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OPERATIONS MANUAL

STANDARD INSTRUCTION 01 FIRE SUPPRESSION

SECTION 08 VEGETATION FIRE PROCEDURES

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I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to provide an operational guide for vegetation fires in the wildland urban interface (WUI) areas.

II. SCOPE

This policy shall apply to all San Diego Fire-Rescue Department (SDFD) personnel.

III. AUTHORITY

The fire chief authorizes the information within this policy.

IV. DEFINITIONS

- A. Strike Team: A team of multiple units, five in number, of the same kind and type of resource category with an assigned strike team leader and common communications.
- B. Task Force: Any combination of single resources, but typically two or more, assembled to meet a specific tactical need, with an assigned task force leader and common communications.

V. POLICY

A. Fire Potential Index

- 1. The Fire Potential Index (FPI) is used to quantify fire potential by assessing weather, live fuel moisture, dead fuel moisture, and greenness of the annual grasses.
- 2. Provides a measure of predicted local fire danger based on past wildfire events and the potential for extreme fire behavior.
- 3. Issued daily via 0800 page by Metro Zone Emergency Command and Data Center (ECDC).

B. Initial Dispatch

- 1. All vegetation fire incidents will receive an immediate initial attack response.
- 2. This initial attack response serves to quickly assess the incident, attack the fire, protect structures, and request additional resources as needed.

C. Dispatch to “No Special Response Area”

- 1. Vegetation fires in “No Special Response Areas” will only receive the initial attack resources unless additional resources are requested by incident command.
- 2. The on-duty deputy chief of operations, operations battalion chief, ECDC battalion chief, and fire dispatch supervisor (FDS) have the authority to upgrade the initial attack to a vegetation 1st alarm.

D. Dispatch to “Special Response Areas”

Vegetation fires in a “Special Response Area” will be assigned the initial attack resources by ECDC unless one or more active fire indicators are present. If one or more active fire indicators are noted, ECDC or any fire officer on the response shall automatically upgrade the incident to a vegetation 1st alarm.

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1. Indicators of active fire include:
 - a. Multiple calls
 - b. Visible smoke from a distance identified by responding units
 - c. Reports of structures immediately threatened by fire
 - d. Active fire reported by an on-scene public safety professional
 - e. "Elevated" or "Extreme" FPI
 - f. The on-duty deputy chief of operations, operations battalion chief, ECDC battalion chief, and the fire dispatch supervisor have the authority to upgrade the initial attack to a vegetation 1st alarm.
2. Vegetation 1st alarm consists of a combination of units to facilitate the protection of structures and the ability to initiate an attack on fires with greater potential.
 - a. The four closest Type 1 engines, followed by the two closest Type 3 engines.
 - b. Water tenders will receive a notification page. Officers are to monitor the command channel and position crew to immediately respond if requested by incident command.

E. Staff Notification

1. Executive Command Staff will be notified of vegetation 1st alarm or greater if FPI is elevated/extreme, or when strike teams/task forces are requested by incident command.
2. Operations support, duty medical support, and logistics personnel shall respond and voice their status on the command channel to ECDC.
3. The incident commander shall make a notification on the command channel, as conditions allow, as soon as it is determined what additional staff will be needed on the response.

F. Strike Team Deployment

1. All strike teams and strike team (STEN)/task force (TFLD) leaders shall respond according to FIREScope
2. Strike team alpha-numeric designation
 - a. The STEN/TFLD is given an alpha-numeric strike team designation by ECDC
 - b. Designation consists of 3 parts:
 - 1) 3 letter agency identifier
 - a) SDFD's strike team designator is SND
 - b) Mixed San Diego County strike team designator is XSD
 - 2) Four digit strike team number, developed by the California Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES)
 - 3) Alphabetical designator to define the strike team type
 - a) "A": type 1 engines

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- b) “B”: type 2 engines
- c) “C”: type 3 engines

c. Examples:

- 1) SND6430A: City of San Diego Strike Team, Type 1
- 2) SND6430C: City of San Diego Strike Team, Type 3
- 3) XSD6430A: Mixed Zone Strike Team, Type 1
- 4) XSD6430C: Mixed Zone Strike Team, Type 3