol and drug usage will not be acceptable or tolerated within the Bergheim Volunteer Fire Department (BVFD).

17.2 Scope

This policy pertains to all BVFD members and applicants.

17.3 Guidelines

To promote high standards of health and safety for members and citizens, BVFD prohibits the use, possession, sale, manufacture, or distribution of illegal or illicit drugs, alcohol or other controlled substance on its property, as well as reporting to an emergency call or scene under the influence of drugs or alcohol. This includes the sale or misuse of prescribed drugs. "Under the Influence" means being affected in any detectable manner by alcohol or illegal drugs or having the odor of alcohol on the breath. Members who violate this policy are subject to discipline, up to and including termination as defined in BVFD SOG 12.0.

Members shall not consume alcohol (even during off time) while wearing BVFD branding.

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**18.0 Media
Guidelines**

18.1 Purpose

The purpose of this SOG is to establish guidelines when news media is interested in Bergheim Volunteer Fire Department. Additionally, this SOG establishes guidelines related to BVFD and social media.

18.2 Scope

Although rare, there may be times when BVFD becomes involved in an emergency call, event, or public activity, where the news media is interested in obtaining specific information concerning a specific emergency call, personnel, equipment, actions, or policy of the department.

Social media provides a new and valuable means of assisting the BVFD and its members in meeting community outreach, problem-solving, investigation, recruitment, fire prevention, and related organizational and community objectives. The personal use of social media can also have an effect on BVFD members in their official capacity, either as individuals or on the BVFD as a whole. As such, guidelines have been established to ensure the integrity of the BVFD.

18.3 Guidelines

18.3.1 News Media

Unless authorized in advance by the Chief or Assistant Chief, no member of the BVFD shall release to anyone who is not a member of this department any information involving or related to any fire department incident or response.

Only the Chief, the Assistant Chief, or the Governing Board designee will make statements or release any information to the media.

Incident Commanders will have to make contingency plans to deal with a media response to fire scenes and other incidents. The media must not be allowed into the command post or behind fire lines for obvious safety, privacy, liability, and confidentiality reasons. Fire lines will have to be established as soon as possible when initiating operations.

All members of BVFD shall exercise extreme caution in the conversation they have between themselves at incident scenes. Bystanders in the area may overhear the conversation and potentially release it as official information.

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Only factual information may be released to the media. Speculative, suggestive, derogatory or opinionated information must be avoided. Members shall not talk "off the record". Verify the media representative if you are uncertain to whom you are speaking.

It is policy of the BVFD that no one will release the name or other vital statistics regarding civilians involved in or affected by fire department operations. No name of a deceased person will be released by any BVFD members.

18.4.2 Social Media

Members are cautioned that speech on or off duty, made pursuant to their BVFD duties or membership may not necessarily be protected speech under the First Amendment and may form the basis for discipline if deemed detrimental to the BVFD. Members should assume that their speech and related activity on social media will reflect upon BVFD and their position within the BVFD.

Members are not restricted from using social media as private citizens or for personal matters, so long as their use does not impair working relationships of the BVFD for which loyalty and confidentiality are important, impede the performance of duties, impair discipline and harmony among co-members, negatively affect the public perception of the BVFD, or violate any provisions of any BVFD SOG.

Members may not post any media (photo or video) depicting the use of BVFD branding in any negative manner. For example, members may not post photos of inappropriate behavior while wearing any BVFD logo.

Members are prohibited from the use of speech, images, comments, and/or cartoons containing obscene or sexually explicit language, images, or acts and statements or other forms of speech that ridicule, malign, disparage, threaten, harass, or otherwise express bias against any member of the BVFD.

Members may not make any statements, speeches, appearances, or endorsements that could reasonably be considered to represent the views or positions of the BVFD without express authorization.

Members may not post, transmit, or disseminate any photographs, video or other recordings obtained or accessible as a result of membership with the BVFD without the express authorization of the Chief or Assistant Chief.

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Members may not post any personal information, photographs, or recordings obtained as a result of an emergency call that would result in any HIPAA (see SOG 19.0) violations. This shall include photos and/or videos of scenes that depict license plates or other distinguishing vehicle markings.

18.4.3 BVFD Authorized Social Media

Authorized Department social media sites or webpages shall be approved in advance by the Chief or Assistant Chief.

Social media pages shall clearly indicate they are maintained by the BVFD and shall have BVFD contact information prominently displayed.

BVFD social media content shall adhere to applicable regulations and policies of the BVFD, including all information technology and records management policies.

BVFD social media pages should state that the opinions expressed by visitors to the page(s) do not reflect the opinions of the BVFD.

- Pages shall clearly indicate that posted comments will be monitored and that the BVFD reserves the right to remove obscenities, off-topic comments, personal attacks or any other comments as they see fit.
- Pages shall clearly indicate that any content posted or submitted for posting is subject to public disclosure.
- Pages shall clearly indicate the process for filing public information requests and that they are not to be used for emergency notification (i e., call 911).

Under no circumstances will photo images, video, or audio of any patients or their identifiers be posted online without their permission.

Members representing the BVFD via social media outlets shall do the following:

- Conduct themselves at all times as representatives of the BVFD and, accordingly, shall adhere to all BVFD standards of conduct and observe conventionally accepted protocols and proper decorum.
- Identify themselves as a member of the BVFD.

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- Not make statements or comments concerning pending BVFD legal matters, nor post, transmit, or otherwise disseminate confidential information.
- Not conduct political activities or private business.

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**19.0 HIPAA
Compliance**

18.1 Purpose

The purpose of this SOG is to ensure that all members of the Bergheim Volunteer Fire Department (BVFD) are made aware of the Health Insurance Protection and Accountability Act (HIPAA) as defined by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

18.2 Scope

To ensure that all members of the BVFD, including firefighters, first responders, and cadets who have access to patient information, understand the BVFD's concern for the respect of patient privacy and are trained in BVFD's policies and procedures regarding our HIPAA Policy.

18.3 Guidelines

According to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, **HIPAA** is the federal **H**ealth **I**nsurance **P**ortability and **A**ccountability **A**ct of 1996. HIPAA at its most basic says that the patient has a right to privacy and that we respect that right.

HIPPA created the term "protected health information" or PHI. PHI can be any medical information, but specifically is any information that can connect the patient with the condition. This includes the patient's name, condition, location, and hospital transported to. The patient can also ask to keep private any and all information, which must be complied with. This includes talking about the patient to the patient's family and friends, police, press, and anyone not directly responsible for patient care. As firefighters and first responder, members are responsible for maintaining the patient's privacy. This includes not interviewing the patient in front of bystanders, family, and non-EMS personnel.

Patient's privacy needs to be worked into all aspects of patient care. Privacy starts with the dispatch and radio correspondance. While it may be convenient and easier to find a location, the patient's name should be omitted from any and all radio transmissions. Anyone can buy a scanner, and with the address and name, figure out who the patient is. Ideally even the address wouldn't be given over the radio, but it is necessary for patient care, and therefore exempt from HIPAA.

When approaching a patient, members should introduce themselves, state that they are from Bergheim VFD, ask for permission to assess and/or treat, and ask if it is acceptable to talk in front of the patient's family/friends. Once permission to assess/treat and speak freely is granted, members should limit the number of personnel

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interacting with the patient. HIPAA allows you to share limited information but only with those in direct patient care to achieve effective patient care. Giving patient report to incoming EMS is considered patient consult and therefore is not a violation of HIPAA laws.

HIPAA does not make provisions for sharing information with police or other authorities not directly involved with patient care. That means that members cannot tell the police that the patient “smelled like a brewery” or “was found with a needle in their arm”.

Care must be taken to ensure HIPAA laws are not violated especially after a call. It is a natural tendency to go back to the station and discuss calls. HIPAA allows for review of calls for training purposes, but PHI needs to be protected.

In the small community of Bergheim, it is easy for people to talk. If a member goes home and talks to their family about the call, the location, the hospital the patient was transported to, or the patient's name, that member is violating HIPAA.

Another concern as far as HIPAA is involved is record keeping. HIPAA regulations spend quite a bit of time talking about security of records. All records must be secure and if used for debrief or training purposes must not have any patient demographics. All records on a computer must be password protected, encrypted, and meet stringent security requirements. Upon returning from a call, any medical information including patient care forms that have been recorded must be placed in the lock box on the joker stand. An officer shall periodically remove all records from locked box and file in a locked cabinet. Records shall be kept for a period of seven years before being destroyed. Destroyed records must be shredded.

All photographs and or video containing individually identifiable patient information are covered by HIPAA privacy laws and must be protected in the same manner as patient care reports and documentation. This shall include but not be limited to patient photos, addresses, vehicle license plates, or other identifiable visual characteristics of the patient or the scene. Additional topics are covered in SOG 18.0 Media Guidelines.

Members are required to report any violations of the HIPAA compliance policies and procedures to the Assistant Chief. Report should include the specific misconduct along with the identity of the compliance offender.

All members are to sign the HIPAA Compliance Affidavit shown below and have a copy placed in their personnel file prior to making any calls.

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HIPAA Compliance Affidavit

I hereby acknowledge and affirm that I have read and reviewed the HIPAA compliance policies and procedures of the Bergheim Volunteer Fire Department; I understand the provisions of the HIPAA compliance policies and procedures and am encouraged to ask any questions I may have regarding its requirements.

I understand that it is a condition of the BVFD to comply with the requirements of the HIPAA compliance policies and procedures and the BVFD overall HIPAA compliance SOG. I also realize that I am required to report violations of the HIPAA compliance policies and procedures when I am told of violations by any person or I witness the violation myself. I understand that I will not be punished for reporting misconduct of any magnitude or which involves any level of BVFD. personnel. I have been informed that I will be disciplined for failing to report such violations. I am familiar with the BVFD requirement to report misconduct and the identity of the compliance offender.

Signature

Printed Name

Date

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**20.0 Line
Officers**

20.1 Purpose:

This SOG shall define the position, rank, and responsibilities of active line officers. This SOG also covers how officers are appointed.

20.2 Line Officers:

20.2.1 There are currently four levels of active Senior Officers (Chief, Assistant Chief, Captain, and Lieutenant). Additionally, there are three secondary officer titles of Training Officer, Safety Coordinator, and Probationary Coordinator. The latter three positions are not mutually exclusive positions (i.e. these roles may be fulfilled by any of the active officers. Additionally, there are an unlimited number of Engineer positions. Engineer positions are not senior officer positions, but are earned positions within the fire department and are considered some of the more senior members regardless of years of service.

20.2.2 The Chief's position is appointed by the board of directors and follows policies and procedures as defined in the board of director bylaws. Assistant Chief, Captain, and the Lieutenant positions shall be an elected position and shall follow the election procedures defined in this SOG.

20.2.3 Senior Officers

20.2.3.1 The Chief is the head of the Bergheim Volunteer Fire Department, and is the final authority in all matters of policy, operations, and administration within the fire department, subject to the laws of the State of Texas. The Chief shall be referred to as "Chief" or "Chief *last name*" by all subordinates during any training or actual emergency response call. The designation of the Chief during radio communications shall be Chief 3-0.

20.2.3.2 The Assistant Chief, is the second in command to the Chief in all matters pertaining to fire suppression or any other emergency which requires the Bergheim Volunteer Fire Department response. In the absence of the Fire Chief, the Assistant Fire Chief shall assume the full authority in such emergencies. The Assistant Fire Chief shall direct all officers and members in conformance with the Department Rules and Procedures or nationally accepted standards in order to expedite proper performance; in accomplishing the assigned objectives at the scene of any emergency. The Assistant Chief shall be referred to as "Chief" or "Chief *last name*" by all subordinates during any training or actual emergency response call. The designation of the Assistant Chief during radio communications shall be Chief 3-1.

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20.2.3.3 The Captain, through the authority of the Chief is the third in command to the Fire Chief in all matters pertaining to fire suppression, or any other emergency which the Chief or the Assistant Chief are not present. The Captain shall assume full authority in such emergencies in any calls that are not attended by either the Chief or the Assistant. The Captain shall be referred to as "Captain" or "Captain *last name*" by all subordinates during any training or actual emergency response call. The designation of the Captain during radio communications shall be Captain 3-1. If more than one Captain is appointed, the second shall carry the designation Captain 3-2. These call signs should be established for each individual regardless of time in office.

20.2.3.4 The Lieutenants, through the authority of the Chief, are the fourth in command to the Chief. In all matters pertaining to fire suppression, or any other emergency which the Chief, Assistant Chief, and Captain are not present, the Lieutenants shall assume full authority in such emergencies. The Lieutenants shall direct all junior officers and members in conformance with the Department standard operating guidelines and/or nationally accepted standards, to expedite proper performance in accomplishing the assigned objectives at the scene of any emergency. The Lieutenants shall be referred to as "Lieutenant" or "Lieutenant *last name*" by all subordinates during any training or actual emergency response call. The designation of the Lieutenants during radio communications shall be Lieutenant 3-1, Lieutenant 3-2. If more than two Lieutenants are appointed, the numbering shall continue. These call signs should be established for each individual regardless of time in office. New Lieutenants shall assume the call sign of the officer they are replacing.

20.2.4 Junior Officers –Engineers/Secondary Officers

20.2.4.1 Engineers are senior members of the fire department who have demonstrated their knowledge and leadership abilities to earn the title. At minimum, Engineers have 2 years of experience, have a Class B non-CDL or higher, have a complete working knowledge of pump operations, including drafting, and demonstrate leadership and mentor roles within the department. Engineer appointments shall be made by a majority vote of the senior officers and a final approval of the Chief. Engineers may serve as either Company Commanders or as Secondary Officers.

20.2.4.2 Secondary Officers

20.2.4.2.1 Training Officer-The Training Officer/Coordinator will oversee the training material and record keeping. The training officer/coordinator may delegate the leading and instructing to different personnel from within the dept that

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meet educational requirements for teaching or bring persons from outside the dept in to teach. (I have found that having the responsibility to establish the material, gather equipment/ materials, coordinate, instruct and keep the records is too much of a work load on one individual).

20.2.4.2.2 Safety Coordinator – The Safety Coordinator is responsible for ensuring safety of all members during training as well as all public and BVFD member during an emergency response. All members are required to follow any requests or demands of the Safety Coordinator immediately. Responsibilities of the Safety Coordinator include:

- Monitor conditions, activities and operations. When there's a perceived risk, take action.
- Ensure rehab is established.
- Monitor and report the status of conditions, hazards and risks to the incident commander (IC) or Training coordinator.
- Ensure that the accountability system is being utilized.
- Using the incident action plan (IAP) from the IC, provide a risk assessment of incident scene operations.
- Ensure the establishment of safety zones, collapse zones, hot zones and other hazard areas. Communicate to all members present through one means (via command).
- Evaluate traffic hazards and apparatus placement. Take appropriate actions to reduce hazards.
- Monitor radio transmissions. Stay alert for missed, unclear or incomplete communications and bridge the gap.
- Communicate to the IC the need for additional safety support, based upon the size, complexity or duration of the fire or emergency.

20.2.4.2.3 Cadet Coordinator - A Cadet Coordinator position shall be established to oversee the training and conduct of the probationary members. Responsibilities of this position include the following:

- Development of a "welcome packet" detailing the Department's expectations and procedures for becoming a member.
- Ensure that all requirements are met before voting new members (NIMS, background check, consecutive meeting requirements, and parental release for Junior Members).
- Serve as liaison to parents of the Junior Members
- Ensure that Junior Members maintain high school grades

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20.0 Line
Officers

20.2.5 In the absence of a Line Officer, the most qualified, senior member shall assume the responsibilities of Acting Officer with the approval of the Chief (as defined in SOG 22.0). The Acting Officer may direct any properly trained members in the tasks or duties; of the position in which he/she is acting. Acting officers shall be accorded all the privileges pertaining to the office of which he or she is assuming and shall be obeyed and respected accordingly. Acting officers shall not alter or dismiss the standing orders of the regular officer without specific authority from a superior officer. A regular appointed officer of equal rank will take precedence in command at fires or other emergencies over acting officers.

20.2.6 When Senior Officers are not available for response to a scene, the most senior member and/or the most qualified member shall be in command.

20.2.7 A regular appointed officer of equal rank will take precedence in command at fires or other emergencies over acting officers.

20.2.8 All officers shall follow the same responsibilities and requirements of line members including but not limited to:

- 60% attendance policy during a revolving twelve month period
- Communication with other officers if they are going to miss a meeting, activity, or function
- Must meet all the driver's requirements including a Class B non-CDL or higher.

