



RUSSELLVILLE FIRE DEPARTMENT
POLICY MANUAL

Policy Number:
Section:
Original Date:
Revised Date:

PURPOSE

This policy establishes a procedure for Russellville Fire Department's response to reports of carbon monoxide (CO) incidents.

It is the responsibility of all personnel to be familiar with this policy, and follow it consistently with regard to detection and/or suspicion of the presence of carbon monoxide.

POLICY

All company officers responding to a CO incident shall be responsible for following this procedure, and submitting the prescribed documentation.

Carbon Monoxide is an odorless, tasteless, colorless gas that is deadly. It is a by-product of a fuel burning process. Many appliances such as furnaces, kitchen stoves, hot water heaters, automobiles, etc. can produce carbon monoxide. When a faulty or unusual condition exists, carbon monoxide may be vented into areas where people are present.

Carbon Monoxide poisoning may be difficult to diagnose. Its symptoms are similar to the flu, which may include headache, nausea, fatigue and dizzy spells.

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration has established a maximum safe working level for carbon monoxide at 35 parts per million (PPM) over an 8 hour period in the general workplace. The US Environmental Protection Agency has recommended that residential levels are not to exceed 9 PPM over an 8 hour average.

The Gas Company will not respond to all carbon monoxide (CO) investigations. They will respond only if the initial call received by them indicates that someone is ill or if the fire department requests that they respond to the scene.

A. Issuance and Maintenance of Meters:

1. One carbon monoxide/4 gas meter is located on each front line engine.
2. These meters will be used to monitor the atmosphere during any suspected carbon monoxide investigation.
3. Each Monday the meters shall be examined and checked for operational readiness. Each CO/4 gas detector shall be QC checked monthly.
4. Should any problem be noted, the Shift Commander shall immediately take steps to correct the problem. The department member in charge of monitors will also provide periodic re-calibration and maintenance of all CO gas meters, as per the manufacturer's recommendations.

B. Initial Carbon Monoxide Scene Assessment

1. Determine if anyone is exhibiting any symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning; if so, immediately evacuate and ventilate the premises.
2. Request necessary EMS response.
3. Begin investigating the cause of the CO alarm.

Approved

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4. If no one exhibits any symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning, it is not necessary to evacuate or ventilate the premises unless a level of over 9 PPM is detected.
5. The Incident Commander shall request that the gas company respond to the scene if:
 - a. A CO level of over 9 PPM is indicated on the CO/4 gas meter.
 - b. Or the responding engine company shuts off any gas appliance.
 - c. Or some one is showing signs of being ill due to CO.
 - d. Or the Incident Commander feels a response by the gas company is needed.

C. Carbon Monoxide Investigations (Procedures)

1. Zero the meter in fresh air and comply with all other start up procedures as recommended by the manufacturer of the metering equipment.
2. Initiate a survey of the premises to determine if there are any amounts above 9 PPM of carbon monoxide present.
3. In any atmosphere that is in excess of 35 PPM of CO all members shall use SCBA.
4. Reading of 9 PPM or less:
 - a. Inform the occupants that our instruments did not detect an elevated level of CO at this time.
 - b. Recommend the occupants check their CO detector per the manufacturer's recommendations.
 - c. Attempt to reset the owner's CO detector
 - d. Inform the occupants if the detector activates again call 9-1-1.
5. Readings of more than 9 PPM but less than 100 PPM:
 - a. Any reading above 9 PPM shall be considered above normal.
 - b. Occupants shall be informed that we have detected a potentially dangerous level of CO.
 - c. Recommend that all persons leave the premises and begin ventilation.
 - d. If it is determined that an appliance is malfunctioning and is thereby producing CO, it shall be shut off.
 - e. Once the premises atmosphere has been reduced to a safe level of CO (9 PPM or less), the premises may be occupied at the discretion of the occupant.
 - f. Attempt to reset the CO detector.
 - g. Inform the occupants if the detector activates again call 9-1-1.
 - h. The occupants shall be informed of the action that has been taken and that the gas company has been requested to respond.

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6. Reading of 100 PPM or greater:

- a. Any reading of 100 PPM or greater – inform the occupants that we have detected a potentially lethal level of CO.
- b. Order the occupants to leave the premises immediately.
- c. If it is determined that an appliance is malfunctioning and thereby producing CO, shut off the appliance.
- d. Once the premises atmosphere has been reduced to a safe level of CO (9 PPM or less), the premises may be occupied at the discretion of the occupant.
- e. Attempt to reset the CO detector.
- f. Inform the occupants if the detector activates again call 9-1-1.
- g. The occupants shall be informed of the action that has been taken and that the gas company has been requested to respond.

D. Assignments

1. CO investigations in which none of the occupants are showing signs or symptoms of illness shall receive a Code 1 response by one Engine Company.
 - a. The investigation shall be toned out.
 - b. An incident number shall be assigned.
 - c. Units shall respond using the same benchmark radio traffic as when responding to an emergency
 - d. The RFD Carbon Monoxide Investigation Checklist shall be completed and signed by the officer on the scene. The checklist shall be submitted to Fire Administration.
 - e. A Carbon Monoxide Detector Activation Notice of Findings form shall be completed by the officer on the scene, and signed by that officer and the occupant. A copy of the form shall be given to the occupant, and the remaining copy shall be submitted to Fire Administration.
 - f. An Incident report shall be completed.
2. CO investigations in which any of the occupants are showing signs or symptoms of illness shall receive a Code 3 response by one Engine Company and the closest Medic.
 - a. The investigation shall be toned out.
 - b. An incident number shall be assigned.
 - c. Units shall respond using the same benchmark radio traffic.
 - d. The RFD Carbon Monoxide Investigation Checklist shall be completed and signed by the officer on the scene. The checklist shall be submitted to Fire Administration.
 - e. A Carbon Monoxide Detector Activation Notice of Findings form shall be completed by the officer on the scene, and signed by that officer and the occupant. A copy of the form shall be given to the occupant, and the remaining copy shall be submitted to Fire Administration.
 - f. An Incident report shall be completed.

Approved

Fire Chief