3.1.4.4 Staging

	YOUR ORGANIZATION STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES/GUIDELINES

TITLE: Staging	**SECTION/TOPIC:** Command and Control
NUMBER: 3.1.4.4	**ISSUE DATE:**
	REVISED DATE:
PREPARED BY: X _____ Preparer	**APPROVED BY:** X _____ Approver
These SOPs/SOGs are based on FEMA guidelines FA-197	

1.0 POLICY REFERENCE

CFR	
NFPA	
NIMS	

2.0 PURPOSE

This standard operating procedure/guideline addresses procedures for staging units and apparatus at emergency scenes, which may include specific procedures for staging and the designation and use of staging officers.

3.0 SCOPE

This SOP/SOG pertains to all personnel in this organization.

4.0 DEFINITIONS

These definitions are pertinent to this SOP/SOG.

5.0 PROCEDURES/GUIDELINES & INFORMATION

5.1 Procedures for staging Units and Apparatus at Emergency Scenes:

This procedure defines the responsibilities of the Staging Sector Officer. Level II staging is implemented by Command and should be utilized for all greater alarm incidents, first alarm medical or hazardous materials incidents, or other incidents in which Command desires to centralize resources, or simply park apparatus in a central, unobstructed location.

Level II staging will require all responding companies to report to the central staging location.

Implementation of Level II staging automatically requires the implementation of a "Staging Sector" Officer. Command should request a separate radio channel and may designate a Staging Sector Officer. Where an officer is not designated, the first company to arrive at the designated staging location will automatically become the staging officer.

Where the first company to staging is a ladder company, Staging Sector responsibilities should be transferred to an engine company officer upon his arrival on the scene.

Radio designation will be "Staging Sector."

Command will request a separate radio channel to be used for Command Post to Staging Sector communications and advise the Staging Sector Officer.

The staging area should be outside the incident site perimeter, but close enough for quick response to the scene. The staging area should allow staged companies to access any geographic point of the incident without delay or vehicle congestion.

 The staging officer will also be responsible for the following functions:

1. Locate an area of adequate size for all apparatus, including apparatus that may respond with additional alarms.

2. Transmit the staging area location to Command and Dispatch, indicating access and routing as needed.

3. Coordinate with the Police Department to block streets, intersections, and other access required for the staging area.

4. Ensure that all apparatus is parked in an appropriate manner for quick exit.

5. Maintain a log of companies available in the staging area and inventory all specialized equipment that might be required at the scene.

6. Maintain crews in a ready state with their apparatus.

7. Provide progress reports to Command indicating number and type of units available.

8. Assume a position that is visible and accessible to incoming and staged companies. This will be accomplished by leaving the red lights operating on the staging officers apparatus and by wearing a sector vest.

9. Assign staged companies to incident duty per Command's direction.

When directed by Command, the Staging Officer will verbally assign companies to report to specific sectors, telling them where and to whom to report. Staging will then advise Command of the specific unit assigned. Command will advise each sector officer the companies being assigned to the sector. The receiving Sector Officer may then communicate directly with the company by radio.

When assigned to incident site duties, companies will activate their MCT "on-scene" button.

The Staging Sector Officer will give Command periodic reports of available companies in staging. Command will utilize this information to request additional resource as needed.

The Staging Sector Officer should organize staging in a manner that will allow apparatus to effectively move into and out of staging. Adequate space between apparatus is required. Ladders companies should be placed in one area, engines in another, and rescues in another area.

Where only staff or specialized equipment is needed at the scene, staging should arrange a "taxi" service using a single company to deliver multiple crews or specialized equipment to the scene. This will minimize site congestion.

During major incidents where a "Logistics" Section is implemented, the Staging Sector will be working under the direction of the Logistics Officer.

5.2 <u>Specific Procedures for Staging</u>:

<u>Staging--Basic Operational Approach</u> The objective of Staging procedures is to provide a standard system of initial placement for responding apparatus, personnel, and equipment prior to assignment at tactical incidents.

Effective utilization of these procedures will:

- Prevent excessive apparatus congestion at the scene.
- Allow time for Command to evaluate conditions prior to assigning companies.
- Place apparatus in an uncommitted location close to the immediate scene to facilitate more effective assignment by Command.
- Reduces radio traffic during the critical initial stages of the incident.
- Allow Command to formulate and implement a plan without undue confusion and pressure.
- Provides a resource pool from which Command may assign units and resources at his/her leisure.

Staging involves two levels: LEVEL I and LEVEL II

<u>LEVEL I - STAGING</u>

Level I Staging is automatically in effect for all incidents with <u>three or more companies</u> responding.

During any multi-company response, companies should continue responding to the scene until a company reports on the scene. In situations where the simultaneous arrival of first due companies is possible, the affected officers shall utilize radio communications to coordinate activities and eliminate confusion. It will be the ongoing responsibility of Dispatch to confirm the arrival of the first on-scene unit.

