

WAC 296-305-05002 Fire suppression. (1) Before beginning interior structural firefighting operations, the incident commander must evaluate the situation and risks to operating teams.

(2) The "initial stages" of an incident must encompass the tasks undertaken by the first arriving company with only one crew assigned or operating in the hot zone.

(3) In the initial stages of an incident where only one crew is operating in the hot zone at a working structural fire, a minimum of four individuals must be required, consisting of two individuals working as a crew in the hot zone and two individuals present outside the hot zone available for assistance or rescue of firefighters during emergency operations where entry into the hot zone is required.

(4) Initial attack operations must be organized to ensure that if, on arrival at the emergency scene, responders find a known rescue situation where immediate action could prevent the loss of life or serious injury, such action must only be permitted when no less than three personnel (2-in/1-out) are present and equipped to provide emergency assistance or rescue of the team entering the hot zone.

No exception must be allowed when there is no possibility to save lives or no "known" viable victims.

(5) Firefighters must not engage in interior structural firefighting in the absence of at least two standby firefighters (2-in/2-out) except as provided in WAC 296-305-05002(4).

(6) Standby team members must comply with the following:

(a) Members must remain aware of the status of firefighters in the hot zone.

(b) Members must remain in positive communication (radio, visual, voice or signal line) with the entry team, in full protective clothing with respiratory protection donned while in standby mode.

(c) Only one standby team member may be permitted to perform other duties outside the hot zone, provided constant communication is maintained with the team in the hot zone, and provided that those duties will not interfere with his or her ability to initiate a rescue as appropriate.

(d) No standby team members must be permitted to serve as a standby member of the firefighting crew when the other activities in which the firefighter is engaged inhibit the firefighter's ability to assist in or perform firefighter rescue or are of such importance that they cannot be abandoned without placing other firefighters in danger.

Note: Nothing in this section will prevent actions which may reasonably be taken by members first on the scene to determine the nature and extent of fire involvement.

(7) Once a second crew arrives at the hot zone, the incident must no longer be considered to be in the "initial stage," and at least one rapid intervention crew should be assigned. For further guidance, see nonmandatory Appendix D.

(8) Teams in the hot zone must have positive communication capabilities with the incident command structure in place. Incident radio communication capabilities within the incident management structure must include monitoring the incident-assigned frequencies (including mutual aid radio frequencies).

(9) Officers at emergency scenes must maintain an awareness of the physical and mental condition of members operating within their span of control and ensure that adequate steps are taken to provide for their safety and health. The command structure must be utilized to request relief and reassignment of fatigued crews.

(10) Personal protective clothing/equipment designed for wildfire suppression must not be used for interior structural firefighting.

(11) Firefighters must not cut the electrical drip loop providing power to the structure nor pull the electrical meter.

(12) Prior to overhaul, buildings must be surveyed for possible safety and health hazards. Firefighters must be informed of hazards observed during the survey and measures must be taken to protect firefighters from these hazards.

(13) Self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA) must be worn throughout overhaul. SCBA must also be worn during activities taking place in the area previously considered the hot zone after overhaul unless the officer in charge conducts an exposure evaluation to determine or reasonably estimate whether an employee is or could be exposed to either an airborne contaminant above a permissible exposure limit (PEL) listed in WAC 296-841-20025 Table 3 or other airborne hazards, such as biological/radiological/nuclear hazards. When the officer in charge cannot determine or reasonably estimate employee exposure they must conclude that an atmosphere is hazardous to the employees in accordance with WAC 296-842-13005.

(14) During the overhaul phase officers must identify materials likely to contain asbestos, limiting the breaching of structural materials to that which is necessary to prevent rekindle.

(15) Prior to removing firefighting ensembles worn in the hot zone, a gross decontamination must be performed to remove potentially harmful contaminants.

(16) Members of the department conducting post-fire investigations must comply with subsections (12) through (15) of this section.

(17) Employees working on, over, or along water where the chance of drowning exists must be provided with and must use approved personal flotation devices, unless it can be shown that conditions are such that flotation would not be achieved.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 49.17.010, 49.17.040, 49.17.050, and 49.17.060. WSR 18-22-116, § 296-305-05002, filed 11/6/18, effective 12/7/18. Statutory Authority: RCW 49.17.010, 49.17.040, 49.17.050, 49.17.060 and 29 C.F.R. 1910.156, Fire brigades. WSR 13-05-070, § 296-305-05002, filed 2/19/13, effective 1/1/14.]