Bath Township Fire Department			Standard Operating Guideline	
Section Safety	**Referral No.** S-16	**Subject:** Emergency Scene Rehabilitation	**Date Issued** 11/02	**Date Revised** 4/11

Purpose:

- To provide rehabilitation sector including rest, nutrition, and medical screening, for personnel operating at an emergency scene.

Scope:

- This standard operating guideline shall apply to all emergency operations and training exercises where physical activity or environmental conditions dictate.

Responsibilities:

- 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 members operating at an emergency scene.
  - These provisions shall include: medical evaluation, treatment, and monitoring; food and fluid replenishment; mental rest; and relief from extreme climatic conditions and the other environmental parameters of the incident.
  - The rehabilitation shall include the provision of Emergency Medical Services at the BLS level or higher.
- Officer
  - All 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.
- Personnel
  - During periods of hot weather, members shall be encouraged to drink water or electrolyte replacement drinks throughout the workday.
  - During any emergency incident or training evolution, all members shall advise their 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 the operation in which they are involved.
  - Members shall also remain aware of the health and safety of other members of their crew.

Establishment of Rehabilitation Sector:

- Responsibility
  - The Incident Commander will establish a Rehabilitation Sector when conditions indicate that rest and rehabilitation is needed for personnel operating at an incident scene or training evolution.
  - A member will be placed in charge of the sector and shall be known as the Rehab Officer.
    - The Rehab Officer will typically report to the Incident Commander or the Safety Officer.
- Location
  - The Incident Commander will normally designate the location for the Rehab Sector.
    - If a specific location is not designated, the Rehab Officer shall select an appropriate location based on the site characteristics and designations below.
- 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 operation or training evolution.
  - It should be far enough away from the scene that members may safely remove their turnout gear and SCBA and be afforded mental rest from the stress and pressure of the emergency operation or training evolution.
  - It should provide suitable protection from the prevailing environmental conditions. During hot weather, it should be in cool, shaded area. During cold weather, it should be in a warm dry area.
  - It should enable members to be free of exhaust fumes from apparatus, vehicles or equipment.
  - It should be large enough to accommodate multiple crews, based on the size of the incident.
  - It should be easily accessible by EMS units.
  - It should allow prompt reentry back into the emergency operation upon release from the rehab sector.
- Site Designations
  - A nearby garage, building lobby, or other structure
  - Several floors below a fire in a high rise building
  - A school bus, municipal bus, or Allen County EMA Command Post
  - Fire apparatus, ambulance, or other emergency vehicles at the scene or called to the scene
  - An open area in which a Rehab Sector can be created using tarps, fans, etc.

- Resources
  - The Rehab Officer shall secure all necessary resources required to adequately staff and supply the Rehab Sector. The supplies should include the items listed below:
    - Fluids - Water, Gatorade and ice.
    - Food – Energy bars, pre-packaged snack type foods
    - Medical – blood pressure cuffs, stethoscopes, oxygen administration equipment, thermometers, cardiac monitor/defibrillators.
    - Other – fans, tarps, blankets, towels, traffic cones, fire line tape

Guidelines:

- Rehab Sector Establishment
  - Officers should consider rehabilitation during the initial planning stages of an emergency response.
  - The environmental conditions should not be the sole justification for establishing a rehabilitation sector.
  - Any incident that is large in size, long in duration, and/or labor intensive should be considered for establishing a rehabilitation sector.
  - Environmental conditions that indicate the need to establish a Rehab Sector is a heat stress index above 90^{o} F or wind-chill below 10^{o} F.
- Hydration
  - A critical factor in prevention of heat illnesses is maintenance of fluids and electrolytes.
  - Fluids must be replaced during exercise or strenuous activity.
    - Re-hydration should also be considered during cold weather operations.
  - Caffeinated and carbonated beverages should be avoided.
- Nourishment
  - The department shall provide nourishment for long duration incidents.
    - Pre-packaged snack type foods or energy bars will be provided.
  - Cooked food will be avoided due to the possibility of food-borne illnesses.
- Rest
  - The “One air bottle rule”, or 30 minutes of work time, is recommended as an acceptable level prior to mandatory rehabilitation.
  - Members shall rehydrate (at least 8 ounces) while SCBA cylinders are being refilled.
  - Firefighters having worked for one full 45cfa (cubic feet of air) SCBA bottles, or 30 minutes of work, shall report to the rehabilitation sector for rest and evaluation.
  - Rest shall not be less than 10 minutes and may be longer as deemed necessary by the rehab officer.

- After personnel have rested and evaluated the rehab officer will release them.
  - The rehab officer must release personnel.
- Recovery
  - Members in the rehabilitation sector should maintain a high level of hydration.
  - If possible, personnel should be removed from extreme environmental conditions.
  - Certain drugs impair the body's ability to sweat and extreme caution must be exercised if the member has taken antihistamines diuretics or stimulants.
- Medical Evaluation
  - EMS will be provided at a minimum of BLS level.
  - EMS shall evaluate vital signs, examine personnel and make proper disposition (return to duty, continued rehab, medical treatment and transport to a medical facility).
    - Continued rehab shall consist of additional rest, fluids and re-evaluation of vital signs.
  - Medical treatment and transport for personnel whose vital signs or symptoms indicate potential problems, should follow EMS protocols.
  - EMS personnel shall be assertive in an effort to find potential medical problems early.
    - Heart rate and Temperature – The heart rate should be measured for 30 seconds and as early in the rest period as possible.
      - If a person's heart rate exceeds 110 beats/minute, an oral temperature shall be taken.
      - If the person's oral temperature exceeds 100.6^{o}F he/she should not be permitted to put their protective equipment back on and return to work.
      - If it is below 100.6^{o}F and the heart rate remains above 110 beats/min., they should be kept for continued rehabilitation.
      - If the heart rate is less than 110 beats/min., the chance of heat stress is negligible.
      - Documentation – All firefighters will have their vitals signs recorded on the Rehab Sector Vital Signs Log.
        - If further medical treatment and transport is warranted, a full EMS run report will be completed.
- Accountability
  - Personnel assigned to the rehab sector shall enter and exit the rehab sector as a crew.
  - Each crew along with times of entry and exit from the rehab sector shall be noted on the rehab sector check in/out sheet.
  - Crews shall not leave the rehab sector until authorized to do so by the rehab officer.

- Rehabilitation considerations for operations in hot weather:
  - Move fatigued firefighters away from the hazardous area
  - Ensure firefighters are out of direct sunlight if possible
  - Remove firefighters protective equipment
  - Ensure adequate air movement over firefighters, either natural or mechanical
  - Provide liquids to replace lost body fluid and. If needed, food
  - Medical personnel will evaluate firefighters within the rehab sector for signs or symptoms of heat exhaustion, heat stroke or other heat related injuries

- Rehabilitation considerations for operations in cold weather:
  - Move fatigued firefighters away from the hazardous area
  - Provide heat and shelter from wind and extreme cold
  - Provide liquids to replace lost body fluid and. If needed, food