



FIRE AND RESCUE DEPARTMENT

November 1, 2013

INSTRUCTIONAL BULLETIN #13-38

TO: All Fire and Rescue Personnel

FROM: Ivan T. Mote, Division Chief/Rescue *ITM*
Kurtis R. Wilson, Division Chief/Operations *KRW*

RE: **New W4 Signal**

In an effort to reduce firefighter exposure to carcinogens and products of combustion and to better facilitate on scene health & safety protocols such as Rehab and Decon, the JFRD will begin implementing the new W4 signal, when needed.

- Three classifications of *W* signals currently exist for structure fires: W1, W2 and W3.
- The W4 signal is not a tactical signal but a *health and safety* one, and can be given prior to or after the signal 77.
- The W4 will become a benchmark in the Incident Command SOG and noted by FRCC (needed-yes or no).
- Both the IC and the *Health & Safety Officer* can call a W4 *in concert* with each other.
- If certain thresholds are met, the W4 will be called automatically by the IC.
 - These include:
 - Primary units exceeding one bottle of air prior to a signal 77 given.
 - Primary units exceeding 40 minutes of strenuous activity prior to a signal 77 given.
 - All 2nd alarms or greater.
- In order for the new W4 policy to work, a shift in the role and responsibilities of the Incident Safety Officer (NFPA) and *Health & Safety Officer* must occur.
 - For all structure fires, a *Rescue Chief* will be dispatched and will assume the *Health & Safety Officer* position for all W3s or greater. Similar to NIMS, this is now a mandated position for JFRD; therefore, the *Rescue Chief cannot be canceled* if Command is established.
 - The second arriving Suppression Chief can fulfill the Incident Safety Officer role (NFPA). However, the IC has the prerogative to assign the second arriving Suppression Chief to another role (Interior, Operations, Hazmat Group, etc.).



- It will be the primary responsibility of the *Health & Safety Officer* to determine the need for a W4 (this is the health & safety function).
- Once a W4 signal has been given, the following minimum will respond: one additional engine, ladder, rescue, Rehab 37, and Air 5.
 - Once called, the *Health & Safety Officer* will manage the W4 group with the exception of the additional companies for overhaul.
 - Additional units can be requested by the IC if needed.
 - A staging area must be determined for Rehab and will consist of Rehab 37, Air 5 and the additional rescue.
 - The additional engine and ladder will be assigned to overhaul duties.
 - **Mandatory SCBA and PPE usage during overhaul, no exceptions.**
 - A way to gross decon gear on scene (port-a-flex shower is on Rehab 37)
 - Tag & bag, if necessary, and have fresh gear delivered to the station.
 - Will have a logistical way for you to call for and have delivered clean loaner gear until yours is washed.
 - Handy wipes and other means to quickly remove products of combustion from your skin while at rehab.
- Only the IC or Health & Safety Officer can call for a W4. If first arriving units go on scene, call Command and give a W3, but downgrade the assignment shortly thereafter to a W2 or W1, then the Rescue Chief can cancel.
 - All W3's with five or more units *will require* the Health & Safety Officer position.
 - Unit designations for the Incident Safety Officer and Health and Safety Officer will remain the same, i.e., Fire 2 has Safety (Incident Safety Officer) and will stay as Fire 2. R105 assuming Health & Safety will remain R105.
- Other SOG's will be changed to include the following:
 - Safety Officer SOG
 - Incident Command SOG
 - Communications SOG
 - Signal 25 SOG