Once a company announces arrival on the scene, Level I Staging will be implemented in the following manner:

For Fires, Hazardous Materials, & Special Operations Incidents

<u>The first arriving engine company</u> will respond directly to the scene and initiate appropriate
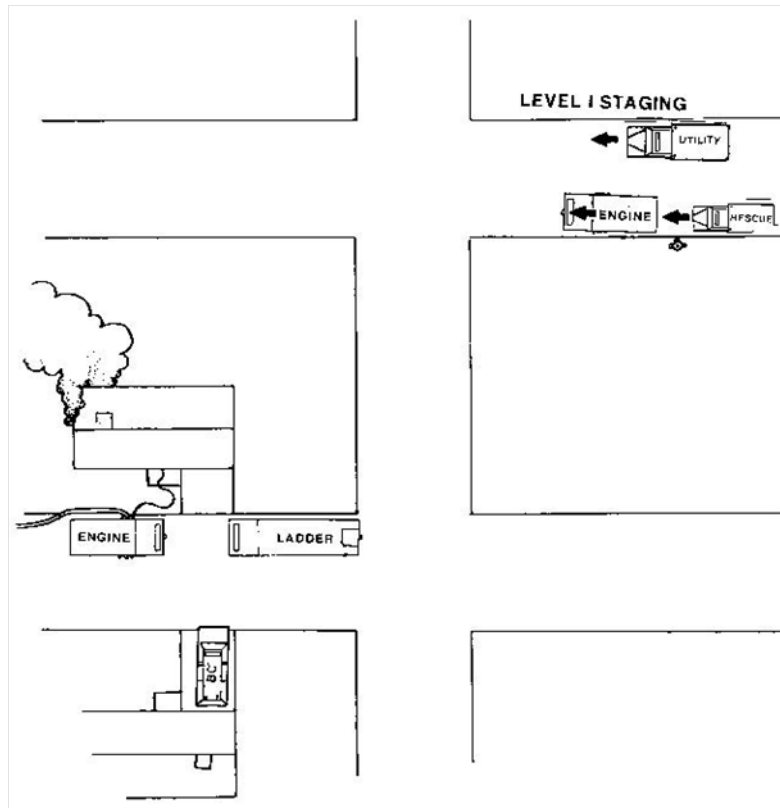
operations.

The first arriving ladder company will respond directly to the scene. They shall announce their approach to the scene so that Command may commit them to an assignment.

The first chief officer will go directly to the scene and assume Command, all other chief officers should report to Command.

Rescues (full-time/part-time) will stage in direction of travel, uncommitted approximately one block from the scene until assigned by Command. When responding from quarters, Rescues shall wait and allow engine and ladder companies to exit first. In the event a Rescue arrives first on the scene, they will make an on-scene report and assume Command until an engine, ladder, or chief officer arrives and Command is transferred.

All other units will stage in their direction of travel, uncommitted, approximately one block from the scene until assigned by Command. A position providing a maximum of possible tactical options regarding access, direction of travel, water supply, etc., should be selected. At no time should units self-assign.

All utility trucks will assume Level I staging. If Level II staging has been implemented, utility trucks will go to the Level II staging location.

For Multi-Company Response to Medical Emergencies

For multi-company response to medical incidents, in addition to the above, the first arriving ALS unit will ALSO go directly to the scene and place their apparatus in a location that will provide maximum access for medical/Rescue support and not impede the movement of other units and indicate their action by radio.

The first arriving Rescue will ALSO go directly to the scene and park their vehicle in a manner that will allow quick and unobstructed exit for patient transportation.

All other companies will stage in their direction of travel, approximately one block from the incident.

Staged companies or units will announce their arrival and report their company designation and their staged location/direction ("Engine One, South").

An acknowledgment is not necessary from either the Dispatch Center or Command. Staged companies will stay off the air until orders are received from Command. If it becomes apparent

Command has forgotten the company is in a staged position, the company officer shall contact Command and advise him/her of their staged status.

