

Union County Standard Operating Guidelines  
**Fireground Operations**

**Fireground Operations, SOG 3.42**

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**USE OF CIVILIANS**

1. Intent and Purpose

To provide fire officers and IC's with an understanding of their authority and responsibilities relative to the rare utilization of civilians during emergency operations.

2. Policy

- a. It shall be the policy of UCFD's to avoid the use of civilians in Fire Department operations.
- b. Whenever, under unusual circumstances, civilians must be utilized or allowed to participate in Fire Department operations, the IC of such operations shall utilize the civilians in such capacities that will not place them in obviously dangerous areas or hazardous environments. The IC shall insure control over their actions and well-being.

3. Scope

As used in this policy, the term "civilian" refers to any person who is not a known member of a Fire, Police, Sheriff Department or the Ohio State Patrol.

4. Responsibility

- a. Whenever UCFD's personnel enlist the aid, assistance, or help of civilians, the department automatically assumes liability for both the safety of such civilians and for their actions, and the results of their actions.
- b. Whenever UCFD's personnel allow civilians to assist, aid, or participate in any way during Fire Department operations (whether by conscious acknowledgement or implied consent), the department automatically assumes liability for both the safety of such civilians and for their actions and the results of their actions.
- c. IC's are responsible for overall control of an emergency scene and, as such, shall insure control over the safety of civilians (whether they have been enlisted or have volunteered) during Fire Department operations.
- d. All UCFD's personnel must keep the safety of the public foremost in their minds and refrain from utilizing civilians, or restrain and prohibit their participation whenever conditions are too dangerous to allow their involvement.