20.3 **Appointment Process.** There are three levels of appointment depending on the position

20.3.1 The Chief's position is appointed by the board of directors and follows policies and procedures as defined in the board of director bylaws.

20.3.2 Assistant Chief, Captain, and the Lieutenant positions shall be an elected position and shall follow the election procedures in the following manner. A senior officer(s) of higher rank than the open position shall make recommendations to the Chief. If the Chief is in agreement with the recommendation(s), he/she shall put it to a vote of the other senior officers. With regards to the Assistant Chief position, the Chief shall make a recommendation directly to the senior officers for majority vote.

20.3.3 Engineer and secondary officer appointments shall be made by a majority vote of the senior officers and a final approval of the Chief.

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**21.0 Cadet
Membership**

21.1 Purpose

This SOG shall define the guidelines for new members of the Bergheim Volunteer Fire Department (BVFD).

21.2 Preface

The BVFD exists to provide neighborhood-based emergency services to the community/public. Continued growth through new membership is essential for meeting this objective. This document provides guidelines for Cadet Membership requirements. For purposes of clarity the Senior Cadet Program is for probationary members over the age of 18. The Junior Cadet Program is for probationary members under the age of 18.

21.3 Senior Cadet Program

21.3.1 Senior Cadet membership will be extended to those candidates who have successfully completed the following requirements:

- Successfully Successful completion of the NIMS requirements (100, 200, 700, and 800) and provide certificates of completion to the Cadet Coordinator
- Successfully passed a department background check
- Successfully Attended 6 concurrent training meetings
- Successfully Voted into the BVFD by a quorum of acting non-cadet Bergheim members
- Senior Cadets must be over the age of 18

21.3.2 Senior Cadets must serve a probationary period of at least twelve months prior to being considered for promotion for full membership status. During the probationary period, Senior Cadets are required to attend at least 60% of the meetings and must not miss more than 3 concurrent unexcused meetings. Any waiver of these requirements shall require the approval of the Chief or Assistant Chief.

21.3.3 Senior Cadets will adhere to all regulations imposed on the Bergheim Volunteer Fire Department, including all applicable SOG's, Rules & Regulations, and similar governing documents and issues, as well as any additional such regulations for the Bergheim VFD Senior Cadet Program.

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21.3.4 Senior Cadets shall not drive any department vehicle until they have been moved to full membership status. The exception to this rule is when vehicles must be moved for weekly inspection. An officer may waive this requirement on a call-by-call basis. However, Cadets are not allowed to move or drive vehicles greater than 26,000 lb GVWR unless they have a current Class B non-CDL or higher or learner's permit.

21.3.5 Senior Cadets shall not attend any emergency call unless a senior Bergheim member of the department authorizes them on a call-by-call basis.

21.3.6 Senior Cadets shall have all the rights, privileges, and responsibilities of the Bergheim VFD facilities as full active members with the exception of voting new members in.

21.3.7 Senior Cadets shall wear appropriate identification (shirts and helmets) identifying their probationary status during all training and for all emergency response calls. Senior Cadets not wearing appropriate designation will not be allowed to attend emergency response calls.

21.3.8 The Chief and Officers will be responsible for any disciplinary actions or issues related to the Senior Cadet Program.

21.3.9 In order to graduate from the Senior Cadet Program, members must meet the following criteria:

- Meet all the attendance requirements detailed in Item 21.3.2.
- Successfully pass all the skills test requirements as provided by the Cadet Coordinator or Training Officer and have a current CPR certificate.
- The Cadet Coordinator and Training Officer will make recommendation of either promotion or continued training required to the Chief and/or Assistant Chief.
- The Chief or Assistant Chief will recommend candidate cadet to the Senior Officers for a vote (vote must be unanimous).
- Senior Cadets may be recommended for additional probationary training based on the recommendations of the Cadet Coordinator, the Chief, or one of the Senior Officers. Senior Cadets who have been recommended for

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**21.0 Cadet
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additional training will receive a written explanation from the Cadet Coordinator as to why they are not being advanced, which will include specific recommendations for areas of improvement.

- Senior Cadets who have been unanimously approved by the Senior Officers shall then be voted by a quorum of acting non-cadet Bergheim members.

21.4 Special Exceptions for Senior Cadet Program

21.4.1 Probationary period for Senior Cadets may be reduced to 3 months if commissioned as a firefighter by the State of Texas OR certified as an EMT/Intermediate/Paramedic through the State of Texas IF the senior cadet is perusing the medical side of Bergheim Volunteer Fire Department ONLY. This special exception must be approved by the Chief or Assistant Chief with the recommendation of the Training Officer. If at any point the senior cadet, with a reduced probationary period for medical choice only chooses to be a firefighter as well, the senior cadet will then fulfill the 12 month probationary period as stated for new senior members. During this time, Senior Cadets must attend at least 60% of the meetings and are excused for attendance when on shift. During the 3 month period, Senior Cadets who fall into this category are to become acquainted with BVFD equipment, personnel, policies, and procedures. Senior Cadets are still restricted from driving or attending emergency response calls without a senior member of the department.

21.4.2 Senior Cadets falling into this category must still meet all of the requirements for promotion as detailed in Section 21.3.9.

21.5 Junior Cadet Program

21.5.1 The Bergheim Volunteer Fire Department Junior Cadet Program is for members who are between the ages of 16 and 18.

21.5.2 Junior Cadets will adhere to all regulations imposed on the Bergheim Volunteer Fire Department, including all applicable SOG's, Rules & Regulations, and similar governing documents and issues, as well as any additional such regulations for the Junior Cadet Program.

21.5.3 Junior Cadet membership will be extended to those candidates who are over the age of 16 and have successfully completed all of the following requirements:

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- Successfully completed the NIMS requirements (100, 200, 700, and 800) and have provided certificates of completion to the Cadet Coordinator
- Successfully passed a department background check
- Attended 6 concurrent training meetings
- Voted into the department by a quorum of the acting non-cadet members
- Obtained a signed parental permission slip
- Provide monthly proof that all high school classes are being passed with a C grade or higher.

21.5.4 Junior Cadets must serve a probationary period of at least twelve (12) months or until their 18th birthday (whichever comes later) prior to being considered for promotion. During the probationary period, new members are required to attend at least 60% of the meetings and must not miss more than 3 concurrent unexcused meetings. Any waiver of these requirements shall require the approval of the Chief or Assistant Chief.

21.5.5 Junior Cadets may respond to emergency response calls and may ride on any apparatus. Under no circumstances shall Junior Cadets respond to emergency response calls in POV.

21.5.6 When responding to the department in their personal vehicles, Junior Cadets must obey ALL traffic laws regardless of the type or urgency of the call. The department will strictly enforce a NO TOLERANCE policy regarding driving. Junior Cadets must never run emergency lights in their POV.

21.5.7 At NO time will Junior Cadets be allowed to drive apparatus (trucks) including backing moving a vehicle for weekly inspection.

21.5.8 Junior Cadets shall wear appropriate identification (shirts and helmets) identifying their probationary status during all training and for all emergency response calls. Junior Cadets not wearing appropriate designation will not be allowed to attend calls.

21.5.9 Junior Cadets will be allowed to participate in all firefighting duties under the direct supervision of senior Bergheim members with the following standing exceptions:

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- Junior Cadets will not enter any Immediate Danger to Life or Health environment (IDLH) except during Bergheim VFD sanctioned training. If the firefighters are wearing air packs, Junior Cadets will not enter. This applies to interior and exterior atmospheres. Once a scene has been controlled and operations shift from suppression to overhaul, Junior Cadets may enter structures when it is appropriate for other firefighters to enter without breathing air and with the approval of the Bergheim Incident Command (IC) or other senior Bergheim member.
- Junior Cadets will not operate the hydraulic rescue tools or other power tools at actual rescue calls unless authorized and observed by the Bergheim IC or other senior Bergheim member. They may assist in other functions of the actual rescue.
- Junior Cadets will not operate power tools during fire fighting operations unless authorized by the Bergheim IC or other senior Bergheim member. After the fire has been called under control by the IC, Junior Cadets may operate power tools during overhaul operations. This includes gasoline exhaust fans, ventilation tools, saws, etc.
- Junior Cadets will get no closer than the Bergheim apparatus staging area on tank battery fires, fuel truck fires, and any other fire deemed to have an explosive hazard. Again, after the fire has been called under control, Junior Cadets may approach the scene with the approval of the Bergheim IC or other senior Bergheim member.
- Junior Cadets will not be the “nozzle man” on vehicle fires unless authorized by the Bergheim IC or other senior Bergheim member.
- Junior Cadets will not enter the hot zone of any technical rescue (such as swift water, confined space, trench, high angle/low angle, or any thereof not listed excluding vehicle extrication rescue) unless approved by the overseeing senior Bergheim member or Bergheim IC.
- Junior Cadets will not enter or function within any collapse zone or explosive perimeter after one has been declared.
- Junior Cadets will not be allowed to make any initial patient contact on any major vehicle accident until a senior Bergheim member has made an initial assessment and approved the Junior Cadet to approach the scene. Additionally, Junior Cadets will be limited in access to any situation where

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death or dismemberment has been identified by the IC or dispatch on any type of emergency response call.

- Additionally, Junior Cadets may be restricted by officers or the Bergheim IC when any situation is deemed dangerous above normal inherent dangers. In any instance where an officer, the IC, or other senior member determines that firefighters cannot supervise or otherwise utilize the services of the Junior Cadets, they will be required to abstain from participation in that aspect of the operation.
- Junior Cadets are not allowed to attend emergency response calls between the hours of 2200 and 0500. If a call is initiated before that curfew and carries into that timeframe, all Junior Cadets on scene will be brought back to the station (when and if at all possible) so that they do not violate the Boerne sanctioned curfew for underage minors.
- Junior Cadets are not allowed to attend emergency response calls during normal school hours. If Junior Cadets are available due to open timeslots in their class schedule, they must provide documentation to that effect to the Cadet Coordinator.

21.5.10 The Chief and Senior Officers will be responsible for any disciplinary actions or issues related to the Junior Cadet program.

21.5.11 In order to graduate from the Junior Cadet Program, members must meet the following criteria:

- Meet all the attendance requirements detailed in Item 21.5.4.
- Successfully pass all the skills test requirements as provided by the Cadet Coordinator and Training Officer and have a current CPR card
- The Cadet Coordinator and Training Officer will make recommendation of promotion to the Chief
- The Chief will recommend candidate cadet to the Officers for a vote (vote must be unanimous).

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- Based on the recommendations of the Cadet Coordinator, the Chief, and other Officers, Junior Cadets may be promoted to full member or recommended for additional probationary training. Junior Cadets who have been recommended for additional training will receive a written explanation from the Cadet Coordinator as to why they are not being promoted which will include specific recommendations for areas of improvement and will be moved to the Senior Cadet Program. Junior Cadets who have turned 18 prior to their probationary period will be automatically moved to the Senior Cadet Program, but must still adhere to the requirements for promotion.
- Junior Cadets who have been unanimously approved by the Senior Officers shall then be voted by a quorum of acting non-cadet Bergheim members.

21.6 Cadet Coordinator

21.6.1 A Cadet Coordinator position shall be established to oversee the conduct of all Cadet Members.

21.6.2 Responsibilities of this position include the following:

- Development of a “welcome packet” detailing the Department’s expectations and procedures for becoming a Bergheim Cadet.
- Ensuring that all requirements are met before voting new potential cadets (NIMS, background check, consecutive meeting requirements, and parental release for Junior Cadets).
- Serve as liaison to parents of the Junior Cadets
- Ensure that Junior Cadets maintain high school grades
- Make recommendations to Chief and other Officers for promotion of Junior Cadet Members to full membership once all objectives have been met satisfactorily met.

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**22.0 Acting
Officers**

22.0 Purpose

This SOG shall define the position, rank and responsibilities of acting officers within the Bergheim Volunteer Fire Department (BVFD)

22.1 Preface

When elected or appointed officers are not available for response or when an officer has resigned or been removed from duty with cause, acting officers will be in charge of that unit of activity.

22.2 Guidelines

22.2.1 Acting officers may be appointed by the immediate superior officer when officer has resigned, been removed, or relieved of duty with cause.

22.2.2 In the case of an officer, an acting officer shall serve for a period not to exceed thirty (30) days. The Chief and Assistant Chief shall appoint a new officer to the position during that time.

22.2.3 Acting officers shall have the authority and be required to enforce the regulations and orders of the position, and will be charged with the knowledge of and be accountable for the proper execution of the duties of such rank.

22.2.4 Acting officers shall be accorded all the privileges pertaining to the office of which he or she is assuming and shall be obeyed and respected accordingly.

22.2.5 Acting officers shall not alter or dismiss the standing orders of the regular officer without specific authority from a superior officer.

22.2.6 When appointed officers are not available for response to a scene, the senior member with the most experience and full driving status shall be in command of that incident.

22.2.7 A regular appointed officer of equal rank will take precedence in command at fires or other emergencies over acting officers.

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**23.0
Relationships**

23.1 Purpose

This SOG shall define relationships within members of the Bergheim Volunteer Fire Department (BVFD) and between BVFD members and the public.

23.2 Preface

Good working relationships, based on trust and mutual respect, are vital for successful emergency operations. Members of the BVFD are perceived by the public as representatives of the BVFD, whether on or off duty and their actions reflect on the BVFD. Therefore, violation of these rules for relationships by any member, regardless of rank, may be sufficient cause for disciplinary action, including reprimand, suspension, being relieved from duty, removal from rank, or termination.

23.3 Guidelines

23.3.1 General Conduct and Behavior: Members, whether on or off duty, shall follow the ordinary and reasonable rules of good conduct and behavior of law abiding citizens. They shall not commit any action(s) that tends to bring reproach or discredit upon themselves or the BVFD.

23.3.2 Truthfulness: Members are required to speak the truth at all times. They shall tell the truth whether under oath or not, in giving testimony, in connection with any order, and in connection with official duties.

23.3.3 Responsibility to Serve Public: Members shall provide service, counsel, direction, and assistance to the public. At all times, members shall respect the rights of individuals and perform departmental service with honesty, courage, discretion, fidelity, zeal, and sound judgment

23.3.4 Courtesy and Respect for the Public: Members shall be polite, courteous, kind, patient, and respectful when dealing with the public. They shall strive to win respect of law abiding citizens by a professional and impartial discharge of their duties.

Members shall be attentive to the needs of the public and shall strive to maintain a cool, even-tempered, professional attitude regardless of the provocation. They shall refrain from answering questions in a short or abrupt manner, and shall not use harsh, coarse, violent, threatening, profane, insolent, suggestive, sarcastic or insulting manner, gesture or action.

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Members shall use correct English when speaking, paying particular attention to grammar and pronunciation. They shall avoid slang or any actions, conducts or mannerisms which may annoy the public.

23.3.5 Providing Name and Department ID Number: Members shall politely give their name, department ID number, and other pertinent information to any citizen as requested, unless such action places the completion of an emergency assignment in jeopardy. Members are not required to provide personal information such as social security number, driver's license, age, or marital status to anyone outside of the BVFD.

23.3.6 Courtesy and respect for Fellow Members: Members shall treat all other members with the respect and response due to them as fellow members. They shall be courteous, civil, and respectful of their associates, supervisors, and officers and shall refrain from threatening, insulting or abusive language, gestures, and actions, whether on or off duty. Officers shall be addressed or referred to by their title or radio number as defined in SOG 20.0.

23.3.8 Abiding, Protection, and Support of Fellow Members: Members shall act together and protect one another in time of immediate or impending danger. Members shall cooperate and assist each other at every opportunity. Members shall not publicly criticize the work manner, performance, or duty of any other member except to an officer in the form of constructive criticism.

23.3.9 Provide Leadership and Maintain Discipline: Senior officers and Junior Officer shall be fair, honest and dignified in their relationships with subordinates. They shall cause obedience to all rules and orders, and shall promptly report and resolve any violation of laws, ordinances, rules or orders. They shall be careful and refrain from immoderate, violent or abusive language or actions in giving orders, directions and in conversation.

23.3.10 Issuing Orders: Orders shall be issued in clear, understandable language, civil in tone, and in pursuit of BVFD business or operations.

23.3.11 Equal and Impartial Treatment: Officers shall provide equal and impartial treatment of members. Officers shall reward merit with due recognition, and shall correct incompetence, misconduct, or negligence with due discipline.

