



## **CANYON CREEK RURAL FIRE DISTRICT #81**

### **Standard Operating Guidelines (SOGs) & Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs)**

**Effective Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Revision Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Approved By:** Fire Chief/Fire Company and Board of Trustees

**Prepared for:** Canyon Creek Rural Fire District, Fire Chief

***Note: These Standard Operating Guidelines (SOGs) are designed to provide clear guidance for safe, efficient, and consistent operations in a rural volunteer fire district. They are based on Montana Annotated Code (MCA), Department of Natural Resources and Conservation (DNRC) from National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) standards (particularly NFPA 1500, 1720, and related guidelines), FEMA recommendations, and from similar volunteer departments in Montana. All members must familiarize themselves with these procedures. SOGs and SOPs should be reviewed annually or as needed by the Fire Chief and officers.***

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## **1. Introduction and Purpose**

This Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) manual establishes guidelines for the efficient and safe operation of the Canyon Creek Rural Fire District (CCRFD), an all-volunteer organization serving approximately 105 square miles in the Canyon Creek area of Lewis and Clark County, Montana. These procedures ensure compliance with Montana state laws (e.g., MCA 7-33-2311 and MCA 19-17-101), National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) standards, and best practices for rural volunteer fire departments. The SOPs promote safety, professionalism, and effective emergency response while fostering community involvement.

### **1.1 Mission Statement**

To provide fire suppression, fire prevention information, and emergency medical services within the District, including automatic aid to neighboring areas such as Birdseye and Marysville. CCRFD is committed to protecting lives, property, and the environment through volunteer service, training, and community education.

### **1.2 Scope and Applicability**

This manual applies to all members, including firefighters, emergency medical responders, and support personnel. It covers organizational structure, membership, training, emergency response, equipment maintenance, safety, and administration.

### **1.3 Definitions**

- SOP (Standard Operating Procedure): Mandatory guidelines for consistent actions.
- Compliance with NFPA 1720 for volunteer department deployment and NFPA 1500 for safety.
- 

### **1.4 Authority, Revision and Approval Process**

CCRFD operates as a volunteer fire company under the Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation (DNRC) guidelines. The Fire Chief has operational authority, with oversight from the Board of Trustees. All members must adhere to federal, state, and local regulations, including OSHA, NFPA, and DNRC standards.

SOPs shall be reviewed annually by the Fire Chief and officers. In accordance with Montana law (MCA 7-33-2105) Changes require approval by the Board of Trustees. Upon approval of SOPs notification and review is required for all department members.

## **2. Department Organization and Administration**

### **2.1 Governance**

**Board of Trustees:** Elected by district residents; responsible for policy, budgeting, and oversight of Fire Chief. Meets monthly or as needed.

**Officers:**

- Fire Chief
- Assistant Chief(s)
- Captains/Lieutenants
- Firefighters/Probationary Members

### **2.2 Roles and Responsibilities**

- Fire Chief: *IAW MCA 7-33-2001 Fire Chief: Powers and Duties*. Overall command, administration, and enforcement of SOPs.
- Officers: Supervise operations, training, and member development.
- Members: Respond to calls, participate in training (minimum 50% attendance recommended), and maintain readiness.

### **2.3 Membership Requirements and Recruitment**

**Eligibility**

- Must be at least 18 years old, reside or work in the district, and pass a background check (State, Federal).
- No discrimination based on race, gender, religion, or other protected classes.
- Members must be physically and mentally capable of duties; annual medical clearance recommended. (Individual's with limitations can still be active members of the Fire Co. upon further review and determination)

Must be able to pass a state background check requiring fingerprinting.

## **2.4 Probationary Period**

- Submit a written application (see Appendix A: Sample Firefighter Agreement) including personal info, references, and employer consultation for availability.
- Interview by membership committee; family/employer may be consulted.
- Probationary period: 6 - 12 months, with required training completion.
- Sign acknowledgment of SOPs, bylaws, and zero-tolerance policies.

Once all requirements have been met, the Fire Co. will vote to accept the member as a full member. If approved the Chief will forward to the Board the results and request at the next board meeting the member be officially voted in as a full member.

## **2.5 Duties and Responsibilities**

- Respond to calls 24/7 when available; maintain pager/radio.
- Attend meetings, drills, and training (minimum 75% attendance).
- Comply with professional conduct: No response if impaired by alcohol, drugs, fatigue, or medication side effects.
- Report unsafe conditions or inability to perform tasks to the Fire Chief or Incident Commander (IC).

## **2.6 Discipline and Suspension/Termination**

- Grounds: Non-attendance, misconduct, failure to train, or zero-tolerance violations (e.g., intoxication on duty, endangering others, insubordination, criminal acts).
- Process: Review by membership committee; appeal to Board.

## **2.7 Meetings**

- Monthly: Business and training.
- Quorum: 50% of active members

## **3. Safety and Health**

### **3.1 Risk Management**

- Priority: Life safety, incident stabilization, property conservation.
- Risk Assessment: “Risk a lot to save a lot; risk little to save little.”
- Prohibit unsafe acts; report near-misses.

### 3.2 Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Reference *Appendix C*

- Full PPE required: Helmet, coat, pants, boots, gloves, eye protection.
- Improperly equipped members will be removed from scene.
- Maintenance: Inspected after each use; annual certification

### 3.3 Occupational Safety and Health Program (NFPA 1500 Compliance)

### 3.4 Incident Scene Rehabilitation

### 3.5 Infection Control and Exposure Reporting

### 3.6 Fitness and Wellness

### **3.7 Impairment Policy**

- Zero tolerance for responding while impaired. IC may remove questionable members.

## **4. Training**

### **4.1 Requirements**

- Minimum 30 hours of approved training annually per MCA 19-17-101, including fire suppression, EMS, and safety.
- New members: Complete basic firefighter training (e.g., NFPA 1001 equivalent) within first year (if FF1 is being offered locally).
- Topics: Engine operations, pump use, SCBA, tactics, wildland fire, hazmat awareness, first aid/CPR.
- Tracking: Maintained by Training Officer; required for pension eligibility.

## **4.2 Training/Drills and Certification**

- Monthly Training/drills: Hands-on scenarios. (See Training Schedule)
- Certifications: Encouraged (e.g., Wildland Firefighter Type 2, EMT).
- Annual Review: Chief reviews membership to determine eligibility is certified. To include Completion of Sexual Harassment and HIPAA Compliance Annual training.

**4.3** Certification and Continued Education for all Licensed EMS personnel to maintain current state and medical director requirements.

**4.4** Driver/Operator Certification Training as outlined in SOP (*Appendix D*)

## **5. Apparatus and Equipment**

**5.1** Apparatus Readiness and Checks. Monthly and Post Incident checklists apparatus specific are to be completed at a minimum of once a month. (Note. The exception if the apparatus is being serviced off site.)

### **5.2 Inventory and Inspection**

- Apparatus: Engines, tenders, brush trucks (meet NFPA/DNRC standards: e.g., 300-750 gal tank, 500-750 GPM pump).
- Tools: Hoses, ladders, extinguishers, SCBA (for at least 2 firefighters)

## **6. Emergency Response Procedures**

### **6.1 Dispatch and Response to Calls**

- Respond only when paged by Lewis and Clark County Dispatch via Active Alert 911.
- Personal vehicles: Use caution; no emergency lights/sirens unless authorized. Review MCA
- Apparatus operators: Drive safely, obey traffic laws; full stop at intersections.

### **6.2 Personnel Accountability System**

### **6.3 Incident Command**

- First arriving officer assumes IC until relieved.
- Use Incident Management System (IMS) per Montana Fire Services guidelines.
- Scene safety: Establish accountability; use PPE (turnouts, SCBA for interiors).

### **6.4 Post-Incident**

- Debrief: Review actions, injuries, lessons learned.
- Reporting: IC submits incident report within 24 hours.
- Rehab: Monitor for fatigue, hydration; rotate personnel.

## **7. Specific Incident Types:**

**7.1 Structure Fires:** Size-up, attack lines, ventilation.

**7.2 Wildland Fires:** Follow NWCG standards; coordinate with DNRC. (See Wildfire Protocol)

- Prescribed Burns: See Prescribed Burn Protocol

**7.3 Motor Vehicle Accidents and Extrication** (*SOP is being written and reviewed*)

**7.4 Hazardous Materials Incidents** (*SOP is being written and reviewed*)

**7.5 EMS:** Provide basic life support; transport if needed. (*Appendix G*)

## **8. Auto/Mutual Aid and Interagency Operations**

**8.1 Auto/Mutual Aid Agreements.** Currently Birdseye VFD and Marysville VFD are called to all CCRFD incidents and vice versa per automatic aide agreement. Active mutual aide agreements are current with Lincoln VFD, West Valley, and VA FD.

**8.2 Requesting and Providing Assistance - Radio SOP** *(Appendix M)*

**8.3 Coordination with Neighboring Departments** *(Currently in revision with Rural Fire Council)*

**8.4 Contracting with Private entities during Incident Operations** *(In Draft Process)*

**9. Post -Incident Procedures**

**9.1 Incident Reporting (NFIRS/NERIS compliance) established protocols** *(Appendix H)*

**9.2 After -Action Reviews (AARs)** A structured, post-incident process used by volunteer fire departments to evaluate what happened, what went well, and what could be improved. It is a critical step in the fire service's planning, execution, evaluation cycle, designed to streamline performance, enhance safety, and drive continuous improvement.

**9.3 Apparatus and Equipment Decontamination SOP** *(In Draft Process)*

**9.4 Critical Incident Stress Management SOP** *(In Draft Process)*

**10. Non-Emergency Operations**

**10.1 Retention and Recruitment SOP** *(Appendix I)*

**10.2 Public Education and Fire Prevention - Fire Prevention Program** *(Appendix J)*

**10.3 Station Duties and Maintenance.** are a key part of the role. Volunteers are expected to:

- Maintain and test equipment and apparatus to ensure they are in ready condition.
- Perform minor repairs to departmental gear and make general maintenance of station facilities.
- Clean and care for grounds, walls, and floors around the station.
- Wash, hang, and dry hose and clean, polish, and maintain apparatus.
- Inventory, order, and stock supplies for apparatus.
- Keep records and logs of equipment, incidents, and maintenance activities.

**10.4 Use of Department Vehicles (Non-Emergency) SOP** *(Appendix K)*

**10.4.1.** Operation of District Equipment by Non-Members - District Equipment will not be utilized by any member of the public other than active Fire District members. No exceptions.

**10.5** Station and Apparatus Video Monitoring SOP (*Appendix L*)

**10.6** Capitol Improvement Plan (CIP) Work in collaboration with designated trustee/s to draft and submit a plan of action that will address large-scale, long-term effort to build, upgrade, or replace a significant asset/s (e.g. building or infrastructure), to improve its performance, extend its life, or meet future needs. These projects are typically funded from a capital budget and planned within a CIP Plan, which outlines the scope, cost, timeline, and funding sources for major investments

**10.7** Fundraising: Donations, grants, events (e.g., Mothers Day Breakfast, 4<sup>th</sup> of July Steak Dinner, Veterans Day Spaghetti Feed); no tax support. With the assistance of the Auxiliary.

**11. Communications**

**11.1** Radio Procedures SOP (*Appendix M*)

11.2 Clear Text and Terminology (See L&C 911 Dispatch Informational Protocol) Appendix.

**12. Records and Documentation**

**12.1 Procurement and Purchase Policy (SOP)** (*current in draft review by Board of Trustees*)

**12.2 Maintenance of Records In accordance with MCA.**

- Maintain: Membership lists, training logs, incident reports, budgets.
- Annual Budget: Categories include operations, maintenance, training (see Appendix C: Sample Budget Template).

**12.3 Confidentiality** - To protect sensitive information — such as victims' personal details, medical records, and other private data from unauthorized disclosure. This obligation is essential to maintain public trust, encourage community members to seek help without fear of exposure, and uphold professional standards. Members will be required to attend training annually for both Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) and Personal

Identifiable Information (PII) and sign a statement of confidentiality to adhere to the laws that govern.

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# Montana Code Annotated 2025

TITLE 7. LOCAL GOVERNMENT  
CHAPTER 33. FIRE PROTECTION  
Part 20. Fire Chief

## Fire Chief -- Powers And Duties

**7-33-2001. Fire chief -- powers and duties.** (1) A fire chief of a governmental fire agency organized under this chapter must be considered the highest ranking officer in the agency and is responsible for the operation of the agency, including but not limited to:

- (a) development and implementation of agency programs and procedures;
- (b) performance of agency personnel;
- (c) preventing outbreak of fires;
- (d) minimizing danger to persons and damage to property caused by fires; and
- (e) providing and managing emergency services that are established by the agency and that are consistent with national standards. These services may include but are not limited to:
  - (i) fire suppression;
  - (ii) medical aid;
  - (iii) hazardous materials response;
  - (iv) ambulance service; and
  - (v) extrication from vehicles.
- (2) In development of agency regulations, programs, and procedures, the fire chief is subject to applicable laws and ordinances.
- (3) The fire chief serves under the direction of the trustees, if trustees have been designated to manage the fire agency under the provisions of this chapter. If the governing body retains management, then the fire chief serves under the direction of the governing body.
- (4) The fire chief shall develop organizational and operational procedures and shall implement those procedures by issuing written administrative regulations and operational guidelines.
- (5) In the event of a fire or other emergency involving the protection of life or property, the fire chief has the authority to direct any operation necessary to extinguish or control the fire or perform a rescue in coordination with other authorities having jurisdiction.
- (6) The fire chief may investigate suspected or reported fires, gas leaks, or other hazardous conditions and may take any action necessary to protect public health and safety and protect property or mitigate damage to property in the exercise of the chief's duties.
- (7) In the exercise of the authority provided in subsections (5) and (6), the fire chief may:
  - (a) enter any property;
  - (b) prohibit any person, vehicle, or thing from approaching the scene;
  - (c) remove or cause to be removed from the scene of the fire or other emergency any person, vehicle, or thing that the chief determines may interfere with the operations of the agency.
- (8) (a) Subject to **50-3-102(1)(c)**, the fire chief may investigate the cause, origin, and circumstances of every fire that occurs in the chief's jurisdiction that involves the loss of life, injury to a person, destruction of property, or damage to property.
- (b) Subject to **50-3-102(1)(c)**, as part of the investigation, the fire chief may take immediate charge of all physical evidence relating to the cause of the fire and may pursue the investigation to its conclusion.
- (c) The fire chief may investigate the cause, origin, and circumstances of unauthorized releases of hazardous materials.
- (9) (a) The fire chief may establish and maintain a program applicable to every community in the chief's jurisdiction that provides for:
  - (i) regular examination of fire hazards; and
  - (ii) regular inspection of commercial property, after the property has been approved for occupancy by a certified city, county, or town building code jurisdiction or the department of labor and industry's bureau of building and measurement standards, with particular emphasis on occupancies identified as high risk to life and property.

(b) The fire chief may establish a formal fire inspection program as authorized by the department of justice under **50-61-102**.

(10) The fire chief shall report all fires to the department of justice and shall use the national fire incident reporting system or other reporting method approved by the department of justice's fire prevention and investigation section.

(11) The fire chief is responsible for establishing and maintaining a training program for the agency and may use existing federal, regional, state, and local training resources. The agency's program must include training in all areas of emergency response in which the agency provides services.

(12) For the purposes of this section, "governmental fire agency" does not include municipal fire departments.

**History: En. Sec. 1, Ch. 167, L. 2007; amd. Sec. 1, Ch. 171, L. 2009.**

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# CCRFD - Volunteer Agreement for Volunteer in Non-Firefighting Capacity

This Volunteer Agreement is entered into on \_\_\_\_\_, by and between the Canyon Creek Rural Fire District (CCRFD), a volunteer fire department organization located in Montana, US , and \_\_\_\_\_ "Volunteer", residing at \_\_\_\_\_ [Volunteer's Address].

## Recitals

WHEREAS, the Volunteer desires to provide voluntary services to the Organization in a non-firefighting capacity, such as automotive mechanical skills, administrative support, community outreach, event assistance, equipment maintenance, or other support roles that do not involve direct firefighting activities or emergency response;

WHEREAS, the Organization is willing to accept the Volunteer's services on a voluntary basis;

NOW, THEREFORE, in consideration of the mutual promises and agreements contained herein, the parties agree as follows:

## 1. Volunteer Services

The Volunteer agrees to perform the following services in a non-firefighting capacity:

- \_\_\_\_\_ [Describe specific duties, e.g., assisting with administrative tasks, organizing community events, maintaining non-operational equipment, providing logistical support, etc.]
- \_\_\_\_\_

Any additional tasks as mutually agreed upon, provided they do not involve firefighting, emergency medical services, or hazardous operations.

The Volunteer will provide services on a schedule agreed upon with the Organization, approximately \_\_\_\_\_ hours per (week) \_\_\_\_\_ (monthly, starting on \_\_\_\_\_ and continuing until \_\_\_\_\_ [End Date or "terminated as provided herein"].

The Volunteer represents that they are physically and mentally capable of performing the assigned tasks without risk to themselves or others.

## **2. No Compensation**

The Volunteer understands and agrees that all services provided under this Agreement are voluntary and without expectation of compensation, salary, wages, benefits, or any other form of remuneration. The Volunteer is not an employee, contractor, or agent of the Organization and shall not represent themselves as such.

## **3. Supervision and Training**

The Volunteer will report to \_\_\_\_\_ [Supervisor's Name or Title, e.g., Volunteer Coordinator] for instructions, guidance, and oversight. The Organization will provide necessary training, materials, and safety instructions relevant to the non-firefighting role.

## **4. Confidentiality**

The Volunteer agrees to maintain the confidentiality of any sensitive information encountered during their service, including but not limited to operational details, personal data of staff or community members, and proprietary information of the Organization. This obligation survives the termination of this Agreement.

## **5. Liability Waiver and Release**

The Volunteer acknowledges that volunteering may involve certain risks, even in non-firefighting roles, such as physical activity or exposure to office environments. The Volunteer hereby releases, waives, discharges, and covenants not to sue the Organization, its officers, employees, agents, or other volunteers from any and all liability, claims, demands, actions, or causes of action arising out of or related to any loss, damage, or injury (including death) that may be sustained by the Volunteer while performing services under this Agreement, except in cases of gross negligence or willful misconduct by the Organization.

The Volunteer agrees to indemnify and hold harmless the Organization from any claims arising from the Volunteer's actions or omissions.

The Organization recommends that the Volunteer maintain personal health and liability insurance coverage.

## **6. Intellectual Property**

Any materials, ideas, or work products created by the Volunteer during their service shall be the property of the Organization.

## 7. Background Check

The Volunteer consents to a background check, if required by the Organization, and agrees to provide necessary information for such purposes.

## 8. Code of Conduct

The Volunteer agrees to:

- Conduct themselves professionally and respectfully.
- Adhere to all Organization policies, including safety protocols, anti-harassment policies, and ethical standards.
- Refrain from any behavior that could harm the Organization's reputation.
- Not engage in any firefighting or hazardous activities unless explicitly authorized (which is not anticipated in this non-firefighting role).

## 9. Termination

This Agreement may be terminated at any time by either party, with or without cause, upon written notice. The Organization reserves the right to terminate immediately for violations of this Agreement, Organization policies, or any conduct deemed detrimental.

## 10. Emergency Contact

In case of emergency, contact : \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

## 11. Governing Law

This Agreement shall be governed by the laws of the State of Montana, without regard to conflict of laws principles. Any disputes shall be resolved in the courts of Lewis and Clark County, Montana.

## 12. Entire Agreement

This Agreement constitutes the entire understanding between the parties and supersedes all prior agreements. Amendments must be in writing and signed by both parties.

### Signatures

**Volunteer:**

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Organization Representative:**

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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## **Canyon Creek Rural Fire District (CCRFD) – Fire Safety & Prevention Partnership Program**

(Grades 1–6, ~41-student rural school in Canyon Creek, MT)

This tailored, low-cost, high-impact program builds on CCRFD’s mission (fire suppression, prevention education, and emergency medical services) and Trinity School’s small size for personalized, hands-on learning. It addresses both home/structure fires (common in rural homes with wood stoves, heaters) and wildland fires (high risk in Montana’s wildland-urban interface).

The program is designed for volunteer firefighters, uses free national and Montana-specific resources, and requires minimal staff time (2–4 visits per school year).

### Program Goals

- Equip students with life-saving skills they can practice at home and school.
- Teach wildfire prevention and preparedness unique to rural Montana.
- Strengthen trust between the fire district and community (including parents).
- Meet or exceed Montana DNRC and NFPA recommendations for school outreach.

### Target Audience & Grade-Level Breakdown

- Grades 1–2: Focus on basics with games, songs, and puppets (Stop, Drop, and Roll; “Get Low and Go”).
- Grades 3–4: Add home escape plans, smoke alarm importance, and simple wildfire prevention (e.g., “Don’t play with matches near dry grass”).
- Grades 5–6: Include fire triangle, basic defensible space ideas, calling 911, and family preparedness discussions.

### Core Components & Activities (Annual Calendar)

#### Key Free Resources (All No-Cost)

- NFPA Sparky School House ([sparkyschoolhouse.org](http://sparkyschoolhouse.org)): Lesson plans PK-5, videos, digital books (e.g., “Annie Makes a Plan”), printables, I Spy fire safety games. Perfect for structural fire safety.
- FireWorks Curriculum (NIFC): Wildland fire science for K-12 – hands-on activities on fire ecology, prevention, and preparedness. Ideal for Montana.
- FireSafe Montana / DNRC: “How Montana Prepares for Wildfire” coloring book, Ready Set Go! folders, Keep Montana Green artwork contest (encourage student entries).
- Smokey Bear Elementary Resources ([smokeybear.com](http://smokeybear.com)): Prevention rules and activities.

- USFA Fire Safety Program Toolkit: Step-by-step guide if you want to expand later.

#### Implementation Steps for CCRFD

1. Contact the School – Reach out to Trinity School principal (7435 Duffy Lane, PO Box 523, Canyon Creek, MT 59633; phone via school website). Propose a 1-hour planning meeting.
2. Assign Roles – Designate 2–3 firefighters (e.g., Chief Kai Bauer or Captain Will Adamson) as “School Safety Liaisons.” Use existing volunteers.
3. Schedule & Budget – Zero new budget needed: use station apparatus, free printables downloaded once. Tie to Fire Prevention Week for maximum impact.
4. Partnerships – Invite Montana DNRC (local Land Office) or FireSafe Montana for guest speaker or materials. Lewis & Clark Rural Fire Council may have shared resources.
5. Evaluation – Pre/post quizzes or drawings (simple 5-question survey for kids). Track home drill completion via parent feedback. Annual review with school.

#### Expected Outcomes & Benefits

- Students leave knowing exactly what to do in a fire or wildfire.
- Parents receive practical take-home tools (escape plans, defensible space basics).
- Positive community visibility for CCRFD recruitment and goodwill.
- Scalable – start small this year and grow.

This program is proven effective in other Montana rural districts (e.g., Missoula Rural FD puppet programs, Ravalli County 5th-grade wildfire education). It directly supports CCRFD’s prevention mission while being fun and memorable for Trinity’s small classes.

Canyon Creek Rural Fire District

7560 Duffy Lane

Canyon Creek, MT 59633

Mailing: P.O. Box 464, Canyon Creek, MT 59633

Station Phone: (406) 368-2266

Chief Kai Bauer: (406) 565-8764 or ccrfd2266@gmail.com



## Canyon Creek Rural Fire District Recruitment and Retention Program

### Introduction

The Canyon Creek Rural Fire District (CCRFD) serves the rural community of Canyon Creek, Montana, located in Lewis and Clark County. Operating from 7560 Duffy Lane, the district provides essential services including fire suppression, fire prevention education, emergency medical services (EMS), and auto/mutual aid to neighboring districts, state, and federal agencies. As a volunteer-based organization, CCRFD relies on dedicated community members to protect lives and property in a vast, sparsely populated area prone to wildfires, medical emergencies, and harsh weather conditions.

Montana's volunteer fire services face ongoing challenges, including an aging workforce and increasing demands from larger wildfires and population growth in rural areas. Statewide efforts, such as the Montana State Fire Chiefs' Association campaign to recruit 1,000 new volunteers, highlight the need for targeted programs. CCRFD currently has a core team of volunteers, including EMT-certified, along with probationary members and mechanics. However, with openings available and recruits awaiting approval, a structured recruitment and retention program is essential to build capacity and ensure long-term sustainability.

This program draws on best practices from national guidelines and Montana-specific initiatives to attract and retain volunteer firefighters and EMS personnel.

### Program Goals

- **Recruitment:** Attract 5-10 new volunteers annually, focusing on diverse candidates including young adults, families, retirees, and those with transferable skills (e.g., mechanics, medical backgrounds).
- **Retention:** Achieve a 90% retention rate for existing volunteers by addressing burnout, providing support, and fostering a sense of belonging and engaged community.
- **Diversity and Inclusion:** Ensure the volunteer base reflects the community, including women, minorities, veterans, and multilingual individuals, in line with nondiscrimination policies.

- **Integration with State Resources:** Leverage Montana’s statewide recruitment tools, such as the Join Montana Fire Service platform, for broader reach.

## **Recruitment Strategies**

Recruitment will focus on personal connections, community visibility, and flexible entry points to appeal to rural residents with busy lives. Strategies are adapted from proven national approaches tailored to Montana’s context.

### **1. Community Outreach and Events:**

- Host open houses, fire prevention workshops, and recruitment events at local venues like county fairs, schools, and community centers in Lewis and Clark County.
- Partner with real estate agents for “welcome wagon” packets targeting new residents, highlighting volunteer opportunities.
- Participate in Trinity/Canyon Creek school and high school career days and collaborate with local colleges for live-in programs offering free room and board in exchange for service, ideal for students pursuing fire or EMS careers.

### **2. Personal Invitations and Referrals:**

- Encourage current volunteers to invite family, friends, and coworkers, providing them with recruitment materials like flyers and email templates.
- Use door-to-door campaigns tied to free home fire safety inspections to build trust and identify potential recruits.

### **3. Digital and Media Presence:**

- Update the CCRFD website ([www.canyoncreekruralfire406.org](http://www.canyoncreekruralfire406.org)) with a dedicated “Join Us” page featuring easy online applications, volunteer testimonials, and role descriptions.
- Leverage social media (Facebook, Instagram) for regular posts showcasing training, incidents, and community service to attract younger demographics.
- Integrate with the statewide Join Montana Fire Service website by listing CCRFD as a participating department, allowing applicants to select it directly online.

### **4. Trial and Sampling Opportunities:**

- Offer ride-alongs, gear try-on sessions, and citizen fire academies to give prospects a low-commitment taste of the role.

- Establish a junior firefighter or cadet program for ages 14-18, with parental involvement, to build a pipeline of future volunteers.

### **5. Targeted Demographics:**

- Reach out to Veterans via local military bases, retirees through senior centers, and seasonal workers at nearby resorts.
- Emphasize flexible roles, such as EMS-only or support positions (e.g., administrative, fundraising), to accommodate those unable to commit to full firefighting duties.

### **6. Onboarding Process:**

- Streamline applications with online forms, background checks, and phased interviews outlining expectations.
- Assign mentors to new recruits for a welcoming introduction and cohort-based training to build immediate connections.

### **Retention Strategies**

Retention emphasizes leadership, support, and recognition to combat common rural challenges like long response times and family commitments.

#### **1. Leadership and Culture:**

- Train leaders in effective communication, delegation, and conflict resolution to foster a positive, inclusive environment free from cliques or harassment.
- Implement a code of conduct emphasizing respect, teamwork, and integrity.

#### **2. Training and Development:**

- Provide flexible training schedules (weeknights, weekends, hybrid online/in-person) focused on essential skills like wildland firefighting and EMS, with state certifications reimbursed.
- Offer advanced opportunities through partnerships with the Montana State Fire Chiefs' Association, including professional development that supports career transitions.

#### **3. Benefits and Incentives:**

- Explore Montana-specific incentives like tax credits, stipends for calls (e.g., \$20 per response), and Length of Service Award Programs (LOSAP) for retirement contributions.
- Provide gear, insurance (including accidental death and dismemberment), and access to employee assistance programs (EAP) for mental health support.

- Partner with local businesses for discounts on services like gym memberships or vehicle maintenance.

#### **4. Recognition and Camaraderie:**

- Host family-friendly events such as picnics, pancake breakfasts, fire related movie nights, and milestone celebrations during National Volunteer Week.
- Use social media and newsletters to spotlight volunteer achievements and send personalized thank-you notes.
- Conduct annual surveys to gather feedback on satisfaction and address issues promptly.

#### **5. Health, Safety, and Work-Life Balance:**

- Recommend annual physicals, exposure tracking, and behavioral health resources to prioritize well-being.
- Allow flexible scheduling, temporary leaves, and role adjustments to accommodate family and work obligations.

#### **6. Support Roles and Transitions:**

- Engage non-operational volunteers in auxiliary tasks (e.g., via the CCRFD Auxiliary) for fundraising and logistics.
- Use exit surveys for departing members to identify and resolve systemic issues.

#### **Implementation Plan**

- **Timeline:** Launch in Q1 2026 with a recruitment event tied to the statewide campaign. Roll out retention initiatives quarterly.
- **Responsibilities:** Fire Chief Kai Bauer oversees the program, with support from the Board of Trustees and Auxiliary. Assign a recruitment coordinator from current volunteers.
- **Budget:** Allocate \$2,500 annually for marketing materials, events, and incentives, funded through grants, donations, and county support.
- **Partnerships:** Collaborate with Lewis and Clark Rural Fire Council, Montana State Fire Chiefs' Association, and national organizations like the National Volunteer Fire Council (NVFC).

## Evaluation and Monitoring

- Track metrics quarterly: number of applications, new recruits, retention rates, diversity demographics, and survey satisfaction scores.
- Adjust strategies based on feedback and annual reviews, aiming for alignment with Montana's goal of a 20% increase in volunteers statewide.
- Report progress at monthly board meetings and share successes via the website and social media.

This program positions CCRFD to strengthen its volunteer force, ensuring reliable emergency services for Canyon Creek and surrounding areas. For more information or to volunteer, contact Fire Chief Kai Bauer at [ccrfd81@gmail.com](mailto:ccrfd81@gmail.com) or visit [www.canyoncreekruralfire406.org](http://www.canyoncreekruralfire406.org).

DRAFT



## **STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES (SOP) CANYON CREEK RURAL FIRE DISTRICT (CCRFD)**

**Title:** Use of Department Apparatus (Non-Emergency)

**Effective Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Revision Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Reviewed/Approved By:** Fire Chief and Board of Trustees

### **Apparatus**

#### **1. Purpose**

This SOP establishes guidelines for the safe, authorized, and efficient use of CCRFD apparatus to ensure operational readiness, protect district resources, and comply with applicable Montana laws and regulations. It aims to minimize risks, prevent misuse, and outline consequences for violations or abuse of property.

#### **2. Scope**

This SOP applies to all CCRFD personnel, Fire Company volunteers, and any authorized individuals operating or utilizing district apparatus. It covers all vehicles and equipment owned or leased by CCRFD, such as fire engines, medic units/QRU, tenders, brush trucks, and associated tools.

#### **3. Definitions**

- **Apparatus:** Any vehicle, equipment, or tool owned, leased, or controlled by CCRFD for fire suppression, emergency medical services, rescue operations, or related activities.
- **Authorized Personnel:** Individuals who have completed required training, hold valid certifications (e.g., driver's license, EVOC - Emergency Vehicle Operator Course), and are approved by the Fire Chief or designee.
- **Emergency Response:** Operation of apparatus with lights and sirens for urgent incidents, as defined in CCRFD response protocols.
- **Non-Emergency Use:** Routine transport, training, maintenance, or administrative tasks without lights and sirens.

#### 4. Responsibilities

- **Fire Chief/Designee:** Oversees apparatus assignment, training, and enforcement of this SOP. Approves any non-standard use.
- **Officers and Supervisors:** Ensure personnel comply with procedures and report any issues or violations.
- **All Personnel:** Adhere to this SOP, report damage or malfunctions immediately, and use apparatus only for authorized purposes.

#### 5. Procedures for Use

##### 5.1 Authorization and Qualification

- Only authorized personnel may operate CCRFD apparatus. Qualifications include:
  - Valid Montana driver's license appropriate for the vehicle class.
  - Completion of department-specific training on apparatus operation, including defensive driving and equipment handling. (*See "CCRFD Vehicle Training and Certification Program"*)
  - Annual review and recertification as required.
- Unauthorized operation is prohibited and constitutes a violation (see Section 7).

##### 5.2 Operation Guidelines

- **Emergency Response:** Apparatus shall be operated in emergency mode (lights and sirens) only when responding to confirmed incidents. Operators must comply with Montana traffic laws, yielding to pedestrians and other vehicles even in emergency mode. Seat belts are mandatory for all occupants.
- **Non-Emergency Use:** Follow standard traffic rules. Apparatus may be used for training, parades, public education, or mutual aid with prior approval.
- **Speed and Safety:** Never exceed posted speed limits unless in emergency response and conditions allow safe operation. Avoid reckless driving, such as abrupt maneuvers or distractions (e.g., mobile device use).
- **Fueling and Parking:** Refuel at designated stations. Park apparatus securely in assigned bays or locations, with keys removed and secured when not in use. Comply with WEX (fuel card) Program guidelines.

### 5.3 Maintenance and Inspection

- **Weekly/Monthly Checks:** Conduct pre- and post-use inspections, including fluid levels, tires, lights, sirens, and equipment inventory. Document findings in the apparatus log and CCRFD Apparatus Inspection Checklist (Appendix A.)
- **Reporting Issues:** Immediately report any defects to a supervisor. Defective apparatus must be taken out of service until repaired.
- **Cleaning and Care:** Keep apparatus clean and organized. Avoid actions that could cause unnecessary wear or damage.

### 5.4 Training and Drills

- All personnel must participate in regular training on apparatus use, including simulated emergency drives and equipment operation.
- New members shall complete orientation before independent use. IAW “CCRFD Vehicle Training and Certification Program” specification.

## 6. Prohibited Activities

- Personal use of apparatus, such as commuting or errands, is strictly forbidden unless explicitly authorized (e.g., on-call status with approval).
- Modification of apparatus without approval.
- Operation under the influence of alcohol, drugs, or while fatigued.
- Lending apparatus to non-authorized individuals.
- Use for non-district activities without written permission from the Fire Chief.

## 7. Violations or Abuse of Property

Abuse or violation of CCRFD apparatus constitutes misuse of public property and may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination, revocation of privileges, or legal prosecution. CCRFD apparatus is considered public property under Montana law, and misuse can lead to civil or criminal penalties.

### 7.1 Definitions of Violation or Abuse in Montana

Under Montana Code Annotated (MCA), the following actions related to CCRFD apparatus may constitute violations or abuse:

- **Unauthorized Use:** Knowingly operating or exercising control over a motor vehicle without consent of the owner (CCRFD). This is a misdemeanor under MCA 45-6-308, punishable by a fine up to \$500 and/or imprisonment up to 6 months.

- **Criminal Mischief (Damage or Tampering):** Knowingly or purposely injuring, damaging, destroying, or tampering with public property without consent, or in a way that endangers persons or interferes with its use. This includes failing to secure property (e.g., leaving gates open on enclosed premises). Under MCA 45-6-101, penalties range from a fine up to \$1,500 and/or 6 months in jail for minor offenses, to up to \$50,000 fine and/or 10 years in prison for damages over \$1,500 or substantial disruptions.
- **Personal Use of State/Public Vehicles:** Using district-owned vehicles for personal purposes, prohibited under MCA 2-17-421, which states that state officers or employees may not use state-owned or leased motor vehicles for personal use unless compensated appropriately by the state (exceptions rare and must be approved).
- **Official Misconduct:** As a public servant (including fire district personnel), purposely or negligently failing to perform duties, violating laws related to the office, or performing prohibited acts. This could include allowing or engaging in misuse of apparatus. Under MCA 45-7-401, this is a misdemeanor punishable by a fine up to \$500 and/or imprisonment up to 6 months, and may result in removal from office or position.
- **Other Related Offenses:** Public nuisance (MCA 45-8-111) if misuse creates conditions injurious to health or obstructs property use; deceptive practices (MCA 45-6-317) if involving fraud; or false claims (MCA 17-8-403) if submitting fraudulent reports related to apparatus use.

**8. Compliance and Review**

All personnel must acknowledge receipt and understanding. Violations may result in retraining or disciplinary action.

VOLUNTEER NAME:

DATE:

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## **STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES (SOP)**

### **Canyon Creek Rural Fire District**

#### **Station & Apparatus Video Monitoring SOP**

**Effective Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Revision Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Reviewed/Approved By:** Fire Chief and Board of Trustees

#### **1. Purpose**

The purpose of this Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) is to establish guidelines for the installation, operation, maintenance, access, storage, and use of dash cameras (dash cams) in all fire apparatus and security cameras on the exterior of the Canyon Creek Rural Fire District (CCRFD) fire station located at 7560 Duffy Lane, Canyon Creek, Montana. This SOP aims to enhance safety, accountability, training, liability protection, and security while ensuring compliance with applicable laws, including Montana Code Annotated (MCA) § 45-8-213 (Privacy in Communications), which permits video-only recording in public safety contexts where no reasonable expectation of privacy exists.

All cameras will record video only, without audio, to avoid violations of Montana's all-party consent requirements for audio recordings. This policy promotes transparency and protects the rights of volunteers, members, and the public.

#### **2. Scope**

This SOP applies to all CCRFD volunteers, members, officers, and personnel involved in the operation, maintenance, or access to dash cams and exterior security cameras. It covers:

- Dash cams installed in all fire apparatus (e.g., engines, tenders, brush trucks, command vehicles).
- Security cameras positioned on the exterior of the fire station at 7560 Duffy Lane, Canyon Creek, in Lewis and Clark County, Montana, for monitoring perimeter areas, entrances, and apparatus bays (exterior views only).

This SOP does not apply to personal devices

#### **3. Authority and References**

- **Authority:** This SOP is issued under the authority of the CCRFD Fire Chief and Board of Trustees, in accordance with Title 7, Chapter 33, MCA (Rural Fire Districts).
  
- **References:**
  - MCA § 45-8-213 (Privacy in Communications).
  - Montana Public Records Act (MCA § 2-6-1001 et seq.) for handling requests for footage.
  - Best practices from similar volunteer fire departments
  - No specific county ordinances in Lewis and Clark County prohibit such installations; however, all activities must comply with state privacy laws.

#### 4. Definitions

- **Dash Cam:** A video recording device mounted in fire apparatus to capture forward-facing or interior views (e.g., cab area) during operations, responses, and travel. Recordings are video-only.
- **Security Camera:** Fixed video recording devices installed on the exterior of the fire station to monitor public and operational areas for security purposes. Recordings are video-only.
- **Footage:** Any video data captured by dash cams or security cameras.
- **Authorized Personnel:** Designated individuals (e.g., Board Chair, Fire Chief, Assistant Chief, or appointed IT) with access to footage.
- **Incident:** Any emergency response, training exercise, or event warranting review of footage.

#### 5. Policy Statements

- **Installation and Use:**
  - Dash cams shall be installed in all CCRFD fire apparatus to record automatically upon vehicle ignition or activation during responses. They provide objective documentation for incident review, training, accident investigation, and liability defense. Dash cams are programmed to continue recording up to 10 mins post engine stop.

- Security cameras shall be installed on the exterior of the fire station to deter vandalism, monitor access, and enhance safety. Cameras will not capture interior views of private areas (e.g., restrooms) or areas with a reasonable expectation of privacy.
- All cameras will record video only; audio recording is prohibited to comply with MCA § 45-8-213.
- Cameras will not be used for surveillance of personnel in non-operational contexts or to intimidate, harass, or discriminate.
- **Privacy and Compliance:**
  - Personnel have no reasonable expectation of privacy in fire apparatus during official duties or in exterior public areas of the station.
  - Notice of recording shall be provided via signage on apparatus (e.g., "Video Recording in Progress") and at station entrances.
  - Footage involving sensitive incidents (e.g., medical responses) shall be handled with care to protect patient privacy under HIPAA guidelines, if applicable.
- **Prohibited Uses:**
  - Unauthorized access, tampering, or dissemination of footage.
  - Use of footage for personal gain, entertainment, or non-department purposes.
  - Installation of additional cameras without Fire Chief and Board approval.

## 6. Procedures

### 6.1 Installation and Maintenance

- Dash cams and security cameras have been installed by qualified personnel or vendors approved by the Fire Chief.
- Maintenance checks shall be conducted monthly, including battery/function tests, lens cleaning, and software updates. Any malfunctions shall be reported immediately to the Chief.
- Records of installation and maintenance shall be kept in the department's administrative files.

## 6.2 Operation

- **Dash Cams:** Activate automatically with vehicle power or manually during incidents. Continuous loop recording (e.g., 30-60 days retention) with event-triggered saves (e.g., via G-sensor for impacts).
- **Security Cameras:** Operate 24/7 with motion-activated recording to conserve storage. Live feeds may be monitored by authorized personnel.
- All systems shall use secure, encrypted storage to prevent unauthorized access.

## 6.3 Access and Review of Footage

- Access is restricted to authorized personnel for official purposes only (e.g., incident investigations, training, legal requests).
- Requests for footage must be communicated to the Fire Chief, who will approve or deny based on need.
- Footage may be shared with law enforcement, insurance providers, or legal counsel as required by law or subpoena.
- Personnel involved in an incident may request to view relevant footage with the Fire Chief present.

## 6.4 Storage and Retention

- Footage shall be stored on secure servers or cloud systems with access logs.
- Retention Period:
  - Routine footage: 30 days (automatically overwritten).
  - Incident-related footage: Retained for at least 1 year or until resolution of any investigation/claim.
  - Permanent retention for significant events (e.g., fatalities, major accidents) as determined by the Fire Chief.
- Deletion of footage shall be documented.

## 6.5 Public Records Requests

- Requests for footage under the Montana Public Records Act shall be directed to the Fire Chief. Redactions may be applied to protect privacy (e.g., blurring faces).

## 7. Responsibilities

- **Fire Chief:** Overall oversight, policy enforcement, approval of access/installations, and annual review of this SOP.
- **Assistant Chief:** Daily operations, maintenance, and initial footage reviews.
- **All Personnel:** Report malfunctions, comply with policy, and notify others of recording presence.
- **Board of Trustees:** Review and approve major changes or expenditures related to camera systems.

## 8. Training

- All new volunteers shall receive orientation on this SOP during onboarding.
- Annual training shall cover policy compliance, privacy laws, and proper use of systems.
- Documentation of training shall be maintained in personnel files.

## 9. Violations and Discipline

- Violations of this SOP may result in disciplinary action, up to and including removal from the department, in accordance with CCRFD bylaws.
- Suspected illegal activity (e.g., tampering) shall be reported to law enforcement.

## 10. Review and Revision

This SOP shall be reviewed annually or as needed (e.g., due to legal changes) by the Fire Chief and Board. Feedback from personnel is encouraged.



## **STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES (SOP)**

### **Canyon Creek Rural Fire District (CCRFD)**

**Title:** Radio Communications

**Effective Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Revision Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Reviewed/Approved By:** Fire Chief and Board of Trustees

#### **1. Purpose**

The purpose of this SOP is to establish standardized, reliable, and effective radio communications protocols for the Canyon Creek Rural Fire District (CCRFD) to ensure the safety of firefighters, efficient incident management, and seamless coordination during emergencies. This SOP emphasizes clear communication in rural Montana's challenging terrain, including mountains, valleys, and remote areas, where signal coverage may be limited. It promotes interoperability with mutual-aid partners, dispatch centers, and other agencies, reducing risks associated with miscommunication and enhancing overall response effectiveness.

#### **2. Scope**

This SOP applies to all CCRFD personnel, including firefighters, officers, incident commanders (ICs), and support staff, as well as any mutual-aid participants operating under CCRFD command. It covers the use of voice radio systems (analog and digital), portable and mobile radios, repeaters, and related equipment during routine operations, training, and emergencies. It includes procedures for fireground tactics, wide-area responses, and integration with supplemental tools like Starlink for non-radio communications where applicable. This SOP aligns with national standards such as NFPA 1221 and FEMA guidelines, adapted for rural fire districts.

#### **3. Responsibilities**

- **Firefighters and Units:** Maintain familiarity with radio equipment for operation in low-visibility, high-noise, or PPE environments. Report equipment issues immediately, adhere to communication protocols, and provide feedback on system performance.

- **Incident Commander (IC):** Serve as the primary point for radio traffic management. Ensure clear, disciplined communications, relay critical information, and handle resource requests. Act as a relay if direct communication fails.
- **Dispatch Center/Dispatchers:** Monitor assigned channels, document incidents, coordinate resources, and provide real-time notifications. Use headsets and footswitches for efficiency and manage channel congestion.
- **Chief/Administrators/Supervisors:** Oversee training programs, equipment procurement, maintenance schedules, and system evaluations. Ensure interoperability planning and compliance with federal/state regulations. Involve personnel in feedback and updates.
- **Technical Staff/Maintenance Personnel:** Conduct regular equipment inspections, RF surveys, and repairs. Manage repeater sites and ensure system reliability in rural terrain.
- **All Personnel:** Practice radio discipline, protect equipment from environmental hazards (e.g., heat, water, dust), and participate in training.

## 4. Equipment

- **Radios:** Use high-tier, ruggedized portable and mobile radios rated for submersible, intrinsically safe operation. Include remote speaker mics (RSMs), bone/throat mics for SCBA integration, and emergency buttons.
- **Repeaters and Enhancers:** Utilize elevated repeaters on high terrain sites to overcome Montana's mountainous obstacles. Include vehicular repeaters (VRs) on apparatus for in-building or remote signal extension. Bidirectional amplifiers (BDAs) may be deployed for structures with poor penetration.
- **Accessories:** High-temperature cords (rated 500°F), spare batteries (1 per 4 units), and chargers. Antennas should be low-profile and omnidirectional for vehicles.
- **Maintenance:** Perform weekly checks on batteries and connections; monthly inspections for damage; annual RF surveys to identify coverage gaps. Report and repair issues within 24 hours. Store equipment in protective cases to shield from rural environmental factors like extreme cold or dust.

