

JOINT RESPONSE AGREEMENT MODEL STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINE

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**STRUCTURAL FIRE ATTACK
Property Conservation**

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This guideline provides Department procedures for preserving property at the scene of an emergency incident.

It is standard procedure to commit the necessary fireground resources that will keep property loss to an absolute minimum. Effective property conservation requires the same early, on going, and aggressive actions as rescue and fire control. All fire personnel are expected to perform in a manner that continually reduces loss of property during fire operations.

Early recognition that the forward progress of the fire has been stopped is an important element in reducing property loss. Salvage operations should begin as soon as possible, and can in some cases be done during fire control efforts. When the fire is out, fire streams should be shut down to further minimize loss.

When basic fire control has been achieved, the Incident Commander should commit and direct companies into "STOP LOSS" activities. Such activities include:

- Evaluating damage to overall fire area
- Evaluating the salvage of various areas
- Evaluate the resources that will be required
- Committing the required resources to salvage functions
- Reducing hose lines from fire control functions

In cases where there is an overlapping need for both fire control and salvage operations, a request for additional resources to perform salvage operations may be required.

The Incident Commander should be aware that personnel involved in rescue and fire control operations are generally fatigued by the time property conservation activities should be completed. This can result in salvage work being completed carelessly, thus causing an increased risk of injuries. The Incident Commander should evaluate the condition of personnel and replace them with fresh resources, if needed.

Prompt fireground lighting, both interior and exterior, reduces fire loss and increases safety.

The provision of salvage functions should be integrated into the cause determination phase. When fire control becomes stable, withdraw fire control resources and let the fire investigator(s) develop a plan.

Caution should be taken to assure personnel do not remove evidence during the overhaul or salvage process.

Crews should not disregard the hazards associated with the fire during the fire containment and fire under control phases. Use of SCBA's is required where the atmosphere conditions require SCBA use.

Much of the property conservation profile of a building can be identified during pre-fire plan activities. The firefighter should consider this profile in developing and extending a plan of attack. Most fire resources are more attracted to active fire attack functions than to the less active operations (example: Salvage and Overhaul) that relate to property conservation. Simply, most fire personnel would rather operate nozzles than throw salvage covers. The Incident Commander should integrate this awareness into specific company assignments and continually follow-up to insure minimization of property loss.