23.3.12 Settling Disagreements: Members shall make every effort to settle disagreements the next highest ranking officer's level. All disputes and agreements shall try to be resolved at the Lieutenant level first and then at the

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Captain level before being resolved at the Chief Officer level. Disputes and disagreements can be made via verbal, written, or through electronic media such as email.

23.3.13 Suggestions for Improvement of the Department: Members are encouraged to offer suggestions for the improvement of the department. Suggestions should be made in writing to the Chief or the Assistant Chief, through their immediate supervisor. Members shall not make derogatory remarks or adversely criticize BVFD policies, operations or activities, on or off duty.

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**PAGE 24.0 Dress and
Appearance**

24.1. Purpose

The purpose of this SOG is to establish the expectations of Bergheim Volunteer Fire Departments (BVFD) dress and appearance for its members.

24.2. Scope

This policy pertains to all BVFD members and applicants.

24.3. Dress

24.3.1. Clean BVFD shirt

24.3.2. Navy blue station pants or blue jeans that are clean and without holes or stains.

24.3.3. Closed-toed shoes, black leather steel toed boots are preferred but are not required.

24.4. Appearance

24.4.1. Clean shaven, with the exception of a mustache

24.4.1.1. Should a member/applicant choose to not shave, they will not be allowed to participate in operations requiring a Self Contained Breathing Apparatus.

24.4.2. Hair is expected to be clean and natural in color. Hair must be able to be kept off of the shoulders and out of the eyes and still fit under a helmet.

24.4.3. May not wear strong colognes or perfumes

24.4.4. Nails are to be trimmed, not to extend past the fingertips

24.4.4.1. Should a member/applicant choose to have nail polish/artificial nails, they are to be clear and without color.

24.4.5. Jewelry

24.4.5.1. May wear a wedding band/engagement ring and/or a class ring.

24.4.5.2. No facial piercings

24.4.5.3. Females may wear small stud earrings, no hoops or dangling earrings.

24.4.5.4. Any jewelry lost or damaged is the responsibility of the member/applicant.

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**30.0 Attention To
Duty**

30.1 Purpose

This SOG shall define the general rules of attention to duty for all members of the Bergheim Volunteer Fire Department.

30.2 Preface

The Bergheim Volunteer Fire Department (BVFD) exists to provide neighborhood-based emergency services to the community/public. Members must be prepared and able to offer services, often in difficult circumstances. General rules of attention to duty are necessary to maintain good working order within BVFD and members shall abide by these rules. Violation of these rules of conduct by any member, regardless of rank, may be sufficient cause for disciplinary action, including reprimand, suspension, being relieved of duty, removal from rank, or termination. For purposes of this document, "Member" shall refer to any person within the rank and file of the Bergheim Volunteer Fire Department and shall include but not be limited to officers, active members, probationary members, as well as members waiting to be voted on.

30.3 Guidelines

30.3.1 Ethical Conduct: The Volunteer Fire Service is one which is founded on mutual respect and trust between firefighters and the citizens they serve. To ensure the continuing integrity of the BVFD, the highest standards of ethical conduct must be maintained at all times. As such, each BVFD member shall be responsible for the following:

- Always conduct themselves (both on and off duty) in a manner that reflects positively on themselves, the BVFD, and the fire service in general.
- Accept responsibility for their actions and for the consequences of their actions.
- Support the concept of fairness and the value of diverse thoughts and opinions.
- Avoid situations that would adversely affect the credibility or public perception of the volunteer fire service.
- Be truthful and honest at all times and report instances of cheating or other dishonest acts that compromise the integrity of the BVFD or the fire service.

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- Conduct personal affairs in a manner that does not improperly influence the performance of each member's duties, or bring discredit to the BVFD organization.
- Be respectful and conscious of each member's safety and welfare.
- Recognize that each of us serve in a position of public trust that requires stewardship in the honest and efficient use of publicly owned resources, including uniforms, facilities, vehicles, and equipment and that these are protected from misuse and theft.
- Exercise professionalism, competence, respect, and loyalty in the performance of their duties and use information, confidential or otherwise, gained by virtue of their position, only to benefit those they are entrusted to serve.
- Never engage in activities involving alcohol or other substance use or abuse that can impair their mental state or the performance of their duties and compromise safety while available for duty.
- Never discriminate on the basis of race, religion, color, creed, age, marital status, national origin, ancestry, gender, sexual preference, medical condition, or handicap.
- Never harass, intimidate, or threaten fellow members of the BVFD or the public, and stop or report the actions of other members who engage in such behaviors.
- Responsibly use social networking, electronic communications, or other media technology opportunities in a manner that does not discredit, dishonor, or embarrass the BVFD, the fire service, and the public.
- Always be aware that while wearing the BVFD branding (i.e. shirts, hats, vehicle stickers, etc.) is a direct reflection of the department even during off- duty activities.
- Always be mindful of the HIPAA Privacy Rules that govern ones conduct regarding the confidentiality, integrity, and availability of electronically protected health information of our constituents.

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30.3.2 Duty to Render Assistance: Members shall be attentive to and take suitable action to the best of their ability on requests for assistance from the public. If necessary, members shall summon additional aid, providing information as needed.

30.3.4 Safety: Members shall use reasonable precautions and safety measures to reduce the risk of injury or accident to the public, other members, and to property.

30.3.5 Duty to Act on Complaints: Members shall be attentive to and take suitable action to the complaints of the public. Members shall fulfill proper requests for information or assistance. Members should not shirk or avoid responsibility, or imply lack of attention to complaints. No matter how trivial the request may seem, each member shall thank the citizen for bringing the matter to his/her attention, and forward it to his/her immediate supervisor for further action. If possible, complaints should be resolved at the station level or throughout the chain of command.

30.3.6 Seeking Advice: Members who are unsure about the nature of an assignment or appropriate course of action shall seek information from their immediate supervisor/officer.

30.3.7 Company Training: Members shall be responsible for learning the skills necessary to safely and effectively complete their assignments as a member of a team. Training classes on all phases of BVFD activities, as required, will be coordinated by the BVFD Training Officer and conducted by other officers, members, chief officers, or outside agencies.

30.3.8 Territory: Members should have knowledge of streets, block numbers, hydrant locations, and target hazards in their coverage area. When responding to an alarm, members shall use the most direct route, considering traffic and street conditions at the time.

30.3.9 Acting in Higher Position: Members shall qualify themselves through training and observation for the next higher rank or position, so they may assume such duties as responsibilities in emergencies or as needed.

30.3.10 In the Absence of Designated Officers: In the absence of any officer designated to perform certain duties, his/her immediate junior or the most senior member shall perform those duties. In emergencies and absence of any officer, the most senior member with full driving privileges, shall act as officer.

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30.3.11 Contact Information: All members shall furnish a telephone number where they may be reached in time of need. Also members are required to provide an email address for general contact on day to day matters.

30.3.12 Change in Personal Status: Members shall immediately notify an officer of any change in personal status-address, telephone number, email address, place of employment, certification level, etc. Members are also required to notify officers of any changes to their driver's license.

30.3.13 Reporting Injuries: Members shall notify an officer or immediate supervisor as soon as possible of any injury sustained while on duty, no matter how slight, and an injury report must be filed. In the event a member is injured off-duty that requires time off from call or training, a written doctor's approval to return to duty must be supplied to an officer.

30.3.14 Communicable Disease, Drug Use, or Intoxication: Any member knowing or suspecting another member of having a communicable disease, using drugs not prescribed by a physician, being intoxicated while on duty, or engaging in unconventional activities shall report such activity through channels to the Fire Chief or Assistant Chief. Any member who feels that they may have been exposed to a communicable disease shall notify, in writing, their immediate supervisor as soon as possible.

30.3.15 Testifying in Departmental Investigations: Members shall answer questions and/or provide statements and/or material relevant to any BVFD or external investigation when directed to do so by an officer or supervisor.

30.3.16 Subpoena, BVFD-related Business: Any member summoned, or requested to appear in court, or to make a statement as a result of their knowledge of occurrences that may affect the BVFD shall immediately notify the Chief or Assistant Chief. Any member subpoenaed to testify on BVFD Business shall appear in dress uniform, neat in appearance, and in accordance with BVFD rules. Any member who receives a subpoena shall immediately notify in writing to an officer or their immediate supervisor.

30.3.17 Lawsuits, BVFD-related Business: Any member who has had a damage suit filed against him/her by reason of an act performed in the line of duty shall immediately notify the Chief or Assistant Chief and furnish a copy of the complaint together with a complete and accurate account of the circumstances in question to the Chief or Assistant.

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30.3.18 Station Cleanliness and Integrity: The kitchen, training room, joker stand, truck bays, and upstairs rooms are available to all members. Members are responsible for maintaining these areas in a neat and orderly condition at all times. The persons using them will wash dishes. Chairs and tables will be straightened and all debris will be removed from the area by the members using the facilities. Equipment may not be removed from these rooms without authorization of a Senior Officer. Dirty laundry shall not be left unattended. All BVFD-issued PPE shall be returned to lockers after every call. Members are expected to take on the "leave the station cleaner than I found it" attitude.

30.3.19 Saluting: Members shall salute the National Colors and the National Anthem with either a hand salute or right hand covering the heart while in uniform. If not in uniform, members shall stand at attention and remove head gear as the National Colors pass.

30.3.20 Relieved of Duty: Any member may be relieved of duty by an officer or a supervisor under circumstances of emergency- such as intoxication, willful refusal to obey orders, or other behavior that may cause the best interest of the BVFD to suffer by the member's remaining on duty.

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**31.0 Driving
Procedures**

31.1 Purpose

This SOG defines the procedures to be used by all members when driving Bergheim Volunteer Fire Department (BVFD) vehicles during emergency and non-emergency responses.

31.2 Preface

All members must practice safe driving habits regardless of nature of the situation. The safety of the public and fellow members, along with the protection of the Department property is the responsibility of the driver, or the operator of the apparatus. These procedures are in place to ensure a safe, timely response. Failure to follow these procedures will result in strict disciplinary action.

31.3 Guidelines

All members of the BVFD driving apparatus shall be at least twenty-one (21) years of age. He/she shall have at least a current class "B" non-CDL license issued by the Texas Department of Public Safety in order to operate any vehicle with air brakes or with a GVW rating of 26,000 lb or greater. Any member who has had their drivers' license revoked, suspended, or restricted shall immediately notify the Chief or Assistant Chief in writing. In such instances, the member shall be prohibited from driving any apparatus and from any Department activities, which would require the member to drive any vehicle while representing the Department, including emergency responses. Failure to report shall result in disciplinary action.

31.3.1 In addition, each member wishing to drive a Department vehicle must:

- a. Not have more than two (2)-moving violations in three (3) years.
- b. Be a member for at least twelve (12) months
- c. Must not be on probationary or cadet status
- d. Exhibit practical driving and operating skills for each Department apparatus to be driven (see section 31.4 Getting Certified to Drive).

An officer may waive requirements b, c, and d as required for an individual emergency incident. Any waiver is only temporary. At no time will a waiver be granted for any member with a revoked, suspended, or restricted license.

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31.3.2 Drivers shall report to a Chief Officer any physical or other condition that may temporarily or permanently affect their ability to safely operate an emergency vehicle. The member shall not operate a Department vehicle until the condition is corrected.

31.3.3 Drivers shall obey all traffic rules and regulations at all times, except as allowed by law while responding to emergency situations. Excessive speed is strictly forbidden.

31.3.4 ALL MEMBERS AT ALL TIMES IN WHICH THE VEHICLE IS IN MOTION MUST WEAR SEAT BELTS.

31.3.5 Drivers shall be responsible for the safe operation of the Department vehicles. The officer in charge shall be responsible for any actions of the driver.

31.3.6 When driving non- emergency:

- a. Drivers shall be aware of clearances required for apparatus to prevent personal injury or property damages.
- b. Drivers shall practice defensive and courteous driving techniques.
- c. When backing a vehicle, the driver shall turn on emergency flashers to alert others of his/her intent. A second member shall be used to ensure safe backing and relay pertinent information via hand signals to the driver.

31.3.7 Emergency response allows drivers of authorized emergency vehicles to request right-of-way. However, the driver is still responsible for the safe operation of the vehicle and must drive with "due regard" for others. When responding as an emergency vehicle:

31.3.7.1 Definition of Due Regard - "a situation in which there is high probability of death or serious injury to an individual or significant property loss and action by an emergency vehicle operator may reduce the seriousness of the situation" – U.S. DOT, Emergency vehicle operators' guide.

31.3.7.2 Driver's may:

- Stop, stand by or park wherever necessary

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- Proceed past traffic signals only after coming to a complete stop

31.3.7.3 Driver's must:

- Use both audible and visual signals "as may be necessary"
- Drive with "Due Respect"
- Drive without "reckless disregard for others"
- Realize that an accident can happen to you

31.3.7.4 Due regard is "how a reasonably careful person performing under similar situations would act. "Only emergency vehicle operators must drive with "due regard". This means that, as an emergency vehicle operator, you:

- Are held to a higher standard
- Must give enough notice to warn of a possible collision
- May be held liable and responsible for any consequences

31.3.7.5 Negligence is "failure to use a reasonable amount of care, when such failure results in injury to another. Failure to use reasonable care could mean:

- Traffic laws were not followed
- SOG's were not used or enforced
- Driving without "due regard"
- "When such failures result in the injury to another" means that someone else suffers an injury or loss due to the result of your actions.

31.3.7.6 In summary, operation of an emergency vehicle is serious business. As an emergency operator, you have a duty to drive with due regard. As an emergency vehicle operator, you must not endanger others by your actions. You may ask for the right of way and you should drive defensively.

31.3.8 During all emergency responses:

31.3.8.1 At no time shall a driver respond to a call as a single member. This is due to safety considerations.

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31.3.8.2 Drivers shall use visual and audible warning devices as required by the law. Continuous use of friction sirens or air horn use is discouraged due to electrical and air system loads. Excessive use of air horns may affect braking ability.

31.3.8.3 Driver's shall operate with due regard.

31.3.8.4 Use of emergency lights and sirens allows the driver to ask for the right of way – it does not allow him/her to take it. If emergency signaling devices do not result in other vehicles yielding the right of way, it shall not be taken in any circumstance.

31.3.8.5 Excessive speed for conditions or in violation of ordinances is strictly forbidden. Officers and drivers shall be responsible for any excessive speed of their apparatus.

31.3.8.6 When approaching a green traffic signal, the driver shall slow down and be prepared to stop prior to entering the intersection, if necessary.

31.3.8.7 When approaching a red traffic signal or stop sign, the driver shall be able to stop prior to entering the intersection, and shall proceed through the intersection only after all other vehicles have yielded the right of way and stopped as verified by the member riding in the officer seat.

31.3.9 Department apparatus shall not be driven over private drives, bridges or other access unless absolutely necessary.

31.3.10 Any apparatus with an integrated pump must have the rear tire chalked prior to engaging the pump. It is recommended that any apparatus with an integrated pump be chalked anytime the apparatus is outside the BVFD bay even if the pump is not to be operated.

31.4 Getting Certified to Drive

31.4.1 Any member wishing to drive a BVFD emergency vehicle must request a BVFD Driver Evaluation/Apparatus Sign-off form from the Training Officer and show a copy of his/her driver's license (class "B" non-CDL or higher or learner's permit for any vehicle with air brakes or with a GVW rating of 26,000 lb or greater).

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31.4.2 A BVFD Driver Evaluation/Apparatus Sign-off form must be signed by two evaluators and a Chief Officer for each vehicle a member is eligible to drive. Any officer or engineer can serve as an evaluator. However, the approving Chief Officer may not be one of the evaluators. Evaluation shall consist of the following:

- Knowledge of apparatus and all equipment associated with apparatus
- Operation of apparatus and all equipment
- Pump operation (if applicable)
- Ride along/safe driving

31.4.3 All BVFD Driver Evaluation/Apparatus Sign-off forms shall be kept in the member's personnel file.

31.4.3 Should a member become active after being inactive, he/she will have to complete new BVFD Driver Evaluation/Apparatus Sign-off forms for each vehicle he/she intends to drive

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**32.0 Apparatus
Backing**

32.1 Purpose

This SOG shall define the guidelines to ensure safe backing practices.

32.2 Preface

The Driver of Bergheim VFD apparatus is held responsible for the safe handling and maneuverability of the apparatus he/she is operating. While driving, Drivers shall try to avoid backing. If you miss a turn, it is usually safer and faster to find somewhere else to turn around or go back around the block. Drivers should avoid backing alone under all situations unless absolutely necessary.

