

# Washington Township Fire Department Standard Operating Procedure

**Division 200:** Emergency Operations  
**Section 203:** Fire Suppression  
**Subject 203.01:** Fire Scene Emergency Radio Traffic and  
Emergency Evacuation  
**Supersedes:** General Order 92-2 Dated April 25, 1997



## Approved By:

Date: March 15, 2003

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## PURPOSE:

To establish procedures for emergency radio traffic and emergency evacuation of fire and EMS personnel from a structure when the extent of the fire prohibits control or the structure becomes unsafe to operate within. It is implied that since personnel are on a “working” situation that the incident has been moved from the Primary talk group to one of the Fire Ground, EMS or Operations talk groups.

## RESPONSIBILITY:

All personnel must become familiar with this policy. Incident Commanders and Fire Alarm Operators must know and understand their responsibilities as outlined.

## PROCEDURES:

### Emergency Radio Traffic

Emergency radio traffic is defined as an urgent radio message when fire or EMS personnel are in need of immediate assistance or observe a situation that must be resolved immediately. These situations include, but are not limited to, personnel down, trapped or missing, or the structure becomes indefensible.

The unit with emergency traffic must identify themselves and state “Emergency Traffic”. The Incident Commander must acknowledge the unit, determine the nature of the emergency situation and take appropriate action. The Fire Alarm Operator may be unable to monitor the talk group to which the incident has been assigned. Therefore, any request(s) from the Incident Commander to the Fire Alarm Operator must be made on the Primary talk group.

### Emergency Evacuation

Emergency evacuation is defined as an urgent need to evacuate a structure, including the immediate area, due to impending danger to crews working in or near the structure. When emergency evacuation is required, the Incident Commander must announce on the talk group assigned to the incident “Emergency – all units in and around the structure evacuate”. The Incident Commander must then contact the Fire Alarm Operator on the Primary talk group and request the evacuation alert tone and announcement be executed.

The Fire Alarm Operator will then transmit the evacuation alert tone on the Announce talk group. Remaining on the Announce talk group, the Fire Alarm Operator will announce, “Emergency – all

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units in and around the structure evacuate”. The Fire Alarm Operator will then announce, “Personnel having portable air horns stand by to give the evacuation signal on my count – 5 – 4 – 3 – 2 – 1 – signal” (air horns on apparatus may also be utilized if located in the immediate area of the structure). The evacuation signal will consist of a continuous ten (10) second blast of the air horns. The Fire Alarm Operator will advise personnel when ten (10) seconds have lapsed. The Fire Alarm Operator at this point will return to the Primary talk group.

**If the incident has been assigned to an *Operations* talk group, the Incident Commander is responsible for handling the entire evacuation process. The Fire Alarm Operator does not have access to *Operations* talk groups.**

Upon personnel receiving the evacuation order, all personnel are to evacuate and immediately report to the designated area as determined by the Incident Commander. All personnel must be accounted for and must remain at the designated location for further instructions.

Note: Portable air horns are maintained in the vehicles of the following: Chief 1, Chief 41, Marshal 40, Battalion 40, Ladder 41, Rescue 43, Attack 41. Air horns must be maintained in the cab of apparatus and in an easily identifiable area in command staff vehicles.