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| **Building or Area Evacuation** | Related Policies:  Operations at Structure Fires, Accountability Procedures; Emergency Traffic; ICS; Rapid Intervention | |
| *This policy is for internal use only and does not enlarge an employee’s civil liability in any way. The policy should not be construed as creating a higher duty of care, in an evidentiary sense, with respect to third party civil claims against employees. A violation of this policy, if proven, can only form the basis of a complaint by this department for non-judicial administrative action in accordance with the laws governing employee discipline.* | | |
| Applicable KY Statutes: | | |
| OSHA: | | |
| NFPA Standard: 1500 Ch. 8, 1521, Ch. 4-6, 1561 | | |
| Date Implemented: | | Review Date: |

1. **Purpose:** To establish a clear, consistent, and effective procedure for evacuating a building or hazardous area under emergency conditions, while accounting for the safety of all personnel operating at the scene.
2. **Policy:** It is the policy of the Fire Department to provide a standardized procedure and signal that can be used to order the prompt evacuation of a building or hazardous area under emergency conditions.
3. **Definitions**

**Emergency traffic:** a radio designation indicating that an emergency has been declared and that there is a need to clear non-urgent radio traffic from the radio channel. Upon the declaration of emergency traffic all non-urgent radio traffic shall cease.

1. **Procedure:**

The following standard operating procedure shall be employed to alert members operating within a structure or hazardous area to evacuate immediately.

1. Any member observing an unsafe or dangerous condition which exists at the scene of a fire or other emergency shall immediately notify the Incident Commander utilizing the radio designation “emergency traffic” as necessary and appropriate. Members shall be alert not to report situations of which the Incident Commander has already been made aware.
2. When conditions warrant the immediate evacuation of a building or area, the Incident Commander shall order Dispatch to make an evacuation announcement, giving clear but explicit information. In the alternative the Incident Commander may request "Emergency Traffic" and make the evacuation announcement personally.
3. When Dispatch is asked to order the evacuation of a building or area, the following announcement shall be given:

Warble Tone, followed by

"Dispatch to all companies operating at \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, from \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Command, evacuate the building – all companies sound the air horn evacuation signal for 20 seconds,

That’s all companies operating at \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, from \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Command, evacuate the building - All companies sound the Air Horn Evacuation Signal for 20 seconds."

1. After the evacuation announcement is made, all apparatus adjacent to the fire building or area that have a member in the immediate vicinity, shall sound the Air Horn Evacuation Signal for approximately twenty (20) seconds.
2. Apparatus parked remote from the scene in staging or relay pumping shall not be required to sound the air horn evacuation signal.
3. Sirens shall not be used as the evacuation signal
4. The air horn evacuation signal consists of a steady series of short blasts on the air horns.

**Editor’s Note:** There is no national standard for an evacuation signal. Departments should adopt an evacuation signal that is consistent with the signal used by surrounding fire departments. Other well-known signals include: a steady series of short blast for ten seconds followed by 10 seconds of silence, repeated 3 times; a steady series of short blasts for 30 seconds; or a steady series of long blasts for 45 seconds.

1. When approximately 30 seconds have passed after the first announcement is made, Dispatch shall make the following announcement:

Warble tone, followed by:

Dispatch to all companies operating at \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, from \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Command, evacuate the building – stand by for a PAR/Roll Call

That's all companies operating at \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ , from \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Command, evacuate the building - Stand By for a PAR/Roll Call.

**Editor’s Note:** Where fire departments operate on multiple radio channels due to mutual aid or other reasons, an additional paragraph should be added requiring all announcements related to the evacuation to be simulcasted over all channels being used, or repeated over all channels being used.

1. Upon hearing the Evacuation Announcement or the Air Horn Evacuation Signal:
2. All members operating within the building or area shall immediately withdraw to the exterior of the structure or hazardous area without delay.
3. All company, division and group officers shall be responsible to immediately account for the safety and location of all personnel under their command.
4. A PAR/Roll Call to account for the location and safety of all personnel shall be conducted immediately following any building or area evacuation pursuant to the Accountability SOP.
5. During an emergency building or area evacuation the radio channel shall be reserved for emergency traffic only, pursuant to the Emergency Traffic SOP.
6. Once a building or area has been evacuated, a collapse/hazard zone shall be established by the Incident Commander. Personnel shall not re-enter the collapse/hazard zone until being given specific orders to do so by the Incident Commander.
7. At incident scenes where an Operations Section Chief has been appointed, the Operations Section Chief may order a building or area evacuation subject to the same requirements as if the Incident Commander gave the order.
8. The Incident Safety Officer, or a designated assistant safety officer, may order a building or area evacuation when, in his/her judgment, the conditions pose an imminent threat to firefighter safety and time does not permit working through the Incident Commander to correct the imminent hazard. In such a case the Incident Commander shall be responsible for conducting the PAR/Roll Call. Thereafter, the Safety Officer shall immediately inform the Incident Commander of the actions taken.
9. Where the Incident Commander has designated an Operations Section Chief to be responsible for all tactical operations, the references in this policy to the Incident Commander shall be applicable to the Operations Section Chief.