## 5. Procedures

### 5.1 General Communication Guidelines

- Speak clearly, loudly, and at a controlled pace. Organize messages using the format: Unit ID, Location, Conditions, Actions, Needs (e.g., "Engine 8111, at structure fire on Duffy Lane, heavy smoke on alpha side, initiating attack line, need ventilation support").
- Use NATO phonetic alphabet for clarity (e.g., "Alpha" for A, "Bravo" for B).
- Avoid unnecessary transmissions; listen before speaking to prevent overlaps.
- Announce channel changes immediately (e.g., "All units, switching to talk-around on Tac 1")

## 5.2 Modes of Operation

- **Repeated Mode:** Default for wide-area communications in rural settings. Transmit on Frequency 1 (input), receive on Frequency 2 (output) via repeaters. Ideal for coordinating with dispatch over long distances.
- **Direct/Simplex/Talk-Around Mode:** Mandatory for on-scene tactical operations (per NFPA 1221). Switch to talk-around if repeater is unreachable due to terrain; announce the switch. Use for fireground interiors to maintain line-of-sight communications without infrastructure dependency.
- **Emergency Activation:** Press the emergency button for priority transmission. Use "Mayday" for life-threatening distress, followed by location, unit, and problem (e.g., "Mayday, Mayday, Firefighter Smith, trapped on second floor, low air").

## 5.3 Codes and Terminology

- Standardize terms: "Mayday" for emergencies, "PAR" for Personnel Accountability Report, "Urgent" for non-life-threatening issues.
- Minimize non-standard codes; use plain language for interoperability with auto and mutual-aid from neighboring districts or state agencies (e.g., Birdseye VFD, Marysville VFD, Montana DNRC).
- Rural-Specific: Report signal issues due to terrain (e.g., "Signal weak in valley, switching to VR").

## 5.4 Rural Considerations

- Account for terrain-induced signal loss; position radios vertically and at shoulder height. Use human relays or VRs in shadowed areas.
- Test communications en route to incidents; identify known dead zones in advance (e.g., via coverage maps).
- Integrate with Starlink or cellular backups for data/non-voice needs, but prioritize radio for voice.

## 6. Training

- **Initial Training:** All new members receive hands-on instruction on radio operation, including gloved use, SCBA integration (*may be an issue at present*), and scenario-based drills in rural simulations.
- **Ongoing Training:** Quarterly refreshers focusing on mayday procedures, channel switching, and equipment troubleshooting. Annual full-gear fireground exercises incorporating terrain challenges.
- **Transition/Updates:** For new equipment or system changes, provide 6-12 months of phased training with practical testing. Refer back to initial purchase plan in ~2023.

- **Interoperability Drills:** Joint exercises with mutual-aid partners to practice shared channels and procedures.

## 7. Emergency Protocols

- **Mayday Response:** IC acknowledges, clears channel, deploys Rapid Intervention Team (RIT), and requests additional resources. All units switch to designated emergency channel if needed.
- **In-Building/Interior Ops:** Use talk-around; position near windows/doors for better signal; deploy VRs from apparatus.
- **Wide-Area Incidents:** Assign dynamic talkgroups; Communications Unit Leader (COML) manages multi-agency traffic.
- **System Failure:** Fall back to simplex; use face-to-face or runners if radio fails entirely.

## 8. Best Practices

- Maintain radio discipline to reduce congestion.
- Conduct post-incident reviews to evaluate communications effectiveness and update coverage maps.
- Encourage feedback from all users to identify rural-specific issues (e.g., repeater vulnerabilities in winter storms).
- Ensure redundancy: Carry spare radios and batteries on all apparatus.

## 9. Compliance and Review

This SOP will be reviewed annually or after major incidents/system changes. All personnel must acknowledge receipt and understanding. Violations may result in retraining or disciplinary action.

**References:** Adapted from FEMA's Voice Radio Communications Guide for the Fire Service and other national best practices. For questions, contact the CCRFD Communications Officer.

VOLUNTEER NAME:

DATE:

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## **NERIS FIRE REPORTING PROTOCOL CANYON CREEK RURAL FIRE DEPARTMENT (CCRFD)**

### **Protocol for Volunteer Fire Departments in Lewis and Clark County, Montana, to File Fire Incident Reports (NFIRS / NERIS System)**

Montana law (Administrative Rules of Montana 23.12.402) requires the chief fire official of every municipality, fire service area, organized fire district, or volunteer fire company to file a fire incident report for every fire occurring in their jurisdiction.

This is done through the national system—historically the National Fire Incident Reporting System (NFIRS 5.0) and now its successor, the National Emergency Response Information System (NERIS), which serves as the sole incident reporting platform for the U.S. fire service.

Lewis and Clark County volunteer fire departments (typically rural fire districts or companies organized under MCA Title 7, Chapter 33) follow the same statewide process as all Montana fire agencies. There are no unique county-specific filing rules; reports go directly to the state via NERIS (which fulfills NFIRS data requirements).

### **Compliance is mandatory and required for grant eligibility (e.g., Volunteer Fire Assistance grants from DNRC).**

#### **Step 1: Onboard Your Department to NERIS (If Not Already Completed)**

New or transitioning departments must complete onboarding before submitting reports. Designate a NERIS Point of Contact (POC) with authority from the fire chief. Gather and submit this information:

- Department demographics (phone, HQ address, population protected, staffing/shift details, PSAP/dispatch info).
- Geographic boundaries and stations (names, addresses).
- Unit/apparatus inventory (using NIMS/FEMA/NWCG resource typing; include CAD designations, types like structural/wildland engines, staffing levels—use 0 minimum for unstaffed volunteer resources).

- Services provided, mutual/automatic aid agreements, and relationships with other departments.
- List of all users who will enter/approve reports.
- If using third-party records management software (RMS) like ResponseRack, Firehouse, or similar: Provide vendor name and Client ID (multi-part code with dashes; request from your vendor).

How to onboard:

- Visit the NERIS onboarding portal: <https://safetyscience.my.site.com/neris/> or <https://neris.fsri.org/onboarding>.
- Use the Montana-specific checklist and guides (download from DOJ site: NERIS-Onboarding-Checklist.pdf, NERIS-Integration-Enrollment.pdf, NERIS-Post-Onboarding.pdf).
- Log in with an admin account, enroll any software integration (enter vendor Client ID and confirm permissions), set up your department profile (add users, stations, resources, ISO rating, etc.).
- Request direct reporting activation if not using integrated software.
- Plan your first incident reporting start date.

Contacts for help:

- Montana NFIRS/NERIS Coordinator (State Fire Marshal's Office): [dojnfirs@mt.gov](mailto:dojnfirs@mt.gov) or (406) 791-2706.
- General NERIS support: [neris@fsri.org](mailto:neris@fsri.org) or the NERIS helpdesk/knowledge base at [neris.fsri.org](http://neris.fsri.org).
- Your Lewis and Clark County Fire Warden or Rural Fire Council can assist with local coordination.

This process typically takes days to weeks depending on data preparation and integration needs. Volunteer departments often use direct web entry or low-cost integrated tools.

## Step 2: Prepare Data for Each Fire Incident

Immediately after a fire response (or as soon as practicable):

- Collect required details using NERIS/NFIRS modules (Basic Incident, Fire, Structure, etc.).
- Key data includes: Incident type (e.g., 100-series for fires), location, date/time, actions taken, cause, factors, property loss estimate, casualties, and resources used.
- Reference the NFIRS 5.0 Complete Reference Guide (still foundational) or current NERIS data dictionary/videos for coding. Create a quick-reference cheat sheet for common codes (incident types, actions taken).

- Document everything accurately—NERIS emphasizes smarter, more detailed data for analysis and grants.

### Step 3: Submit the Report

- Log into NERIS ([neris.fsri.org](http://neris.fsri.org) or the integrated RMS).
- Create a new incident.
- Enter/validate all data (required fields are marked).
- Submit the report (real-time or batch).
- If no fires in a month, submit a “no activity” report.

