

ODOR INVESTIGATIONS

A. Purpose:

To establish a guideline for maximizing firefighter safety when dealing with a odor investigation.

B. Scope:

This guideline is to be followed by all members regardless of the district in which the investigation is taking place. Authority to deviate from this guideline rests with the senior officer who is solely responsible for the results of any deviation.

C. Positioning

Apparatus, personnel, and POV's will position no closer than 100 feet from the dispatched location. The engine shall be the personnel staging area.

D. Investigation

Two personnel in full bunker gear with SCBA shall walk to the location---no radio shall be carried by the investigating team. A metering device shall be used to determine if a flammable gas is present. If a flammable gas is present, and the LEL is approaching lower explosive limits, the team shall don SCBA immediately return to a safe location and plan for scene mitigation. If a flammable gas is present, and the LEL is below explosive limits, the team shall communicate with the senior officer and attempt to eliminate the source of the supply as soon as feasible.

If other than a flammable gas is suspected or detected, the investigation team shall immediately don their masks. They shall then return to a safe location and plan for scene mitigation. It should be remembered that a hissing sound or vapor cloud without an odor is no guarantee that the gas is neither flammable nor toxic.