3.2.3 Guidelines

In the event backing is deemed the best action or only option, extreme caution should be taken and the following steps should be adhered to:

32.3.1 Backing Alone

32.3.1.1 Drivers should avoid backing alone under all situations unless absolutely necessary.

32.3.1.2 Drivers will not back apparatus onto paved public roadways without having someone stop traffic unless there is no other choice. The Driver must walk around the vehicle before backing to ensure clear backing.

32.3.1.3 Drivers that choose to back while on private roads, fields, lots, etc. will stop the apparatus, get out and check for a clear path, and if necessary use traffic cones to block access of other vehicles and pedestrians.

32.3.1.4 When backing alone into the fire station, the Driver will be responsible for ensuring the bay door(s) are closed after the vehicle has been parked.

32.3.1.5 Emergency lights should always be used while backing. The driver shall also give two short horn bursts to make everyone aware of his/her intent Remember that you are never given the "Right of Way" while backing even if your emergency lights are on.

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**32.0 Apparatus
Backing**

32.3.2 Backing With a Partner

32.3.2.1 Before backing, the Driver will stop the apparatus to let a backer off. Once in position and traffic has stopped, the Driver may resume backing when signaled by the backer. The backer shall not assume a position in the road where traffic is moving or is potentially moving.

32.3.2.2 When backing into a fire station, the backer will be responsible for securing the apparatus door.

32.3.2.3 The backer must use extreme caution when exiting the apparatus, as not to be struck by a vehicle. Do not exit the apparatus until it has come to a complete stop. The backer should always wear a bunker coat or reflective vest and carry a flashlight at night. If necessary, use radio communications on a Bergheim OPS Channel (e.g. BVFD Ops 1). Never turn your back to other vehicles. The backer will take position on the Driver side of the apparatus near the rear to have a good view of two sides. Do not stand behind the apparatus.

32.3.2.4 The Driver must also have visual contact with the backer when on ground. Emergency lights should always be used while backing. The driver shall also give two short horn bursts to make everyone aware of his/her intent. Remember that you are never given the "Right of Way" while backing even if your emergency lights are on.

32.3.2.5 When coming into the fire station, apparatus should not back in off the main road unless apron is blocked by other apparatus.

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33.0 Vehicle
Inspections

33.1 Purpose

This SOG shall define the guidelines for inspecting the vehicles.

33.2 Preface

Emergency vehicles must always be ready to respond. Regardless of whether a vehicle responds to a call once an hour or once a month, it must be capable of performing in the manner for which it was designated at a moment's notice. In order to ensure this performance, proper vehicle inspections must be performed on a regular basis.

Each member of Bergheim VFD is responsible for ensuring that all vehicles are properly inspected and that each vehicle is equipped with its full complement of equipment, tools, supplies, water, fluids, etc.

Vehicle inspections do not take the place of periodic maintenance. Periodic maintenance and/or vehicle repair is performed by the County and records are kept by Bergheim officers. Vehicle inspection records are maintained by Bergheim officers.

33.3 Guidelines

All vehicles that are operated on a regular basis must undergo weekly vehicle inspections. These inspections will usually take place during the first hour of our weekly Tuesday night training.

Each vehicle shall be checked in the following manner:

33.3.1 Prior to pulling the vehicle out of the bay, ensure that the Kussmaul charger is properly plugged into the vehicle and that the charging light is illuminated. Upon starting the vehicle, ensure that the Kussmaul plug properly ejects prior to moving the vehicle. Note - when starting a diesel-fueled vehicle, ensure that the glow plug light goes out before cranking the starter.

33.3.2 Pull the vehicle out of the station and park outside the corresponding bay. If a vehicle is equipped with wheel chocks, they should be placed fore and aft of the driver's side rear wheel prior to beginning the inspection.

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33.3.3 Begin the vehicle inspection using the vehicle inspection books. The vehicle inspection books have been designed to have the vehicles inspected in the following order:

33.3.3.1 Start with a quick cursory walk around of the vehicle to ensure cleanliness and note anything out of the ordinary.

33.3.3.2 Begin the formal inspection in the cab of the vehicle.

33.3.3.3 Open the hood and check the components under the hood. Make sure the vehicle has been turned off at least 5 minutes before checking the engine oil.

33.3.3.4 Check all tire pressures. If necessary, fill according. Record all "as left" pressures.

33.3.3.5 Continue checking the vehicle in a counter-clockwise manner beginning at the driver side door.

33.3.4 Each page of the vehicle inspection checklist should be initialed by the member/firefighter and record his/her number upon completion. Vehicle checklists can take the form of hard copy or electronic copy.

33.3.5 If any vehicle is missing or low on supplies, fluids, equipment, etc. members should make every effort to correct the problem. If a problem cannot be corrected immediately, the "Inspection Issues" page of the inspection book should be filled out. On this sheet, the member should include the date, a brief description of the issue, and initial and write down his/her number. The issue should then be brought to an officer's attention. It is now the officer's responsibility to ensure that proper corrective action is performed. Upon completion of the corrective action, the officer shall fill out the "Inspection Issues" page documenting the corrective action, the date the correction took place, and initial.

33.3.6 Special Considerations

33.3.6.1 Items that have been identified as "Operate" in the vehicle inspection sheet should be started and/or operated to ensure proper function.

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33.0 Vehicle
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33.3.6.2 SCBAs should be turned on to ensure proper battery levels and tank pressures should be recorded. SCBA spare bottles should have the tank pressures recorded. Any tank pressure less than 4000 psi should be removed from service and filled. If a tank is removed from an SCBA, it should be replaced with one of the spare bottles.

33.3.6.3 Medical bags or jump bags should be inspected in addition to the vehicles. Ensure that minimum quantities are maintained. Drug bags should only be checked by approved members.

33.3.6.4 Pumps should be operated only by members who have been properly trained on their operation and safety procedures.

33.3.6.5 Perform a radio check on each vehicle by switching both the vehicle radio and the base station to the Bergheim Ops channel. Check radio operation both sending and receiving radio communications.

33.3.7 Bergheim officers shall maintain vehicle inspection records for one calendar year after the vehicle inspection year is complete.

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**34.0 Personal Protective
Equipment**

34.1 Purpose

This SOG shall provide policy Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for Bergheim Volunteer Fire Department (BVFD) members when responding to emergency calls.

34.2 Scope

Each member of BVFD required to perform fire, rescue, and EMS activities will be issued a complete set of structural firefighting clothing that meets or exceeds National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) standards.

Protective equipment for personnel will include protective turnout coat, bunker pants, gloves, boots, helmet, and flash hood, and respiratory mask.

Wildland/brush gear (not including boots) is also provided.

34.3 Guidelines

34.3.1 It is the responsibility of every firefighter to wear and properly utilize BVFD issued personal protective equipment ("PPE" or turnout gear) when engaged in firefighting, emergency, extrication, and/or training evolutions. Personal Protective Equipment must be worn properly and in its entirety, as outlined below:

- Helmet, with eye protection in place.
- Turnout/bunker coat, which must be fully closed and secured with the collar in the up position.
- Department issued fire gloves.
- Bunker pants and boots.
- Protective hood, which must be properly worn with the base hem completely tucked under the coat and collar as to completely cover the neck.

34.3.2 It is the policy of the BVFD that personnel involved in all phases of interior structural firefighting wear a complete set of PPE as outlined above (including SCBA). This is to include the hood, which must be in place and properly worn. Unless advised to the contrary by an Officer, Acting Officer, Chief, or other Incident Commander, the entire PPE "ensemble" must be worn.

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**34.0 Personal Protective
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34.3.3 Full bunker gear or wildland gear approved for extrication, with attached face shields (eye protection) shall be worn when in the area of anyone operating power or hydraulic equipment. Personnel will wear a minimum of a helmet and a bunker coat or reflective vest when working in or near vehicle traffic. If a rescue is in progress, those involved in the rescue or on hose lines shall wear full protective clothing. Personnel will make every effort to don the appropriate level of protective clothing prior to arrival on scene.

34.3.4 For wildland/brush fires, firefighters shall don BVFD provided wildland/brush gear, gloves, helmet, and appropriate eye protection. Anytime a member is traveling in the man wells, helmets and eye protection must be worn.

34.3.5 Active firefighters and all officers will be issued complete PPE. All PPE will be assigned by the Assistant Chief. All members are required to complete and pass an online class (PPE101.com) prior to being bunker gear. PPE101.com describes proper care and maintenance of bunker gear. Each member is responsible for the care and upkeep of the equipment. This includes cleaning bunker gear on a regular basis. All PPE must be carefully inspected and cleaned following use. Any missing, damaged, or inadequate PPE should be reported to an officer immediately, and if necessary taken out of service. Requests for new or replacement PPE or for PPE repairs should be brought to the attention of the Assistant Chief.

34.3.6 All firefighters and officers will wear turnout coats and pants. Chiefs will wear white helmets with their turnouts, the Captain will wear a red helmet, and the Lieutenants will wear yellow helmets indicating their rank. All firefighters will wear black helmet; Probationary firefighters will be identified by blue helmets. Additionally the Safety Coordinator will wear a green helmet.

34.3.7 For calls that involve contact with bodily fluids (blood, vomit, feces, saliva, etc), PPE shall be properly cleaned immediately upon return and out of service until such time.

34.3.8 Prior to arriving to any first responder/medical call, all responding members shall don properly fitted latex gloves even under bunker gloves. On calls where excessive amounts of bodily fluids exist or know communicable diseases exist; members should consider wearing two layers of latex gloves.

34.3.9 Personal Protective Equipment is the property of BVFD. All PPE will be turned into the Assistant Chief upon any member entering inactive status. The

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**34.0 Personal Protective
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property will be identified in the computer system as being in the custody of BVFD.

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**PAGE 39,0 Medical
Response**

39.1 Purpose

39.1.1 The purpose of this SOG is to establish a policy that defines how to respond to a medical call and defines what is acceptable versus unacceptable for members of the Bergheim Volunteer Fire Department (BVFD).

39.2 Scope

39.2.1 This policy pertains to all BVFD members and applicants.

39.3 Guidelines

39.3.1 This policy shall establish that members shall respond to medical calls when appropriately paged out by Kendall County dispatch or Active911 unless:

39.3.1.1 Called directly at the station, the member will then relay the information to dispatch, to page out to the rest of the department and EMS.

39.3.1.2 Dispatch paged out EMS for a medical call, in the Bergheim response area or in Kendalia's response area, and failed to page out Bergheim

39.3.2 Members will respond to medical calls, taking an appropriate vehicle that they are checked off to drive, and will continue to the scene until EMS has made patient contact, regardless if EMS has told BVFD to cancel prior to making patient contact.

39.3.3 Upon arrival to the scene, members will provide patient care, or assist the medics with requested tasks, so long as it is within the members scope.

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**40.0 Apparatus
Responses**

40.1 Purpose

This SOG shall define calls by nature code and the type of response (emergency or non-emergency) required by this department. It is the intent of this SOG to reduce the amount of emergency responses that, in turn, will lessen the chances of fleet accidents, which are costly and generally cause bodily harm.

40.2 Preface

Each Driver and Officer is responsible for knowing the appropriate response for each nature code. Situations may arise in which judgment must be used (i.e.: additional information received by Radio Dispatch), in such cases, always error on the side of saving lives and conserving property. The Incident Commander reserves the right to upgrade any non-emergency response for just cause.

At no time shall a member respond to a call without a minimum crew of 2 members, unless an officer (Lieutenant or higher) authorizes verbally or by text message. Authorization shall be made on a call-by-call basis at the discretion of an officer.

40.3 Nature Codes and Appropriate Responses

EMERGENCY RESPONSES

- Aircraft emergencies
- Automatic alarm without a call back
- Child locked in a vehicle
- Commercial fire
- Dumpster / trash fire
- Gas / smoke in a building
- Haz-mat responses
- MVA's Relief crews / rehab
- MVA's with entrapment
- Mutual aid responses
- Hi-angle rescue
- Trench rescue
- Water rescue
- Structural fires
- Train accidents
- Vehicle fires

NON-EMERGENCY RESPONSES

- Assist Law Enforcement
- Automatic alarm with a call back
- Gas / smoke in the area
- Illegal burning
- Live wires / wires down
- Transformer fires
- Unknown nature calls

- Service calls
- Back-in assignments
- Cascade responses
- Wash down / fluid spills

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40.0 Apparatus Responses

40.4 Proper Response of Vehicles

A. Response Area Calls

1. Grass Fires
 - a. Brush Truck-units
 - b. Pumper/Tender
 - c. Rehab
2. Structure Fires
 - a. Pumper/Tender-units
 - b. Tankers
 - c. Squad
 - d. Rehab
3. Still Alarms (car fires, trash fires, power lines down)
 - a. Pumper/Tender

B. Out of Response Area Calls

1. Grass Fires
 - a. Brush Truck -closest unit
 - b. Rehab
2. Structure Fires
 - a. Pumper/Tender
 - b. Rehab
 - c. Next closest unit moves up to ready status
3. Still Alarms
 - a. No unit will respond unless requested. If Bergheim is toned then an officer should advise fire desk that we will be standing by until the unit responding advises.

BVFD does not want to take all of our units out of service for a call. We don't want to have excessive radio traffic of units going en route when they are not needed.

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41.0 POV Response

41.1 Purpose

This SOG shall define how Bergheim Volunteer Fire Department (BVFD) members respond to calls in their personnel vehicles (POV).

41.2 Preface

All members must practice safe, responsible driving habits, regardless of the nature of the incident. The safety of the public, our family and friends, and our fellow members are the most important priority.

41.3 Guidelines

41.3.1 All responding BVFD members will respond in a lawful, safe, and prudent manner to the Bergheim Fire Station in their POV after being dispatched for an incident.

41.3.2 No member will respond directly to any scene without approval of the incident commander. If command has not been established, then the highest ranking officer en route or on scene will be the only person that can give permission.

41.3.3 No member will respond to the station in a vehicle that does not have insurance on that vehicle.

41.3.4 No member will be allowed to drive to the station without a current valid driver's license.

41.3.5 All members will obey all traffic laws, including speed limits.

41.3.6 No member will be allowed to use emergency flashers while responding to the station or to a scene.

41.3.7 No member (even if installed on their vehicle) will be allowed to respond with emergency lights, to the station or to the scene unless approved on a call-by-call basis by the highest ranking Officer En route. No emergency lights will be used at all unless pre-approved by the Chief.

41.3.8 All members must park in designated parking spots. If no spots are available, members shall park in the asphalt training area east of the station. Members shall never block a bay door with a POV.

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**42.0 Incident
Response**

42.1 Purpose

The purpose of this SOG is to define the responsibilities of Bergheim Volunteer Fire Department (BVFD) crews responding to an emergency call.

42.2 Scope

The scope of the SOG pertains to all officers and members who respond to emergency call for the BVFD. The existence of these written guidelines is not intended to limit any member in the exercise of judgment or initiative in taking the action a reasonable person would take in extraordinary situations that may arise in the fire service. Much by necessity must be left to the training, experience, initiative, integrity, and discretion of the members of the BVFD

42.3 Guidelines

Each Member will be given a Pager and/or an Active 911™ account by which they can receive pages/tones from Kendall County Dispatch. Each member should respond directly to their appropriate station except as defined by BVFD SOG 42.0.

42.3.1 Arriving at the Station

Upon arriving at the station, the first arriving member should contact dispatch to let them know that Bergheim is "In Service". If the nature of the call requires a brush truck, the brush truck pump should be started prior to contacting dispatch. We do not want to put the station in service if our equipment is unable to respond.

Upon arrival firefighters shall:

- 1 Don the appropriate PPE gear for the nature of the call.
 - a. Confirmed structure fire, suspected structure fire, smoke alarm, etc. requires full bunker gear including SCBA masks.
 - b. Vehicle accident requires either full bunker gear or approved Tecgen gear.
 - c. Grass, brush, or wildland fire requires either Tecgen gear or wildland gear.
 - d. Medical related calls require appropriately dressed attire. Consider wearing bunker pants since the full nature of the call is often not conveyed over the pager system.

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**42.0 Incident
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e. No matter the nature of the call, bunker gear shall be packed since the call may change, we may need to land air support, or may get paged for a different call during or after the current call.

2 Open appropriate bay doors. When not sure of which apparatus to use, wait until arrival of an officer, engineer, or senior member.