These staging procedures attempt to reduce unnecessary radio traffic, but in no way should reduce effective communications or the initiative of officers to communicate. If staged companies observe <u>critical</u> tactical needs, they will advise Command of such critical conditions and their actions.
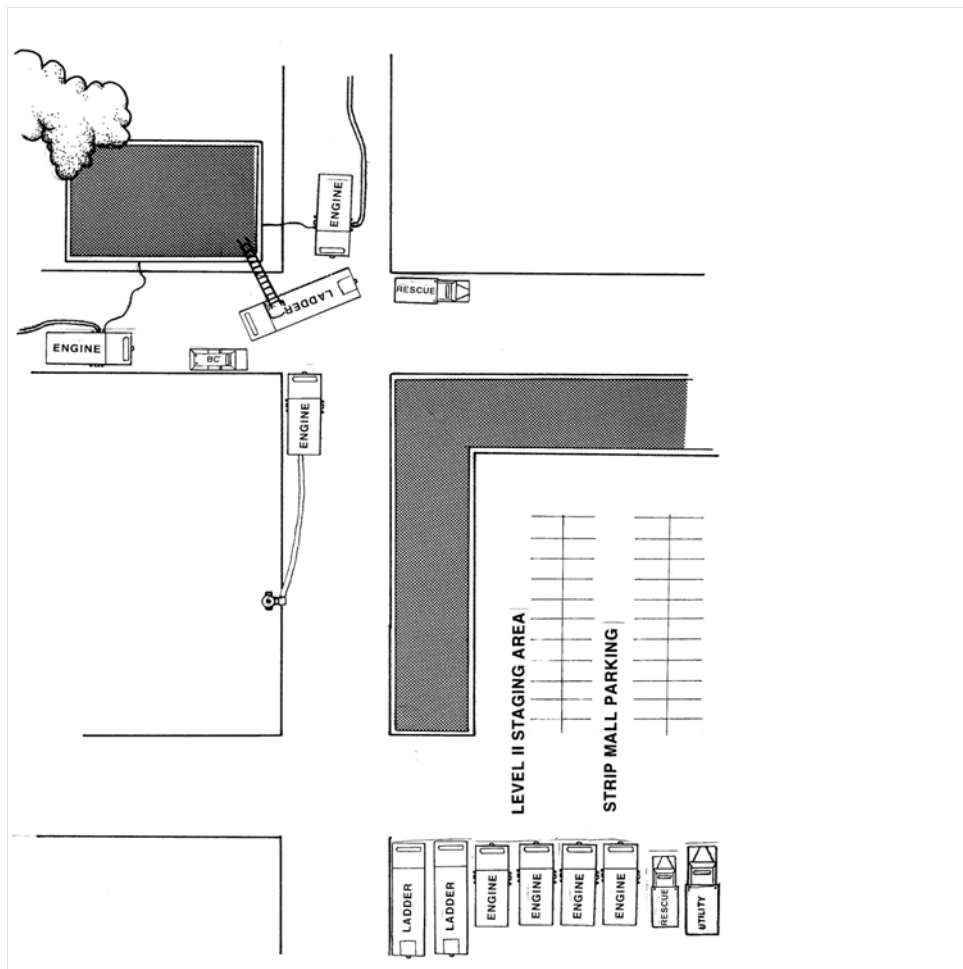
<u>LEVEL II - STAGING</u>

Level II Staging is utilized when Command desires to maintain a reserve of resources on-scene, and when the need to centralize resources is required. Level II Staging places all reserve resources in a central location and automatically requires the implementation of a Staging Sector Officer.

Level II Staging will be implemented for all greater alarm incidents. Level II staging should be considered for first alarm medical or hazardous materials incidents, or other incidents in which Command desires to centralize resources, or simply to park apparatus in a central, unobstructed location.

Companies which are already staged (Level I) or en-route to Level I Staging, will stay in Level I unless otherwise directed by Command. All other responding units will proceed to the Level II Staging Area. When activating Level II Staging, Command will give an approximate location for the Staging Area and request a separate radio channel for the Staging Sector.

The Staging Area should be some distance away from the Command Post and the emergency scene to reduce site congestion, but close enough for prompt response to the incident site.

Command should consider Level II Staging when calling for additional resources and request a separate radio channel. This is more functional than calling for Level II Staging while units are en-route. The additional units will be dispatched to the Staging Area. Responding units should monitor both the tactical and staging channels.

Command may designate a Staging Area and Staging Officer who will be responsible for the activities outlined in this procedure. In the absence of such an assignment, the first fire department officer to arrive at the Staging Area will automatically become the Staging Officer and will notify Command on arrival. The arrival notification will be made to Command on the assigned tactical channel.

Due to the limited number of ladder companies, a ladder officer will transfer responsibility for Staging to the first arriving engine company officer. Staging Officers will assign their company members as needed to assist with Staging operations, or assign them to another company.

All responding companies will stay off the air, respond directly to the designated Staging Area, and the Company Officer will report in person to the Staging Officer. The crew will standby their unit with crew intact and warning lights turned off until assigned incident site duties, or released from the scene.

When assigned to on-site duties, companies leaving staging will communicate directly with Command or their assigned sector officer for instructions.

Once Level II staging is implemented, all communications involving staging will be between Staging and Command or Logistics.

STAFF CHIEF OFFICERS AND CAPTAINS

Arrival on the scene of staff Chief Officers and Captains can enhance the Command organization and incident management. Unless arriving staff officers have predetermined responsibilities (i.e., Safety Sector, Haz Mat Sector), these officers should assume a Level I staging posture and announce their arrival on the tactical channel. If the Staging Sector has been assigned a separate radio channel, notification should be on the designated channel.

Vehicle parking at the site can be limited. Staff officers should leave their vehicles in the Staging Sector, or park well off the road (i.e., parking lots) so as not to restrict on-site access by fire apparatus.

5.3 Designation and use of Staging Officers: