




# FIRE RESCUE

ALBEMARLE COUNTY

## STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINE

<b>Subject:</b>	Modified Response
<b>Reference Number:</b>	SOG-OPS-016
<b>Effective Date:</b>	14 December 2005
<b>Last Revision Date:</b>	27 April 2017
<b>Signature of Approval:</b>	 <b>J. Dan Eggleston, Chief</b>

**Purpose:**

The purpose of this SOG is to provide general operating guidelines for responses during inclement weather or other high call volume periods. The primary objectives are to protect responders from unnecessary risks during adverse conditions and to help maintain an operationally manageable number of responses.

**Scope:**

This Standard Administrative Policy shall be applicable to all personnel operating within the Albemarle County coordinated and integrated fire and emergency medical service system as defined in Albemarle County Code Chapter 6, Article I, Division I, Section 6-100.

**Background:**

This policy replaces and supersedes the following policies:  
 SOG-OPS-008 Marking of Disabled Vehicles  
 SOG-OPS-016 Modified Response Plan (Inclement Weather)

**Guideline:**

1. The following pre-determined levels of response shall be utilized to modify emergency operations during inclement weather. Additional modifications may be made by the Albemarle County Fire Rescue Chief or the EOC as conditions warrant.

**Storm Mode**

Response to tree and power line down calls shall be limited to reports that meet one of the following criteria:

- Tree into a structure with confirmed or unknown injury or entrapment
- Power line across the road
- Power line or tree on fire threatening a structure
- Power line or tree on fire and spreading (brush fire)
- Incidents meeting these criteria may be further prioritized at the station level as necessary due to call volume

**Modified Response Level 1 (MRP1)**

Response to motor vehicle collisions (MVC) shall be limited to reports that meet one of the following criteria:

- Report of injury (EMS and Fire response)
- Report of person(s) trapped (extrication response for EMS and Fire)
- Overturned vehicle (EMS and Fire response if unknown or reported injury)
- Smoke or fire showing (Fire only if unknown or no injury)
- Hazardous situations (including downed power lines, fuel leaks, etc., Fire only if unknown or no injury)

### Modified Response Level 2 (MRP2)

In addition to MRP1, a fire department response shall be added to all EMS calls, regardless of location or level, for added personnel. Resources other than fire department units may be utilized to satisfy the additional staffing requirement, i.e. rescue squad chase car or national guard asset.

#### 2. Activation/Cancelation

The following guidelines shall be utilized to activate or cancel a modified response plan:

- If the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) has been activated, all requests to activate or cancel a modified response shall be directed to the fire rescue representative in the EOC.
- In the absence of an activated EOC, a chief officer may activate or cancel Storm Mode, MRP1, or MRP2 for their response area based on conditions. Coordination among the County's fire and rescue agencies is strongly encouraged. When area rescue squads initiate a modified response plan, the corresponding fire station districts shall also be in modified response mode.
- The ECC shall notify all personnel by means of radio alert tone, and announcement, that the Modified Response Plan is in effect (either county-wide or for specified areas). An advisory text message shall also be sent for notification purposes. The same procedures shall be utilized to discontinue the Modified Response Plan as conditions improve.

#### 3. Suspension of Emergency Dispatch

If conditions pose too high of a risk for responders, it may be necessary to suspend all emergency response to a specific area or to the county at large. These conditions may include, but are not limited to, hurricane force winds (sustained 39 mph or greater), wide spread icing of roads, wide spread violence, etc. Only the Albemarle County Department of Fire Rescue Chief, his designee or the EOC has the authority to make this determination.

If response is suspended to any part of Albemarle the following items shall be completed:

- Alert tone and text message notification to all fire rescue personnel advising of the conditions and the affected area
- Notify Emergency Manager and consider opening the EOC
- Notify County Executive
- Make public notification to the affected area

This guideline does not prohibit a responder from suspending an individual response due to safety concerns.

#### 4. Mutual Aid Requests

Modified response plan applies to Albemarle County and the City of Charlottesville only. Any requests from neighboring localities shall be dispatched by the standard protocol. A determination to accept or decline the request will be made at the station level.

#### 5. Radio Communications

During periods of high call volume, the Emergency Communications Center (ECC) may become overwhelmed with 911 calls and radio traffic, requiring the need to limit responders to essential emergency traffic only. When this happens ECC will notify units that ECC is in **Condition Red**. During this time all radio traffic, requests for information, and phone calls shall be limited to essential emergency traffic only. For additional information see SOG-OPS-011.

#### 6. Marking of Hazards

During periods of high call volume or inclement weather, it may not be possible for units to remain on scene with hazards, such as disabled vehicles, trees in the road, or power lines down, until the situation has been fully resolved. To make units available for higher priority calls, and reduce the likelihood of multiple calls for the same incident, the following guidelines shall be used when a unit cannot remain on scene with a hazard:

- Insure there are no immediate safety threats
- Mark the area or object with yellow caution tape so that it is clearly visible from the roadway

Notify ECC of the hazard and the fact that it has been marked, when reasonable