3 Wait for officer, engineer, or senior member to make vehicle assignments.

4 Once assigned a vehicle, members should secure seatbelt and SCBA (as required).

5 Obtain a two-way radio from the joker stand and secure in bunker gear. Leave radio in the off position until exiting the vehicle at the scene.

Upon arrival engineers/drivers shall:

- 1 Don the appropriate PPE gear for the nature of the call.
 - a. Confirmed structure fire, suspected structure fire, smoke alarm, etc. requires full bunker gear including SCBA masks. Drivers shall pack gear, but are not required to don jackets or gloves.
 - b. Vehicle accident requires either full bunker gear or approved Tecgen gear.
 - c. Grass, brush, or wildland fire requires either Tecgen gear or wildland gear.
 - d. Medical related calls require appropriately dressed attire. Consider wearing bunker pants since the full nature of the call is often not conveyed over the pager system.

2 Start the appropriate response apparatus

3 Do a walk around and inspect the status of the apparatus

4 Verify the location and directions to the call address

5 Verify that everyone on the vehicle is wearing a seatbelt Upon arrival the highest

ranking officers shall:

- 1 Don the appropriate PPE gear for the nature of the call.

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- 2 Determine what and how many apparatus are required for the call.
- 3 Assign members to vehicles.
- 4 Conduct all communications for responding unit(s)
- 5 Secure the Bergheim Station upon departure (i.e. make sure no doors are left open
- 6 In the absence of an officer, the engineer, or senior member shall make the assignments.
- 7 The right seat of each apparatus is reserved for the highest ranking officer on board or most senior member on board.
- 8 Determine whether or not to run code and convey information to all Engineers/Drivers of other vehicles
- 9 Obtain a two-way radio from the joker stand (if not assigned one) and secure in bunker gear. Leave radio in the off position until exiting the vehicle at the scene.
- 10 Don a SCBA when applicable.
- 11 Upon leaving the station, the officer in first out vehicle should contact dispatch and tell them which vehicles are en route and repeat the call address. Unless a vehicle leaves the station later than the first out vehicle, only one contact should be made to dispatch in order to reduce non-vital radio traffic.

42.3.2 En Route to Call

When en route to all members MUST wear seatbelts until the vehicle has come to a complete stop and emergency brakes applied. At no time should any member don a firefighting helmet while a vehicle is in motion. Also, all handheld radios should be in the off position.

While en route firefighters shall:

- 1 Receive initial assignments from the officer

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- 2 Secure a flashlight
- 3 Mentally prepare for arrival.
- 4 If you are unclear about your initial assignment get additional details from the Officer on board.

Drivers/Engineers shall

- 1 Concentrate on driving only and shall not be communicating on radio
- 2 Alert other public drivers when approaching intersections
- 3 Prepare for parking vehicle based on the nature of the call Officers shall
- 1 Activate warning lights
- 2 Conduct all radio communications. Contact with dispatch shall only be done by the officer in the first out or lead vehicle.
- 3 Give out initial assignments to other members in the vehicle. Everyone should know what they're doing when first arriving on scene. Assignments may be changed by Incident Command or other lead officers upon arrival.
- 4 Collect accountability tags from everyone on the vehicle and secure to the vehicle accountability tag.
- 5 Help alert driver upon entering an intersection about vehicular traffic. When approaching an intersection the officer should change the siren tone to alert public vehicular traffic.

42.3.3 Upon Arrival to Scene

Upon arrival, everyone should know their initial assignments and be donning the appropriate PPE for the incident type.

Firefighters shall not exit vehicle until emergency brakes have been applied. Firefighters shall give one accountability tag to the driver prior to exiting the

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vehicle. When appropriate firefighters shall give their additional accountability tag to the Incident Commander. Upon arrival firefighters shall perform their initial assignments.

Engineers/Drivers shall secure the scene by appropriately parking the apparatus. Things that should be considered when parking a vehicle include: functionality of the apparatus, scene and firefighter safety, and consideration of other vehicles that may be on their way. Once the vehicle has been parked and had the emergency brake applied, the process of putting the apparatus into pump mode (as required) should take place. It is the policy of BVFD to not begin pumping water from an engine or a tender without chocking the left rear wheel.

Officers should conduct an initial site assessment where applicable and establish an Incident Commander if not already identified. The officer of the lead apparatus should contact dispatch and tell them which vehicles are on scene. Again only one contact should be made to dispatch. When applicable, the officer should give dispatch a scene size up and if necessary request additional departments.

42.3.4 Leaving a Call Scene

When leaving a call scene it is everyone's responsibility to ensure that the scene is clean and that all tools and equipment have been returned to their appropriate vehicle location. Firefighters shall ensure that their accountability tags have been retrieved from the Incident Commander. Unless told to do differently by an officer, everyone should return to the station in the same vehicle that they arrived in. If SCBA bottles were used and an air truck is on scene, make sure that all bottles are completely filled and that all SCBA packs and bottles are secured in their original location.

The engineer/driver is responsible for ensuring that all tools, equipment, hose, etc. have been returned and secured to in the appropriate vehicle compartment. The engineer/driver is responsible for making sure that all compartment doors have been closed and secured before getting in the vehicle. For any calls that require vehicles to be off-road, the driver should check to make sure that no rocks are wedged between the dual rear tires.

The officer shall ensure that everyone that arrived in the vehicle is accounted for and return all accountability tags. The officer of the lead vehicle shall notify dispatch that Bergheim has been cleared from the scene and that all units are en route back to the station.

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42.3.5 Arriving Back at Station

Upon arrival at station, the officer of the lead vehicle shall notify dispatch that all Bergheim units have returned to station.

Everyone is responsible for making sure that all apparatus are brought back to call readiness by replenishing any consumed material. If hoses were deployed, hoses should be removed and replaced with fresh hose. Deployed hoses should be immediately cleaned and set up to dry.

All PPE gear should be returned to its original location. All PPE gear should be cleaned as required.

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**43.0 Incident
Command**

43.1 Purpose

This SOG shall define the Incident Command System (ICS) used by the Bergheim Volunteer Fire Department (BVFD) to more efficiently organize and manage emergency operations.

43.2 Preface

The purpose of an incident command system (ICS) is to increase the effectiveness and safety of emergency operations through a systematic, complete and functional command organization. The use of ICS has proven to reduce confusion and risk of injury, to improve the use of resources, equipment and personnel; and to improve the overall effectiveness of emergency operations through focused efforts toward a common goal.

The incident command system, hereafter referred to as ICS, is designed to provide guidelines and concepts to manage in an efficient manner. The ICS will improve firefighter safety by providing better accountability of personnel and improved use of resources and tactical effectiveness.

The existence of these written guidelines is not intended to limit any member in the exercise of judgment or initiative in taking the action a reasonable person would take in extraordinary situations that may arise in the fire service. Much by necessity must be left to the training, experience, initiative, integrity, and discretion of the members of the.

43.3 Guidelines

It is the responsibility of the initial Incident Commander, regardless of their rank, to implement the necessary ICS functions as determined by the specific incident. As the command function is transferred to succeeding officers, further expansion of the ICS should take place. Prior to command being transferred, the Incident Commander must be thoroughly briefed as to the status of the entire operation underway

The ICS is the official policy for the management of all incidents and the development of standard operating guidelines. The BVFD will implement the system at all incidents for which it has management responsibility.

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The ICS has several characteristics or components. These components interact to create a system that ensures optimum information management and control under normal or crisis conditions. The characteristics are:

1. **Common Terminology** insures that all personnel are able to communicate effectively. The more simple the message, the more effective communications will be.
2. **Manageable Span of Control** is most effective when management responsibility of personnel ranges from three to seven, with five being ideal.
3. **Modular Organization** means that ICS organization levels evolve based on the type and complexity of the incident. A routine incident will have a simple structure. A complex incident will require a larger organizational structure. Incident Commanders are responsible for the performance of the six main functions within the ICS. The functions are Command, Planning, Operations, Staging, Logistics, and Finance. If any function is not delegated it remains the responsibility of the Incident Commander.
4. **Integrated Communications** is managed through the use of a communications plan. In incidents involving only the BVFD, then two operating radio channels are likely to be utilized: BER-1 will be the working frequency and the Incident Commander will monitor Kendall County Fire Channel on the handheld. When mutual aid fire departments and police agencies are involved, however, the communication plans must be made adaptable and adjusted appropriately.
5. **Unified Command** is a means of organizing different agencies that have legal authority and responsibility at large scale incidents, into one coordinated and controlled effort. It is designed to minimize "turf battles" and promote close working relationships among different departments. Instead of several different command posts operating independently, the operation is directed from one command post.
6. **Designated Incident Facilities** is an area that is established to serve a particular purpose, i.e. Command Post, Staging etc.

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43.4 Five Incident Command System Functions

43.4.1 Command: The functional authority the IC exercises over subordinates. It includes the responsibility for effectively using resources to accomplish strategy. It is the function through which all the incident activities are directed, coordinated and controlled to accomplish the mission. It encompasses the personnel, equipment, communications, facilities and guidelines to plan for what has to be done, issue orders and supervise the execution of operations. At all incidents Command conducts size up, develops strategy and is responsible for its outcome. The IC retains responsibility for Command and the performance of any functions or areas in the system that is not delegated. As the incident expands or becomes more complex, then the IC must delegate authority for performance of functions to other individuals. The IC has the option of implementing Command Staff, i.e. Safety Officer, Operations Officer and Information Officer.

43.4.2 Planning: The function responsible for gathering, evaluating and disseminating information about the incident and status of resources. It prepares alternate strategies and objectives to control the incident.

43.4.3 Operations: The function of managing all the tactical operations at the incident to accomplish the primary mission and plan of the Incident Commander. Operations are broken down into several functions and will fix personnel accountability, Teams, Sectors, and Groups. It is recommended and encourage for the Incident Commander to designate Operations Officer to next ranking officer at the scene.

43.4.4 Staging: A specific area to which resources are assigned before deployment. It gives the IC breathing room to make better decisions. It is a checkpoint to provide accountability and prevent freelancing. It provides an area of protection from exposure in hazardous environments. It establishes a reserve immediately available for a contingency.

43.4.5 Logistics: The function that provides the resources such as supplies, services and facilities needed to support the incident, Medical, Facilities, Food, and any other Special Units.

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**44.0 Emergency Incident
Rehabilitation**

44.1 Purpose

The purpose of this SOG is to ensure that the physical and mental condition of line members of the Bergheim Volunteer Fire Department (BVFD) operating at the scene of an emergency or a training exercise does not deteriorate to a point that affects the safety of each member or that jeopardizes the safety and integrity of the operation.

44.2 Scope

These guidelines pertain to all BVFD members during any and all emergency operations and training exercises where strenuous physical activity or exposure to heat or cold exists.

44.3 Responsibilities

44.3.1 Incident Commander - The Incident Commander shall consider the circumstances of each incident and make adequate provisions early in the incident for the rest and rehabilitation for all line members operating at the scene. These provisions shall include: medical evaluation by EMS, treatment and monitoring, food and fluid replenishment, mental rest and relief from extreme climatic conditions and the other environmental parameters of the incident.

44.3.2 Safety Coordinator - Safety Officers shall maintain an awareness of the condition of each member operating within their span of control and ensure that adequate steps are taken to provide for each member's safety and health. The command structure shall be utilized to request relief and reassignment of fatigued crews.

44.3.3 Members - During the period of hot weather, line members shall be encouraged to drink water and activity beverages throughout the tour of the assignment. During any emergency incident or training evaluation, all line members shall advise their Safety Officer when they believe that their level of fatigue or exposure to heat or cold is approaching a level that could affect themselves, their crew, or operation in which they are involved. Line members shall also remain aware of the health and safety of other line members of their crew.

44.3.4 Bergheim Assist – Bergheim Assist is an organization consisting of non-first responders dedicated to providing rehabilitation when requested. Members

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of the organization have access to Active 911™ and receive pages whenever BVFD is requested for service.

44.4 Establishment of Rehabilitation Area

44.4.1 Responsibility -- The Incident Commander will establish a Rehabilitation Area when conditions indicate that rest and rehabilitation is needed for personnel operating at an incident scene or training evaluation. When possible, a Safety Coordinator will be placed in charge of the sector and shall be known as the Safety Rehabilitation Officer. The Safety Rehabilitation Officer will typically report to the Operations Officer. The Safety Officer or Incident Commander should request dispatch to send an Active 911 page to Bergheim Assist requesting their services with a brief description of requested rehab and number of people involved.

44.4.2 Location -- The location for the Rehabilitation Area will normally be designated by the Incident Commander. If a specific location has not been designated, the Rehabilitation Safety Officer shall select an appropriate location based on the site characteristics and designations below.

44.4.3 Site Characteristics:

- It should be in a location that will provide physical rest by allowing the body to recuperate from the demands and hazards of the emergency operations;
- It should be far enough away from the scene that the line members may safely remove their respective personal protective equipment and be afforded mental rest from the pressure of the emergency operation;
- It should be suitable protection from the prevailing environmental condition. During hot weather, it should be in a cool, shaded area. During cold weather, it should be in a warm, dry area;
- It should enable line members to be free of exhaust fumes from apparatus or equipment;
- It should be large enough to accommodate multiple crews based on size of the incident;
- It should be easily accessible by EMS units;

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- It should allow prompt reentry into the emergency operation upon complete recuperation.

44.4.4 Resources -- The Safety Rehabilitation Officer along with the EMS unit and Bergheim Assist shall secure all necessary resources required to adequately staff and supply the Rehabilitation Area. Supplies should include the following:

- Drinking fluids;
- Food;
- Medical equipment (EMS);
- Other (extra clothing, cooling fans, blankets and towels).

44.5 Guidelines

44.5.1 Rehabilitation Sector/Group Establishment -- Rehabilitation should be considered by Incident Command during the initial planning stages of an emergency operation. However, the climatic or environmental conditions for the emergency scene should not be the sole justification for establishing a Rehabilitation Area. Any activity incident that is large in size, long in duration and labor intensive will rapidly deplete the energy and strength of the personnel, and, therefore, merits consideration for rehabilitation.

44.5.2 Hydration -- A critical factor in the prevention of heat injury is the maintenance of water and electrolytes. During heat stress, the line members should consume at least one quart of water per hour. The rehydration solution should be a 50/50 mixture of water and activity beverage and administered at about 40° F. Rehydration is important even during cold weather operations.

44.5.3 Nourishment -- The department should provide food at the scene of extended incident when units are engaged for three or more hours.

44.5.4 Rest -- The "Two Air Bottle Rule" or 30 minutes of work time, is recommended as an acceptable level prior to mandatory rehabilitation. Line members should rehydrate at least eight ounces of fluid while SCBA bottles are being changed. Firefighters having worked for a full 30 minutes shall be

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immediately placed in the Rehabilitation Area for rest and medical evaluation by EMS. Fresh crews released by the Safety Rehabilitation Officer shall be sent back to the manpower staging area for assignment.

44.5.5 Recovery -- Line members in the Rehabilitation Area should maintain a high level of hydration. Line members should not be moved from a hot environment directly into an air-conditioned area because the body's cooling system can shut down in response to the external cooling. An air conditioned environment is acceptable after cool-down period.

44.5.6 Medical Evaluation:

- EMS shall provide trained and qualified personnel on the Rehabilitation Scene. They shall evaluate vital signs, examine line members and make proper disposition (return to duty, continue rehabilitation, or medical treatment, i.e., hospital). Continued rehabilitation should consist of additional monitoring of vital signs, providing rest and fluids for rehydration;
- Line members are not allowed to continue working in emergency operations if any of the following conditions are present : Blood pressure over 180/100, pulse over 110, respiration rate over 24, or an oral temperature over 100.6 F.;
- All medical evaluations shall be recorded on standard forms along with the employee's name and company number. These forms must be signed and dated and timed by the Safety Rehabilitation Officer before a member is allowed to return to the manpower area.

44.5.7 Accountability -- Line members placed in Rehab shall report directly to the Rehabilitation Safety Officer, who, in turn, will log in that member, and treatment will then be started. The Rehabilitation Safety Officer shall enter each member's entrance and exit times into the Rehabilitation Area. No employee shall leave the Rehabilitation Area unless they are released by the EMS crew or the Rehabilitation Safety Officer.

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**45.0 SCBA
Guidelines**

45.1 Purpose

The purpose of this SOG is to establish policy and guidelines to indicate the proper operation, training, and maintenance of self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA) in order to ensure the safety of all Bergheim Volunteer Fire Department (BVFD) personnel.

