Bath Township Fire Department			Standard Operating Guideline	
Section **Operations**	**Referral No.** **O-O7**	**Subject:** **Response to Water Rescue Incidents**	**Date Issued** **1/03**	**Date Revised** **4/08**

Purpose:

- To provide guidelines for safe emergency response to water rescue incidents and define the response plan for water rescue incidents.

Scope:

- This standard operating guideline shall apply to all personnel.

Responsibilities:

- Officer
  - Ensure that personnel respond properly.
  - Provide direction based on the Incident Management System.
  - Ensure the safety of all personnel.
- Personnel
  - All personnel have the responsibility of following the direction of Incident Command at an emergency scene.
  - All personnel have the responsibility to wear the proper safety equipment and to operate in a safe manor.

Guidelines:

- **Safety is always our first priority**
- **A "Full Response" shall be initiated for all Water Rescue Incidents**
- When dispatched to a water rescue incident, Truck 5 will respond with the boat
- Medic 6, 7, Ladder 1, and Rescue 9 will also respond
- **Rescue Priorities:**
  1. Safety of the rescuers
  2. Safety of the victims
  3. Body recovery
- **Equipment:**
  - Personal Floatation Device (PFD) – All personnel involved with water rescue incidents **MUST** wear PFD's at all times when in or near water
- **Basic Safety Rules:**
  - DO NOT wear structural firefighting PPE in or near the water
  - Do not overextend yourself
  - Do not become a victim
  - Always bathe thoroughly after entering any body of water due to pollution hazard

- **Risk Priorities:**
  - Shore-based: least risky. Use poles, floats, throw bags, etc. to make contact with the victim. Avoid entering the water whenever possible.
  - Tethered boat or float and rope system: A boat or float that is secured at either two or four control points may be used to reach victims.
  - Free boat: A boat that is either paddled or motor powered and not tethered to the shore.
  - In water contact: swim to the victim, physically contact him and return him to shore. **THIS IS VERY RISKY**
- The boat operator will have a portable radio to stay in contact with personnel on the shore
- The dispatcher will be notified when the boat has entered the water.
- Advise the receiving hospital of near drowning, codes, and multiple patients when necessary.
- If dive team is needed, have dispatch contact the ACSO Dive Team
- Water rescue incidents require a large number of people to complete them safely, if mutual aid is needed, don't hesitate to ask for it
- Advise dispatch when the boat has returned to shore.
- Refuel the vehicle and ensure that the vehicle is clean and ready for service.
- Any damage or malfunction of any equipment shall be reported to an officer and a repair slip filled out and submitted to that officer.