

Union County Standard Operating Guidelines
Fireground Operations

Fireground Operations, SOG 3.24

STAGING

1. Intent and Purpose

- a. The intent and purpose of the Staging SOG is to provide a standard system of initial placement for responding apparatus, men and equipment prior to assignment at tactical incidents.
- b. Effective utilization of this guideline:
 - Will prevent excessive apparatus congestion at the scene.
 - Will allow time for the Command Post to evaluate conditions prior to assigning companies.
 - Place apparatus in an uncommitted location close to the immediate scene to facilitate more effective assignment by the Command Post.
 - Produces more effective communications by virtue of reducing radio traffic during critical initial stages of fire operations.
- c. Note: Staging will involve two (2) levels: Level I and Level II

2. Level I Staging

- a. Level I Staging applies to all multiple Company responses on 1st Alarm Assignments. It dictates the standard apparatus response areas for both residential and high-risk properties.
- b. The first arriving Officer, Company Officer, or Department member shall assume command and size-up the incident. If necessary, the Standard Apparatus Arrival – Tactical Operations (see 3.12 First to Arrive Duties) may need to be adjusted. Unless otherwise directed, Companies will be positioned at the incident as outlined below.
 - Chief - arrival first: size-up, set-up Incident Command (IC), and direct incoming Companies.
 - First Engine Company - arrival first: May or may not lay a line into the scene, size-up, set –up IC, and direct incoming Companies. If preceded to the scene by Chief Officer then report to the front of the building and report to the IC unless advised otherwise.
 - Second Engine Company: Position at nearest hydrant, or intersection, or 500' from scene and report placement.
 - First Ladder Company: Position at the nearest hydrant, or intersection, or 500' from scene and report placement. If the Second Engine Company is already on the hydrant, proceed to the scene with the First Engine Company.
 - Second Ladder Company: Position at the rear of the building (incident) and report your position.
 - Third Engine Company: Position at the FDC and report your position. If no FDC, position at the rear of the building and report your position.
 - Fourth Engine Company: Position with the Second Ladder Company or rear of building and report your position.

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- Medic: When a medic is dispatched it should be located near the Command Post and be prepared to take care of injured personnel or civilians.
 - c. Note: If the IC sets-up staging at a hydrant, etc., then all incoming Companies shall report there unless told otherwise.
3. Level II Staging
- a. Level II Staging will relate to large, complex-type incidents requiring an on-scene reserve of Fire Companies, as well as other agencies, and will involve formal staging in an area designated by the IC. When the IC announces a formal staging area, the Fire Dispatcher (s) should be notified and all responding Companies will report to and remain in the staging area until assigned to the incident. If staging on roadway at night, turn headlights off, leave parking lights and emergency flashers on for safety. Note: Level II Staging will be an automatic procedure when dispatched to Multiple Alarms.
 - b. The IC may designate a Staging area and Staging Officer who will be responsible for the activities outlined in this guideline.
 - c. The first Company Officer to arrive at the approximate location of the staging area shall become the Staging Officer. He/She will notify the IC of his/her arrival, designate the exact location of the staging area, and assume command of the staging area.
 - d. If no staging area or Staging Officer is designated, the Officer of the first arriving Engine, Ladder, Tanker, or Medic shall designate the location of the staging area. The Officer will automatically become the Staging Officer, will notify the IC of his/her arrival, and assume command of the staging area.
 - e. When requested by the IC, the Staging Officer will verbally assign Companies to report to specific Divisions or Groups, telling them where and to whom to report, and what frequency they are operating on. He/she will then advise the IC of the specific Companies assigned. The division or group supervisor may then communicate directly with the Company. The Staging Officer will give the IC periodic reports of available Companies in the Staging area. If requested to do so by the IC, the Staging Officer may communicate directly with Fire Dispatch to replace Companies as they are assigned.
 - f. The Staging Officer will also be responsible for the following:
 - Coordinate with police, sheriff, or state patrol to block the streets, roads, intersections, and other access required for the staging area.
 - Assure that all apparatus is parked in an appropriate manner.
 - Maintain a list of Companies available in the staging area and inventory all specialized equipment (i.e. Thermal Imagers) that might be required at the scene.

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- Review with the IC what resources must be maintained in the staging area and coordinate the request for these with the Fire Dispatcher.
- Assume a position that is visible and accessible to incoming and staged Companies.

4. Staging Area Resources

- a. Unless otherwise instructed, the Staging Officer will advise the IC when the level of resources in the staging area is depleted to two engines and one ladder/tanker or less. The IC will make a decision whether or not to call for additional units or to call for an additional alarm.
- b. The IC may instruct the Staging Officer to maintain a base level of resources until further advised. In such circumstances, the Staging Officer will communicate directly with the Fire dispatcher to request additional units.
- c. Separate and/or multiple staging areas may be required for some incidents (i.e. Medical staging area, Hazmat staging area, Support Staging, etc.). In such cases, the Staging Officer will so designate and relay this information to the IC and the Fire Dispatcher.

5. Special Tactical/Violent Scene Staging

- a. Special Tactical staging must be set up for 911 Unknown/Violent Scenes. Do not pass in front of and/or within site of location. Have a protective structure or hill between staging and scene. Consider having Law Enforcement secure staging area. Keep back a minimum of one (1) block away. Keep vehicles and personnel out of the line of sight of the incident. Have an escape route planned.
- b. Members should consider the hazards at hand. They should Stage in Quarters if the incident is within 1 mile of the station. Otherwise, stage a minimum of one (1) block away from the incident, out of sight of the incident, with at least two (2) means of egress (backing out doesn't count).
- c. Members should remember that the crowd may be a hazard.
- d. Units should turn off warning lights when staged and then turn them back on when completing the response to the scene (**once scene is confirmed secure by law enforcement**). Turning off warning lights at the scene may reduce crowd attraction to the incident.
- e. The best plan may be to retreat if necessary to ensure the safety of the crewmembers.