45.2 Scope

Each member of BVFD will provide full personal protection for its members during fire and emergency operations. Recognizing the dangers of exposure to heat and flames, to the toxic products of combustion, and to other hazardous materials, BVFD provides full protective gear to all members who may be exposed to such respiratory hazards. This protective gear includes positive pressure self-contained breathing apparatus with integrated PASS alarms. All BVFD personnel are required to use SCBA whenever operating in an atmosphere suspected of being "Immediately Dangerous to Life and Health" (IDLH).

All personnel involved in any phase of interior structural firefighting, including overhaul, are required to wear SCBA in conjunction with a complete set of PPE as described in BVFD SOG 34.0. Use of SCBA is required at **all** firefighting operations, including those operations involving vehicles, dumpsters, rubbish, Carbon Monoxide (CO) and other gas or odor investigation calls. This includes inside operations, and also outside positions where personnel may be exposed to smoke or other potentially toxic IDLH conditions. During these incidents, positive pressure SCBA must be worn at all times unless otherwise ordered by the officer in command.

45.3 Guidelines

45.3.1 It is the policy of the BVFD that all personnel responding to emergency calls shall be equipped with, and trained in the proper use and maintenance of the self-contained breathing apparatus because they are likely to respond to and function in, area of atmospheric contamination.

45.3.2 BVFD personnel shall utilize only SCBA's which are of the approved, positive pressure type, and have been certified (hydrostatically tested).

45.3.3 BVFD personnel shall utilize SCBA's as part of their overall personal protective equipment.

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45.3.4 Cylinders shall be filled and maintained in accordance with these guidelines and NFPA standards.

45.3.5 SCBA air cylinders shall be pressurized to 4500 psi. The minimum acceptable air pressure for a stored SCBA air cylinder is 4000 psi. Any time a cylinder is found with less than 4000 psi, it shall be pulled from service and recharged.

45.3.6 BVFD SCBA's shall be inspected during each training session using equipment check-off list as well as before and after each use. Inspection shall consist of full functionality check. Additionally, each breathing apparatus will be cleaned after each use and stored in a "ready-to-use" fashion, which includes all straps being fully extended, untwisted, and properly stored on each apparatus.

45.3.7 SCBA's or their component parts, which are observed to be worn, defective, or damaged, shall be removed from service immediately, and brought to an officer's attention. A suitable replacement SCBA or part shall be provided as soon as possible.

45.3.8 SCBA's and their spare air cylinders shall be secured to BVFD apparatus and vehicles in such a manner as to be readily available for quick operations; yet shall be well secured enough to prevent injuries to personnel or accidental damage to apparatus and/or equipment.

45.3.9 BVFD policy shall be to provide a minimum of one SCBA for each member assigned to a particular piece of fire apparatus or emergency vehicle, except for the assigned drivers. Spare cylinders will be provided at each scene.

45.3.10 Only personnel in good health and physical condition shall don a SCBA. It is each person's responsibility to be physically and mentally prepared to enter confined, hazardous, and stressful areas. If at any time you feel you are overexerted, ill, mentally or physically unable to carry out assignments, notify Incident Command/Officer or Acting Officer immediately. **NEVER GO INTO A HAZARD IF YOU ARE NOT PHYSICALLY AND/OR MENTALLY PREPARED.**

45.3.11 Each person will use their SCBA under conditions specified by these guidelines, and in accordance with the training they receive on the use of each particular model. In addition, the respirator shall not be used in a manner for which it is not certified by its manufacturer.

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45.3.12 All BVFD members shall conduct user seal checks each time that they wear their SCBA face piece.

45.3.13 Members shall use either the positive or negative pressure checks as specified by the manufacturer.

45.3.14 No person is permitted to wear tight-fitting respirators if they have any condition such as facial scars, beards or other facial hair, or missing dentures, which prevents them from achieving a good seal. No one is permitted to wear headphones, jewelry, glasses, or other articles that may interfere with the face piece-to-face seal.

45.3.15 When donning a SCBA, members will always work in pairs. Apparatus and equipment can and will malfunction. Under no circumstances will any member of BVFD enter a confined or contaminated area by themselves.

45.3.16 Under no circumstances will any part of the SCBA and/or its associated components be tampered with, modified, or otherwise adjusted for any reason than its intended use, nor will any safety features be bypassed. Only certified personnel shall repair the SCBA.

45.3.17 SCBA will be fully inspected, cleaned and tested following each use. It is the responsibility of every firefighter to wear and properly utilize BVFD issued personal protective equipment (PPE) when engaged in firefighting, emergency, extrication, and/or training evolutions. PPE must be worn properly and in its entirety, as outlined below and further defined in BVFD SOG 34.0:

- Helmet, with eye protection in place.
- Turnout/bunker coat, which must be fully closed and secured with the collar in the up position.
- Department issued fire gloves.
- Bunker pants and boots.
- Protective hood, which must be properly worn with the base hem completely tucked under the coat and collar as to completely cover the neck.

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45.4 Responsibility

45.4.1 The Chief and Assistant Chief have the overall responsibility for providing a proper respiratory protection system within the BVFD and are responsible for overall management of the respiratory protection system.

45.4.2 The Officers are responsible for ensuring that SCBA's are properly maintained and repaired, and that an adequate number of SCBA's are available for use by departmental personnel.

45.4.3 The Officers and Training Officer are responsible for ensuring that BVFD personnel meet minimum training standards relating to the operation of SCBA's and that there is adequate, regular and standardized SCBA training provided to each member of the fire department.

45.4.4 Incident Commanders have the overall responsibility, at emergency incidents, for ensuring that proper respiratory protection is both provided to and utilized by BVFD members.

45.4.5 The Officers are responsible for ensuring that these SCBA policies are adhered to at all times by all members under their cognizance.

45.4.6 All BVFD members are directly responsible for their personal safety and shall utilize and maintain self-contained breathing apparatus in accordance with this policy and keeping proficient with the use of SCBA's.

45.4.7 Each BVFD member shall be responsible for the proper donning/doffing, operation, and cleaning of SCBA's, outlined in this policy. This responsibility includes the reporting of worn or faulty equipment associated with SCBA's.

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**46.0 Rapid Intervention
Team**

46.1 Purpose

This SOG outlines a procedure that ensures the risks faced by our personnel are minimized through sound risk management practices and safety procedures that shall be used by the Bergheim Volunteer Fire Department (BVFD).

The objective is to have a fully equipped rescue team on scene and in a ready state to deploy for rescuing injured and trapped firefighters. This procedure shall be considered for all incidents where personnel are subject to hazards that would be potentially dangerous to life and/or health or subject to danger from equipment failure or sudden change of conditions. A Rapid Intervention Team (RIT) shall be established on all structure fires that have grown beyond the incipient stage, other incidents where personnel are subject to hazardous environments or when Incident Commander (IC) deems it necessary. "BEYOND THE INCIPIENT STAGE" IS ANY TIME THAT FIREFIGHTERS ARE ON AIR INSIDE THE STRUCTURE OR HAZARD ZONE.

The single objective of the RIT is to standby in a state of readiness, until launched on a rescue mission. The RIT function will continue until the Incident Commander determines that the RIT is no longer needed on the incident.

46.2 Definitions

AWARE: An acronym utilized by RIT to remember what items need to be available for a rescue

Air: Separate air supply for the victim.

Water: Hoses line to create a defensible position.

A Radio: Separate radio for the victim, pre-set to the assigned emergency.

Extrication: Tools necessary to extricate the victim.

Incipient Stage: The beginning of a fire where oxygen content has not been significantly reduced and the fire is producing minute amounts of water vapor, carbon dioxide, carbon monoxide and other gases. The room has a normal temperature and the fire can be controlled with a portable fire extinguisher, i.e. pan on the stove, damper closed on fireplace, etc.

Initial Stage: Shall encompass the control efforts taken by resources which are first to arrive at an incident requiring immediate action to prevent or mitigate the loss of life or serious injury to citizens and firefighters.

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Known Life Hazard: A situation, in which someone can be seen, heard or a reliable report indicates that someone is still in the structure and immediate actions are necessary to prevent loss of life or serious injury.

Mayday: A radio message reserved for the sole purpose of notifying on-scene personnel that there is a missing, trapped, or disabled firefighter.

Positive Communications: Contact must be maintained by visual, verbal, physical, or electronic means.

Rapid Intervention Team (RIT): A designated crew that will serve as a stand-by rescue team for personnel and be available for the immediate search and rescue of any missing, trapped, injured or unaccounted for fire fighter(s). This team shall be fully equipped with the appropriate personal protective clothing, protective equipment, SCBA and specialized rescue equipment needed as based on the specifics of the operation that is underway. This includes the emergency Breathing Support System (quick-fill hose device).

Standby Fire Fighter: One (1) fire fighter in standby mode fully equipped with the appropriate protective clothing and equipment in order to provide rescue assistance of other firefighters.

Standby Mode: Full personal protective clothing including a SCBA donned with the face piece in standby mode.

Suppression Personnel: Personnel approved by the Fire District to make interior attacks at structure fires.

Risk Management: The development of action plans, which take present and potential risks into consideration.

46.3 Guidelines

46.3.1 Risk Management: Risk management (risk vs. value analysis) shall be utilized by the Incident Commander when formulating the incident action plan. The objective is to save lives and to save property in as safe a manner as possible, as dictated by the incident. The practical application of risk management shall be as follows:

- 1 Within a structured plan, we may risk our lives to protect savable lives.

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2 Within a structured plan, we may risk our lives a LITTLE to protect savable property

3 WE will NOT risk our lives at all to save lives or properties that are already lost.

46.3.2 Initial Operations (Two In/Two Out)

46.3.2.1 Two In/Two Out

46.3.2.1.1 Prior to interior structure fire fighting operations or deployment into IDLH atmospheres, the Incident Commander must evaluate the situation and risks to operation crews and confirm that there are an adequate number of personnel available to safely conduct emergency operations.

46.3.2.1.2 Personnel in hazardous areas shall function in teams of two or more and shall maintain contact with each other by means of voice, visual, or other direct contact.

46.3.2.1.3 Fire fighters must not engage in interior structural fire fighting in the absence of at least two standby fire fighters.

46.3.2.1.4 Exceptions to the Two In/Two Out requirement beyond what is identified are not permitted. Any attempts to circumvent the limited exemption by assuming all or most structure fires may involve a rescue are equally unacceptable.

46.3.2.1.5 The firefighters on standby must be equipped with full PPE, with face piece in the standby mode.

46.3.2.1.6 At least one of the firefighters shall be solely dedicated to monitoring the status and safety of the interior team, including location, function & entry time.

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- 46.3.2.1.7 The firefighters on standby must remain in positive communication with the interior team(s) and the IC.
- 46.3.2.1.8 The firefighters on standby may be permitted to perform other duties provided that they are in close proximity to the incident and those duties will not interfere with their ability to participate in an immediate rescue, if necessary.
- 46.3.2.1.9 The firefighters on standby shall be located in close proximity to the incident.
- 46.3.2.1.10 Nothing in this section shall prevent activities that may reasonably be taken by firefighters first on the scene to determine the nature and extent of fire involvement.
- 46.3.2.1.11 A separate RIT is not required for each interior team; however, additional RITs may be established due to extensive distances between crews.
- 46.3.2.2 Two In / One Out Exception (Rescue Mode, No RIT)
- 46.3.2.2.1 Prior to implementing a Two In / One Out operation, the Incident Commander must evaluate the situation to determine the value for the risk based on Risk/Value Statement.
- 46.3.2.2.2 During this risk analysis, life threat must be obvious through initial observations (see or hear victims, family or neighbors verify occupants are still in structure).
- 46.3.2.2.3 Prior to implementing a Two In / One Out operation, the Company Officer / Incident Commander shall notify Dispatch that they are in "RESCUE MODE with no RIT". Dispatch shall repeat this transmission for all responding units.
- 46.3.2.2.4 Whenever "Rescue Mode with no RIT" is chosen as the option, a Standby Firefighter must be in place

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prior to the rescue/attack crew entering the structure or hazardous area.

46.3.2.2.5 This Standby Firefighter's foremost responsibility shall be the constant monitoring of the interior team's status and safety, including location, function & entry time.

46.3.2.2.6 The Standby Firefighter must be wearing the appropriate PPE, with SCBA face piece in the standby mode.

46.3.2.2.7 When a "Rescue Mode with no RIT" operation is initiated, incoming resources need to commit to a course of action that fulfills the Two In/Two Out requirements.

46.3.2.2.8 The Standby Firefighter may perform other duties outside of the hazardous area when communication can be maintained with the team in the hazardous area, and provided that those duties will not interfere with the responsibility to monitor the status & safety of the interior team.

46.3.2.2.9 The firefighters on standby shall be located in close proximity to the incident.

46.3.2.2.10 In the event that personnel are unavailable to fulfill the Standby Firefighter(s) position, personnel shall not engage in interior structural firefighting activities, and an alternative strategy will need to be utilized.

46.3.2.2.11 Nothing in this section shall prevent activities that may be reasonably taken by firefighters who are first on the scene to determine the nature and extent of fire.

46.3.3 Sustained Operations

46.3.3.1 Once additional resources have arrived, the Incident Commander shall upgrade the initial 1-out component to a dedicated Rapid Intervention Team to include back up teams

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and/or additional RIT teams, depending on the magnitude, configuration of the structure, or geographical layout of the incident. Separate Rapid Intervention Teams are not required for each interior team.

46.3.3.2 RIT is designated, announced via radio and assigned to a location by the Incident Commander. When assigned, the RIT Officer will obtain a briefing from the Incident Commander and conduct a specific size up that focuses on:

- Fire location
- Interior team(s) entry point and location
- Critical fire ground factors (scene conditions & hazards)
- Type of construction and condition
- Air management (elapsed time)
- Firefighter fatigue
- Radio communications
- Potential firefighter rescue operations

46.3.3.3 During size up, every RIT member will be assigned a primary function, if deployed and equipped for such function. Refer to the AWARE acronym in definitions; Air, Water, A Radio, and Extrication.

46.3.3.4 If a water supply has not been established the RIT should pull a separate charged hose line off of another Engine Company if available.

46.3.3.5 Necessary and appropriate rescue tools and equipment that the RIT may need shall be brought to the area where the RIT is assigned.

46.3.3.6 RIT shall be immediately ready for assignment wearing full protective clothing and SCBA in standby with a minimum of one portable radio for the team and preferable one radio for each member. The RIT Officer must closely monitor the tactical radio channel at all times to maintain awareness of the activities and status of working companies.

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46.3.4 Radio Communications

46.3.4.1 RIT will be assigned the radio designation "RIT". When multiple RITs are assigned, designators must correspond with the assigned division or group, such as "Division A RIT" or "Team A RIT".

46.3.4.2 The assigned RIT Company will report directly to the Incident Commander, unless assigned to a division, group or branch.

46.3.4.3 The "emergency traffic tone" will be activated whenever a RIT is launched on a rescue mission unless already transmitted with the Mayday.

46.3.4.4 When RIT is launched on a rescue, a new RIT will be assigned to take their place and will assume the "RIT" call sign. The 1st RIT will then take the call sign of their assigned apparatus.

46.3.5 Terminating RIT Teams

46.3.5.1 After the Incident Commander and the Incident Scene Safety Officer have thoroughly evaluated the situation and the Incident Commander has decided the operation no longer presents hazardous risks to personnel necessitating the RIT, the Incident Commander may suspend the operations of the RIT(s). The Incident Commander shall advise over the radio that the RIT is being terminated, so that all personnel on the fire ground are aware of this.

46.3.5.2 The Incident Commander should consider keeping the RIT available after active firefighting and suppression operations have ceased; yet operations such as salvage and overhaul are still active. Conditions such as opening in floors, weakened structural members or other potentially hazardous circumstances may warrant the use of a RIT.

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**47.0 Injury and Incident
Reporting**

47.1 Purpose

The purpose of this SOG is to establish guidelines for injury and incident reporting for members the Bergheim Volunteer Fire Department (BVFD) while either on call, responding to a call, or during training.

47.2 Scope

These guidelines pertain to all BVFD members whenever an incident or injury occurs.

47.3 Guidelines

47.3.1 Injury or Incident

All injuries or incidents must be reported to the Chief and/or Assistant Chief. The highest ranking member on scene shall document the injury or incident. A report shall be written and emailed to both the Chief and Assistant Chief detailing the injury or incident, including details of property damage and/or human injury. The report should include actions that lead up to the incident and/or injury and whether or not any guidelines were violated.

The incident will be discussed in detail at the next available officers' meeting. The reporting member (and possibly others that were directly involved) will be invited to debrief the officers on the incident/injury. Officers shall discuss possible methods to prevent future occurrences.

47.3.2 Vehicle Accident

In the event that one of BVFD emergency vehicles becomes involved in an accident while responding to/from an emergency call, work detail, training event, or social activity, the following actions will be adhered to:

If responding to an emergency call, notify dispatch immediately and render the apparatus out of service and to dispatch another unit or BVFD.

The driver of a BVFD vehicle involved in a motor vehicle accident shall immediately assess the incident and call for the appropriate assistance. This includes the need for police, medical and fire service, towing assistance.

The driver shall take all necessary steps to secure the scene and render medical care to all victims.

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The driver of a motor vehicle accident shall notify the both the Fire Chief and Assistant Chief or other Officer immediately after, calling for appropriate assistance, rendering medical care and securing the scene.

The driver shall ensure that an accident report is conducted by a police agency and obtain a copy of the report.

The Driver shall complete a Vehicle Accident/Loss Investigation Report prior to departing the fire station. In the event that the Driver is unable to complete the reports, an officer shall be responsible for the completion of the report. This report shall be submitted to the Chief for processing to the Board for insurance purposes. This shall occur with 24 hours of an accident.

A review of all the necessary paper work shall be conducted for completeness and accuracy.

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47.0 Injury and Incident
Reporting

Vehicle Accident/Loss Investigation Report

(This is not a claim form)

Fire Department _____ Date _____

Address _____

Name of Driver _____ Vehicle ID/Unit Number _____

Type of Vehicle _____

Date Driver Last Certified On Above Vehicle _____

Date of Accident _____ Time _____ Date Reported _____

Location of Accident _____

Roadway

- | | |
|--|--|
| ☐ Straight _____ | ☐ 2-lane |
| ☐ Curve _____ | ☐ 3-lane |
| ☐ On Grade _____ | ☐ 4-lane |
| ☐ Level _____ | ☐ Divided |
| ☐ Hillcrest _____ | ☐ Rural |
| ☐ Dry _____ | ☐ Other _____ |
| ☐ Wet _____ | ☐ Lanes marked |
| ☐ Muddy _____ | ☐ Lanes unmarked |
| ☐ Snowy _____ | ☐ No road detects |
| ☐ Icy _____ | ☐ Holes, ruts, etc. |
| ☐ Oily _____ | ☐ Loose material |
| | ☐ Other |

Accident Occurred:

- | |
|---|
| ☐ At station |
| ☐ Responding to emergency |
| ☐ At emergency scene |
| ☐ Returning from emergency |
| ☐ Training |
| ☐ Convention or parade |
| ☐ Other _____ |
| ☐ Sleet |

Type of Loss

- | |
|--|
| ☐ Personal injury |
| ☐ Property damage |
| ☐ Vehicle damage |

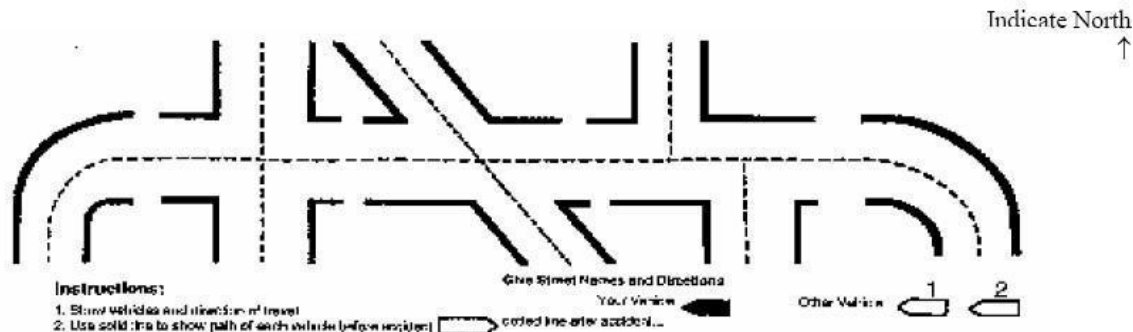
Weather

- | |
|--------------------------------------|
| ☐ Clear |
| ☐ Rain |
| ☐ Snow |
| ☐ Fog |
| ☐ Other _____ |

Description Of Accident _____

Motor Vehicle Diagram

Complete the following diagram showing direction and positions of automobiles involved, designating clearly point of contact.



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**48.0 Hazardous Material
Response**

48.1 Purpose

The purpose of this SOG is to establish tactical and strategic guidelines to be executed when responding to possible or confirmed hazardous materials spills, leaks, and fires by the Bergheim Volunteer Fire Department (BVFD).

48.2 Scope

These guidelines pertain to all BVFD members when called to perform emergency services dealing with hazardous materials.

48.3 Guidelines

BVFD members personnel are not trained or equipped to handle hazardous material incidents at this time. Incident Commanders must immediately request assistance from Boerne, Bulverde, or Leon Springs Fire Department.

When accidents or fires occur involving hazardous materials, the first priority is the prevention of fatalities and injuries. The prevention of damage to property and of injury to livestock, wildlife and the environment is a secondary priority.

To manage a hazardous materials incident in the safest manner, it is absolutely necessary to know the properties of the materials and the shipping containers involved.

It must be emphasized that no individual can ever be assumed to be an "expert" in this field and that a heavy reliance must be placed on obtaining information from external sources. It must also be stressed that hazardous materials incidents cannot be handled in the same manner as typical firefighting operations. Quick aggressive action is most often inappropriate in a hazardous materials incident and can potentially increase the risk of unnecessary exposure of personnel. Hazardous materials incidents are often time consuming and can be very demanding from an incident management perspective. It is especially critical that all officers and firefighters work within the Incident Command System. All actions taken must be deliberate and planned after properly identifying the substance involved.

It is possible that the affected area, or "Hot Zone," can have such a high degree of hazardous contamination that the only safe course is to essentially seal the outer perimeter and evacuate those who may have been exposed to the material(s). Severe hazards often exist without combustion, smoke, or noticeable fumes.

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**48.0 Hazardous Material
Response**

Use the Department of Transportation Emergency Response Guide (ERG handbook) located in each fire apparatus to identify and ascertain the dangers and characteristics of the hazardous materials involved. The handbook will also contain relevant emergency response information.

If an incident involving hazardous materials happens, **IMMEDIATELY:**

1. Notify Kendall County Dispatch and request Boerne Hazardous Materials Response Team.
2. Make initial survey of the scene, determining:
 - What initial actions might be taken while waiting for the Hazardous Materials Response Team. This can be obtained by using the ERG handbook.
 - Location of exposed or potentially exposed people
 - Presence of fire, smoke, or fumes
 - Presence and location of actual hazardous materials
 - Overall condition of the scene, containers, and/or vehicle
 - Wind direction, speed, and the condition of the terrain, including presence of water sources, supplies, and the sewer system, if any
3. Rescue/remove from the Hot Zone any exposed or injured people, if possible. Wearing the proper protective clothing and the utilization of appropriate equipment is paramount. NOTE: PPE issued by BVFD is NOT designed for hazardous material emergencies. Plan escape routes before entering the Hot Zone. Personnel are not to be exposed unnecessarily to the materials, smoke, and/or fumes.
4. Make every attempt to identify the specific products, cars, trailers, or containers involved. Identify the hazard class of all materials involved. Truck drivers are required to carry all shipping papers containing this information, or the papers will be kept within the cab of the involved truck. Placards applied to vehicles and/or labels on packages may help in identifying the presence of hazardous materials, but the shipping papers are the best source of on-scene identification information. If these papers are destroyed, the carrier should be contacted to ascertain the exact material or substance being carried.

Use the Department of Transportation Emergency Response Guide (handbook) located in each fire apparatus to identify and ascertain the dangers and characteristics of the hazardous materials involved. The handbook will also contain relevant emergency response information. Incident Commanders should also contact CHEMTREC at (800) 424-9300, which can provide additional information.

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Response

5. Do not release any product(s) from containers or attempt to ignite or detonate either the materials or the containers. The use of the thermal imaging camera may help in identifying hazardous levels.

6. The shipper(s) should be contacted for additional information on the product(s) involved. Again, CHEMTREC should be contacted and both CHEMTREC and the shipper should be given the following information:

- Your name, location and contact telephone number
- Location of the incident
- Carrier involved
- Vehicle reporting marks (car or truck number)
- Placard / label applied on vehicle
- Name of commodity and shipper
- Accessibility
- Weather conditions
- Local population information
- Topographical information
- Availability of water

48.3.1 General Classifications of Hazardous Materials

Following is a list of the general classifications of hazardous materials. DOT classifies chemicals according to their major hazardous characteristics. These are determined by the chemical and physical properties of the chemical involved. Remember chemicals can have more than one hazard and may have multiple hazards.

1. **Explosives:** Explosives are any chemical compound, mixture or device used primarily to function by detonation or deflagration. For fires near explosives, every effort shall be made to extinguish the fire before it reaches the explosive. Do not fight fires involving explosives, as an explosion is extremely likely. Some explosives will explode immediately on ignition; others may burn for a period of time before exploding. Products of combustion of some explosives may be poisonous.

2. **Gases:** A non-flammable gas is a gas that will not form a flammable mixture in air but may support combustion. These gases may be oxidizers, poisons, corrosives, etc. Certain gases, while classified as "non-flammable" by DOT, have narrow flame ranges. Anhydrous ammonia is an example of this type of

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gas. There is a possibility that such gases could ignite or flash during an incident under certain circumstances. A flammable gas is a gas that will form a flammable mixture when released in air. Flammable gas vapors can be heavier than air. Do not permit these vapors to enter the sewer system where they can accumulate and ignite. A cryogenic gas is a liquefied gas at a temperature below –328F. These gases present an extreme cold hazard to the point that they freeze objects to a point of brittleness where impact can shatter the frozen object.

3. ***Flammable Liquids:*** A flammable liquid is any liquid having a flash point below 100F. The possibility of ignition is greatest for liquids with low flash points. The lower the flash point, the greater the probability that the temperature of the liquid at atmospheric temperature will be higher than the flash point of the liquid. The higher the temperature, the greater the amount of vapor formed and the greater the hazard. Prevent flammable liquid spills from entering the sewer system or waterways as they can easily be ignited at a distance from the actual point of entry. An empty or partially empty container can be more hazardous than a full one because the vapor air mixture is more susceptible to ignition.

4. ***Combustible Liquids:*** Combustible liquids are those having a flash point above 100F. Under extreme heat conditions, liquids normally classified as combustible may evolve sufficient vapors to require handling them as flammable liquids. Keep in mind that combustible liquids may present other hazards to health and environmental contamination.

5. ***Flammable Solids:*** A flammable solid is any material other than an explosive which under normal transportation conditions is liable to cause a fire through friction or retained heat or one that can be ignited readily and burn vigorously. Spontaneously combustible and water reactive substances are included in this class. Spontaneously combustible substances ignite due to retained heat or will oxidize to generate heat and ignite or will absorb moisture to generate heat and ignite. Water reactive solids will chemically react with water to become spontaneously flammable or give off flammable or toxic vapors. Air reactive materials will ignite at normal temperatures when exposed to air. White phosphorous, a flammable solid and poison is an example.

6. ***Oxidizers:*** Oxidizers are substances that yield oxygen readily and stimulate combustion of organic material. Most oxidizers shipped as liquids will cause fire by contact to combustible material. Organic peroxides heated above their transportation temperatures are likely to explode. If an accident occurs involving refrigerated truck carrying organic peroxides and refrigeration is lost, there is a

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strong possibility that an explosion will occur. In addition to supplying oxygen, oxidizers have other hazards: some are explosive sensitive to heat, shock or friction, some react with combustible organic materials rapidly enough to cause spontaneous combustion. Most oxidizers will form an easily ignited or explosive mixture when united with finely divided organic materials.

7. **Poisons:** A poison may be a gas or liquid which only a very small amount of gas or vapor from the liquid mixed with air will be dangerous to life. Shipping containers for poisons DO NOT have pressure relief devices. If a poison is involved with fire, the products of combustion may be less hazardous than the poison itself. It may be less dangerous to allow the poison to be consumed in the fire than to extinguish it and be faced with a poison vapor problem. The decision can only be made after a proper hazard assessment. Any water runoff from such fire will have to be contained and tested. Empty poison containers are extremely dangerous due to residue remaining.

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**49.0 Forcible
Entry**

49.1 Purpose

The purpose of this SOG is to establish tactical and strategic guidelines to be executed during emergency situations when access into a specific area is immediately required by the Bergheim Volunteer Fire Department (BVFD).

49.2 Scope

These guidelines pertain to all BVFD members during emergency operations that require access.

49.3 Guidelines

BVFD members should thoroughly “size-up” and evaluate any situation potentially requiring forcible entry prior to selecting the most appropriate method of entry. Among the deciding factors are: urgency of entry, type of door and lock assemblies, the tools and manpower available, and the extent of damage entry will create. The need for speed should be the overriding concern, whether to save life or cut off rapidly extending fire. In certain cases, however, the type of doors or lock assembly will be the deciding factor. Certain types of doors or locks are best opened using specific methods. In some cases, there is only one way to get past that specific door. In almost all cases, the degree of damage caused by forcible entry should be consistent with the danger and damage from the hazard, usually fire. Time should not be wasted, however, where life is at risk or where a structure may be heavily involved with fire. Law enforcement shall be requested prior to forcible entry.

Four basic rules to forcible entry

1. ***Try before you pry.*** It is inexcusable to force entry through a door that is unlocked.
2. ***Don't ignore the obvious.*** Look for the easiest way to enter a premise. Entry should be made via the area of least resistance.
3. ***If possible, use the doors that the occupants normally use to enter or exit the premises.*** Not only does that put you into the likely exit paths of the occupants so you can begin your search, but it will also make your assignments easier.

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49.0 Forcible
Entry

4. ***Maintain the integrity of the door.*** By breaking doors or smashing glass, personnel become at a disadvantage in controlling the oxygen supply to the interior of the premise.

Entry should be considered in the earliest stages of the size-up process, which commences upon the initial alarm. Use appropriate tools for the job at hand (i.e. Haligan bar, hydraulic tools, hand tools). Law enforcement shall be requested prior to forcible entry.

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**50.0 Fireground Search and
Rescue**

50.1 Purpose

The purpose of this SOG is to establish tactical and strategic guidelines to be executed during emergency situations requiring the search for victims during fire suppression operations of a structure by the Bergheim Volunteer Fire Department (BVFD).

50.2 Scope

These guidelines pertain to all BVFD member performing primary/secondary searches of the structure during fire emergencies.

50.3 Guidelines

It is BVFD policy that at no times should searches or any other interior fire ground operation or evolution be attempted with less than two firefighters and only with properly donned PPE.

Firefighters must stay low, not only to maximize whatever visibility may remain in an Immediately Dangerous to Life and Health (IDLH) environment, but also to remain below the more dangerous high heat.

Smoke conditions will frequently make it necessary for firefighters to rely on their sense of touch. A utility or search rope tied to the doorknob of a door may be used as a guideline when searching large areas or as a means of maintaining orientation.

Use the Thermal Imaging Camera to assist in all search and rescue efforts.

Part of the size-up process is being aware of the resident(s) of the structure and the time and day of the week. Ask neighbors, family members, standby, if residence is occupied. If so, ask for last known place victim(s) was/were, if known. This will indicate who is likely to be in a house or apartment at a given time. Firefighters must also be sensitive to typical behavioral patterns of different age groups in a fire. Children may hide in closets or under beds, while the elderly are frequently found taking refuge in the bathtub or shower stall. Firefighters must be aware that removal of draperies or curtains and moving large objects or furniture may be necessary, as they may hide a victim, sealed-off closet, or other areas being used for refuge.

Victims are frequently located near the door or other areas of egress, such as the front door, interior stairways, or balcony access doors. As they will usually try to reach a means of evacuation, they are often found behind and around the entrance door, which is where a room search should commence. Firefighters should always check behind

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**50.0 Fireground Search and
Rescue**

the entrance door for possible victims upon entering a room. After a quick check of this area using the pattern determined by an Officer, the room or apartment search can begin. **In the absence of orders, right hand search is BVFD policy.**

After the primary search of the room or apartment, the team shall report to the Incident Commander immediately.

If after a reasonable amount of time no communications are made or established with search team, Incident Commander will immediately order a Rapid Intervention Team (RIT) into the structure to locate (see BVFD SOG 46.0). There may be a possibility that the search team may be in trouble and require assistance.

With the assistance of the Thermal Imaging Camera, thorough searches, both primary and secondary, are required on all floors above the fire as well, because products of combustion and fire spread will rise and mushroom on the upper floors. Public hallways and the entire staircase up to the roof must be examined as soon as possible for those civilians who unsuccessfully attempted to use the interior stairs. Firefighters should vent as they go as to make the interior of the structure bearable for trapped victims and firefighting personnel alike while improving visibility.

If for any reason a thorough search of an area has not been completed, then an officer must be informed and a carefully executed follow-up search should be initiated. Search for life shall not be confined to the structure alone. The perimeter of the building and other areas must be checked for victims who may have jumped, fallen, or attempted escape.

Secondary searches must be conducted as soon as conditions permit. Secondary searches shall be conducted in the same manner as listed above. It is recommended, however, that a different team of firefighters conduct the secondary searches.

When a victim is found, immediate notification must be made to the supervising Officer or Incident Commander. The victim must be removed from the structure by both firefighters conducting the search. A firefighter must never be left alone within a structure. The rescuing firefighters exiting the structure must immediately inform the Incident Commander exact location that the search was ended in the recovery of the found victim. A possibility still exists of more victims within the same room and the room, along with any remaining unsearched rooms, will have to be searched further.

Coordination is imperative when conducting both primary and secondary fire ground searches. The objective is to locate any trapped people and to get to the most severely endangered in the shortest time period. Duplication of efforts wastes precious time.

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**50.0 Fireground Search and
Rescue**

Under no circumstances will “freelancing” be allowed in any BVFD operation. All operations will be conducted in accordance with the Incident Command System and the BVFD chain of command.

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**51.0 Vehicle
Extrication**

51.1 Purpose

The purpose of this SOG is to establish general extrication preparations and guidelines to be executed during emergency situations requiring extrication of personnel involved in automobile accident by the Bergheim Volunteer Fire Department (BVFD).

51.2 Scope

These guidelines have been developed to provide BVFD members with an operational procedure to extricate victims from vehicles and to minimize the risk to rescue personnel working at the scene of an emergency. These guidelines do not address the medical treatment of patients nor does it address specifics extrication techniques to be executed. The extent to which emergency medical treatment is given will be limited to the individual personal protective equipment and medical training of department members.

51.3 Guidelines

The following guidelines should be followed for any vehicle extrication.

51.3.1 Scene Size up

Upon arriving at the scene of a vehicle accident with an entrapment, the Officer shall determine the best placement for the responding vehicles to ensure the protection and safety of all personnel operating on the scene. The first arriving Officer shall size up the situation and establish command. The Officer/IC should evaluate the following criteria:

- The number of vehicles involved
- Number of persons injured or entrapped
- Type of vehicles involved such as car, truck, or Hybrid vehicle
- Actual fire present
- Leaking fuel causing a potential fire or explosion hazard
- Stability of vehicles involved
- Presence of vehicle safety systems such as air bags and whether they have deployed
- Involvement of electrical power lines or other electrocution hazards
- Involvement of any actual or suspected hazardous materials

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**51.0 Vehicle
Extrication**

51.3.2 Emergency Medical Treatment

If medical assistance is not present at the time of the BVFD's arrival, medical assistance shall be requested and/or confirmed. If Kendall County EMS is not yet on scene, radio any pertinent information regarding patient status that may improve efficiency upon their arrival. The rendering of emergency first aid shall be limited to the situation present and upon the training education, experience and available personal protective equipment of firefighters present. Only qualified EMS personnel should have direct patient contact. Patient and firefighter safety is paramount.

51.3.3 Scene Preparations and Securement

The Incident Commander shall survey the scene for possible hazards. If utility hazards are present, utility company assistance shall be requested and/or confirmed. Contact shall also be made with personnel rendering medical assistance to determine the extent of extrication required. If additional resources are available, Incident Commander shall request for more immediately.

Proper scene preparation before operations begin is critical to the overall success of the operation. Scene preparation should include but is not limited to establishing a tool resource staging area (placed on tarp) and providing scene lighting when necessary.

All ignition sources shall be eliminated from the area. The batteries of all vehicles involved shall be disconnected UNLESS power is needed to activate windows, door locks or power seats.

Extrication can only begin after the vehicle has been properly stabilized, a 1¾" handline is pulled and positioned, and all personnel working in the extrication zone (fire and EMS) have been briefed on the actions that will be undertaken.

An imaginary circle should be established around the vehicle and a walk around the parameter shall be conducted, looking for victims possibly ejected from the vehicle. If trees are in the area, it might deem necessary to look in trees as well.

Vehicle stabilization is paramount and should be initiated immediately and prior to any personnel making entry into the vehicle.

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**51.0 Vehicle
Extrication**

51.3.4 Extrication process

The extrication of process shall begin with the appointment of an Extrication Lead. This should be the member with the best capabilities of performing a vehicle extricaiton. The Extrication Lead should establish an extrication zone. Access to this area shall be limited only to those firefighters involved in the extrication process and those providing the 1¾" handline.

The extrication team should consist of an Extrication Lead and at least two firefighters. The use of full protective clothing by the team with protective EMS gloves worn under the fire gloves shall be enforced (SCBA is an option to be considered by command and the appointed safety officer). It will be the duty of the Extrication Lead to oversee the extrication process and also inform Incident Commander of progress of the extrication. If at anytime the Extrication Lead feels that the extrication may require more specialized tools, he/she should not hesitate in making this request to the Incident Commander.

When the need for extrication exceeds the resources of BVFD, additional vehicle rescue tools shall be requested from the nearest extrication capable fire department.

51.3.5 Safety

The Incident Commander is responsible for the safety of ALL individuals working in and around the emergency scene. All personnel working on the scene shall wear all protective clothing appropriate to the task they are performing which normally includes full protective clothing. Gloves, helmet and eye protection (face shields down or safety glasses/goggles) must always be worn. Reflective safety vests are required to be worn when working in or around the incident scene.

It is critical that all precautions are taken to warn motorists of personnel working in the area. The proper placement of apparatus, to protect the responders on the scene, is one of the critical precautions that shall be addressed. Adequate Law Enforcement personnel will be present to assist with controlling traffic hazards. It is imperative that the Incident Commander work closely with the responding Law Enforcement and EMS agency to ensure the safety of all personnel on the scene.

Under no circumstances will "freelancing" be allowed in any BVFD operation. All operations will be conducted in accordance with the Incident Command System and the BVFD chain of command.

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**52.0
Ventilation**

52.1 Purpose

The purpose of this SOG is to establish tactical and strategic guidelines to be executed during structure fires when fire attacks and ventilation are essential by the Bergheim Volunteer Fire Department (BVFD).

52.2 Scope

These guidelines pertain to all BVFD members during fire suppression operations.

52.3 Guidelines

There are two primary purposes for ventilation:

1. **Venting for Life:** To facilitate entry when there is known or suspected life hazard.
2. **Venting for Fire:** To make it possible for the attack crew to enter the superheated environment and extinguish the fire.

Any immediate, limited ventilation is justified if it facilitates an interior search for occupants. Ventilation for search purposes, however, can intensify the fire and could endanger other occupants of the building. Ventilation may be defined as the removal of hazardous and/or toxic atmosphere from a structure that has been contaminated with smoke, gases, and heat, by providing both a controlled means of escape and the controlled replacement with fresh air for the purpose of making the atmosphere safe. It permits the advancement of hose lines rapidly which results in effectively extinguishing the fire.

The ventilation requirements are to make a building livable and to prevent further spread of the fire. If ventilation is not first instituted at the roof prior to entry at the lower level, a back draft could result and cause total involvement and loss of the structure. Also, if ventilation is started before charged hose lines are ready to advance, the fire could spread rapidly throughout the building. **It must be understood that ventilation will probably increase the intensity of the fire and therefore must be carefully coordinated with hose line evolutions in order to avoid increasing the severity of the fire.** There are two types of ventilation: natural and mechanical. As in all ventilation evolutions, personnel should pull and/or push ceilings, and remove all obstructions in order to maximize the impact of ventilation.

Ventilation will be covered within the BVFD training program.

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52.0
Ventilation

The following principals of ventilation are integral to successful fire control operations:

52.3.1 Vertical Ventilation

This is the proven and accepted type of ventilation to be used in the initial stage of operations. It should be performed for the following reasons:

- Relieves the upper portions of the building of heat, smoke, and gases. Prevents mushrooming and minimizes early fire extension. At the same time, it increases the survival time of unconscious or trapped victim(s).
- Permits more thorough search and examination above the fire.
- Relieves hallways and stairs of heat and smoke facilitating the escape of occupants while allowing an aggressive interior fire attack.
- Creates a vertical draft that channels the products of combustion, limiting horizontal spread and making control easier.
- Permits advancement above the original fire area to search for possible victim(s) and cut off fire extension.

52.3.2 Lateral (Horizontal) Ventilation

- Permits rapid advance of hose line(s) to the immediate fire area.
- Reduces the danger of heat and/or flames from passing over or around the shield created from a fog pattern, since smoke and the heat are permitted to escape through these controlled openings, i.e. windows, exterior door, etc.
- Make thorough search guidelines easier on upper floors as well as on the fire floor.
- Personnel should be aware of the effects of thermopane windows, which are commonly used today. These windows seal the building more efficiently therefore personnel must be made aware of the increase possibilities of flashover and backdraft. Also venting these windows with a hose stream is much more difficult.

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52.0
Ventilation

When BVFD members engage in ventilation evolutions, they will do so in a manner as described above. All members will also carry out their assignments with due care and diligence and will utilize forcible entry tools, i.e. axes, pike poles, crow bars, saws, halligan tools, etc.. Members will carry out their assignments in pairs of two and will follow orders of the Officer as to the location and type of ventilation to be conducted. Members should be aware of ventilating for fire or for life. These concepts can be explained to you by your company officers.

Under no circumstances will “freelancing” be allowed in any BVFD operation. All fireground operations will be conducted in accordance with the Incident Command System and the BVFD chain of command. Firefighters will only ventilate under the direct order of an officer. Extreme heat and smoke conditions can develop in the fire area and the floor above the fire. The potential for flashover and backdraft is real. Uncontrolled horizontal ventilation can seriously jeopardize the safety of other firefighters and civilians still located in the structure.

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53.0 Landing Air
Support

53.1 Purpose

The purpose of this SOG is to detail the proper procedures for landing air or other emergency helicopter transport.

53.2 Preface

From time to time, Bergheim First Responders may be asked to either setup or assist in setting up a landing zone (LZ) for safely landing emergency air support (EAS). During this process, safety of all personnel involved should be considered throughout the process. Bergheim personnel should wear appropriate PPE at all times; including but not limited to: reflective clothing, head protection, and eye protection.

53.3 Guidelines

Two special procedures for setting up a landing zone (LZ) depending on the landing zone location. These specific steps are detailed below.

53.3.1 Remote Landing Zone:

Step 1 Determine if suitable a location is available or if predetermined locations such as Bergheim Fire Station should be used. Location should be flat, straight, and free of overhead and/or surrounding obstructions.

Step 2 Identify an LZ Command. LZ Command should have two handheld radios for communication purposes

Step 3 Advise dispatch that the LZ coordinator will be operating on **V-MED 28** and tell dispatch to inform the inbound air craft that LZ instructions will be available on that channel. Switch one radio over to that channel and keep the other on Kendall Fire and on roam.

Step 4 Ensure that all personnel involved in LZ are wearing appropriate PPE. I.e. reflective clothing (bunker gear or vest), helmets (with chin straps secured, and eye protection.

Step 5 Locate a handheld anemometer (wind meter) and determine wind speed and direction.

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Step 5 Block road (if landing on highway) using Engine 31, Engine 32, Tender 33, Brush 32, Brush 33, or Squad 36 and turn on emergency lights. NO SIRENS. When possible, ask Police Department (PD) or Sheriff Officer (SO) for assistance with blocking and directing traffic.

Step 6 If landing on a dry dirt field; consider lightly spraying the field with a hose line to prevent/minimize dust during helicopter landing. Do not over wet or muddy the area.

Step 7 Setup four (4) TurboFlares™ in a 100' square to designate LZ Step 8 Make contact with EAS personnel. Inform them of:

- Any trees or structures and give their location relative to LZ
- Power lines or antennas location relative to LZ
- Wind speed and direction using anemometer
- Identify one of BFD vehicles and tell them relative location of LZ to that vehicle (include the designation of vehicle e.g. B32, E32, S36 etc.)
- Describe landing surface (e.g. dirt, asphalt, grass, concrete, etc.)

Step 9 Upon EAS arrival, ensure all personnel are protected from blade wash.

Step 10 Assist EAS and EMS as required. Make sure no one in the LZ is wearing caps or hats. NEVER approach helicopter. If they require assistance they will approach you.

Step 11 Once EAS and EMS have left the scene, clean up accordingly. Ensure all TurboFlares™ are turned off and returned to their storage location returned.

53.3.2 Bergheim VFD Landing Zone:

Step 1 Acquire two handheld radios and check into dispatch as LZ Command

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OPERATING GUIDELINES

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Support

Step 2 Advise dispatch that the LZ coordinator will be operating on **V-MED 28** and to inform inbound air craft that LZ instructions will be available on that channel. Switch one radio over to that channel and keep the other on Kendall Fire.

Step 3 Ensure that all personnel involved in LZ are wearing appropriate PPE, including reflective clothing (bunker gear or vest), helmets (with chinstraps secured, and eye protection.

Step 4 Locate a handheld anemometer (wind meter) and determine wind speed and direction.

Step 5 Move Engine 31, Engine 32, Tender 33, Brush 32, Brush 33, or Squad 36 to North East entrance and turn on emergency lights. NO SIRENS.

Step 6 Turn on exterior flood lights (switch by rear door) "wall pack" Step 7

Setup 4 TurboFlares™ on East concrete drive to designate LZ. Step 8 Make contact with EAS personnel.

Inform them of the following:

- LZ is a concrete pad
- Antenna tower to the north – approximately 75 yards
- Power lines to the north - approximately 50 yards
- Tree line to the east – approximately 40 yards
- Wind speed and direction using anemometer
- Vehicle with emergency lights is North East of LZ (use vehicle designation).

Step 9 Ensure that Bays 1 and 4 are completely open (remove remaining vehicles) so that ambulance can drive through upon arrival. Keep Bay 4 door open.

Step 10 Inform EMS that they can approach the station from the west and enter through the open bay door.

Step 11 Close all east bay doors prior to EAS arrival.

53.0 Landing Air Support

Step 13 Assist EAS and EMS as required – NEVER approach helicopter. If they require assistance they will approach you.

Step 14 Once Air Support and EMS have gone, clean up accordingly.
Ensure all TurboFlares™ returned.

**Bergheim Volunteer Fire
Department**

Standard Operating Guidelines Affidavit

My signature below certifies that I have received a copy of the Standard Operating Guidelines for the Bergheim Volunteer Fire Department. I also understand that I am responsible for reading and understanding all of the materials contained herein. I will faithfully discharge and obey my duties and obligations as per the Standard Operating Guidelines to the best of my ability as a Firefighter and/or Officer of the Bergheim Volunteer Fire Department. I also understand that as a member of the Bergheim Volunteer Fire Department, I am subject to all guidelines and policies as such and that failure to follow the guidelines and policies could result in disciplinary action.

(Signature)

(Print Name)

(Date)

Bergheim Volunteer Fire
Department
HIPAA Compliance Affidavit

I hereby acknowledge and affirm that I have read and reviewed the HIPAA compliance policies and procedures of the Bergheim Volunteer Fire Department; I understand the provisions of the HIPAA compliance policies and procedures and am encouraged to ask any questions I may have regarding its requirements.

I understand that it is a condition of the BVFD to comply with the requirements of the HIPAA compliance policies and procedures and the BVFD overall HIPAA compliance SOG. I also realize that I am required to report violations of the HIPAA compliance policies and procedures when I am told of violations by any person or I witness the violation myself. I understand that I will not be punished for reporting misconduct of any magnitude or which involves any level of BVFD. personnel. I have been informed that I will be disciplined for failing to report such violations. I am familiar with the BVFD requirement to report misconduct and the identity of the compliance offender.

(Signature)

(Print Name)

(Date)