#### Timing:

- Submit as soon as possible after the incident (USFA/Montana recommendation).
- At minimum, monthly batches to the state.
- The state fire marshal may flag incomplete/invalid reports for resubmission.

### Step 4: Ongoing Compliance and Best Practices

- Monitor your NERIS account for state notifications and correct any issues promptly.
- Train all personnel (use free USFA/NERIS videos, self-study courses, or Montana Fire Services Training School resources).
- Maintain your FDID (Fire Department Identification number)—lookup or confirm via Montana NFIRS POC or [apxdata.com](http://apxdata.com) if needed.
- For volunteer-specific tips: Many Lewis and Clark rural/volunteer departments use integrated software for ease; direct NERIS entry works well for smaller agencies.
- Retain local copies of reports for your records, insurance, or county requirements.
- Coordinate with the Lewis and Clark Rural Fire Council ([lcfirecouncil.org](http://lcfirecouncil.org)) for mutual aid or county-wide consistency, but primary submission is via NERIS to the state.

#### Additional Notes

- NERIS improves on legacy NFIRS with better structure, analytics, and all-hazards support (fires, EMS, etc.), but the core requirement for fire reports remains unchanged.
- Non-compliance can affect state/federal funding and may trigger follow-up from the State Fire Marshal.
- For wildland fires or multi-agency incidents, additional reporting (e.g., to DNRC) may apply alongside NERIS.

If your department needs assistance with onboarding, FDID assignment, or software recommendations, start with the Montana NFIRS/NERIS Coordinator at [dojnfirs@mt.gov](mailto:dojnfirs@mt.gov). For training materials, visit [usfa.fema.gov/nfirs](http://usfa.fema.gov/nfirs) or [neris.fsri.org](http://neris.fsri.org).

This protocol ensures full compliance while keeping the process efficient for volunteer operations. Update your internal documentation with these steps and review annually or after any system changes.



## Canyon Creek Rural Fire Department

### Vehicle Training and Certification Program

#### Purpose

The Canyon Creek Rural Fire Department (CCRFD) Vehicle Training and Certification Program ensures all members operating department vehicles and fire apparatus do so safely, competently, and in compliance with applicable laws, department policies, and industry standards. This program reduces risk to personnel, the public, and equipment while promoting professional development in a rural volunteer fire service environment.

This program aligns with:

- NFPA 1002: Standard for Fire Apparatus Driver/Operator Professional Qualifications
- NFPA 1451: Standard for a Fire Service Vehicle Operations Training Program
- Relevant state driver licensing requirements (e.g., firefighter endorsements where applicable)
- Best practices from Emergency Vehicle Operator Course (EVOC) programs

This program applies to all members who may operate department vehicles, including:

- Fire apparatus (tenders, engines, brush trucks, rescue vehicles)
- Support vehicles (chief's vehicles, QRU, utility trailers)
- Personal vehicles used in official capacity (e.g., responding to incidents)

#### Prerequisites for Entry into the Program

To be eligible for vehicle operator training:

1. Must be an active member in good standing for at least 6 months (probationary members may observe but not operate).
2. Minimum age: 18 years.
3. Valid driver's license appropriate for vehicle class (e.g., non-commercial Class B or equivalent)

for heavy apparatus; firefighter endorsement if required by state law).

4. Completion of basic firefighter training (e.g., Firefighter I or department equivalent).

5. Approval from the member's Company Officer/Lieutenant and the Training Officer.

6. Proof of clean driving record (reviewed annually).

## **Training Components**

### **1. Classroom Instruction (Minimum 8-16 Hours)**

Topics include:

- Legal responsibilities and "due regard" for public safety during emergency responses.
- Defensive driving principles.
- Vehicle dynamics (weight distribution, braking distances, skid avoidance).
- Use of lights, sirens, and exemptions under traffic laws.
- Causes of emergency vehicle accidents and prevention strategies.
- Department SOPs for vehicle operations (e.g., backing, intersection procedures).
- Effects of weather, road conditions, and fatigue on driving.
- Daily vehicle inspections and maintenance reporting.

Recommended resource: VFIS Emergency Vehicle Driver Training or equivalent EVOC curriculum.

### **2. Practical Hands-On Training (Minimum 10-20 Hours per Apparatus**

**Type)** Conducted under direct supervision of a certified Driver Trainer:

- Pre-trip and post-trip inspections.
- Basic maneuvers: serpentine, alley dock, diminished clearance, straight-line backing.
- Non-emergency and emergency response driving on rural roads.
- Simulated emergency scenarios (e.g., intersection negotiation with lights/sirens).
- Backing with spotters (mandatory use of spotters; dismount and 360° walk-around if no spotter available).

- Apparatus-specific skills (e.g., pumping operations for pumpers, off-road for brush trucks). Training logged on individual skill sheets.

### **3. Apparatus-Specific Certification**

Members train and certify on specific vehicles:

- Support/Utility Trailers
- Brush/Wildland Trucks
- Pumpers/Engines
- Tankers/Tenders/Mobile Water Supply
- Other (as applicable)

#### **Certification Process**

1. Complete classroom and practical training.
2. Pass written exam (80% minimum).
3. Successful completion of practical evaluation course (evaluated by Training Officer or designee, including random skills from NFPA 1002).
4. Recommendation from supervising officer.
5. Final approval and sign-off by Fire Chief.

Certification issued via department certificate and added to member training record. **Recertification and Ongoing Training**

- Annual refresher training (minimum 4-8 hours, including practical skills).
- Biennial driving record review.
- Recertification every 3 years, including practical evaluation.
- Remedial training required after any at-fault incident or observed deficiency.

#### **Driver Trainers**

- Must hold current certification on relevant apparatus.
- Complete Train-the-Trainer course (e.g., VFIS or state-approved).

- Approved by Training Officer and Fire Chief.

### **Recordkeeping**

- All training, evaluations, and certifications documented in department records.
- Individual training files maintained by Training Officer.

### **Safety Guidelines (Key SOP Excerpts)**

- Seat belts mandatory for all occupants.
- No backing without spotter(s); use audible backup alarms.
- Speed limits: Safe speed based on conditions; no exceeding posted limits excessively during emergencies.
- Lights and sirens used only when authorized and with due regard.
- No cell phone use while driving.

This program will be reviewed annually or as needed by the Training Officer and Fire Chief. Members are encouraged to provide feedback for continuous improvement.

### **Approved by:**

Fire Chief, Canyon Creek Rural Fire Department

Date: January 2026



**STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE (SOP)  
CANYON CREEK RURAL FIRE DEPARTMENT (CCRFD)  
EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES (EMS)**

**Title:** Emergency Medical Services Operations and Patient Care

**Effective Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Revision Date:** Initial Issuance

**Approved By:** Fire Chief \_\_\_\_\_ Medical Officer \_\_\_\_\_

**Reviewed/Approved By:** Board of Trustees, Fire Company

### **1. PURPOSE**

This Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) establishes uniform guidelines for the provision of emergency medical services by Canyon Creek Rural Fire District (CCRFD) personnel. It ensures safe, consistent, effective, and compliant prehospital care within the District boundaries, during mutual aid responses, and in support of other agencies. All operations comply with Montana statutes (MCA Title 50, Chapter 6), Administrative Rules of Montana (ARM 37.104), the Montana Board of Medical Examiners (BOME) scope of practice, and the agency's license as a **Non-Transporting Unit – Basic with ALS Authorization (License #118)**.

This SOP promotes member safety, patient outcomes, regulatory compliance, and continuous improvement for CCRFD's volunteer Quick Response Unit (QRU) operations.

### **2. SCOPE**

This SOP applies to all CCRFD members who hold a current Montana Emergency Care Provider (ECP) license (EMR, EMT, AEMT, or Paramedic) and respond to EMS incidents. It covers dispatch response, scene operations, patient care, documentation, equipment, training, and quality assurance. Clinical treatment follows separate standing orders/protocols; this document focuses on operational standards.

### **3. AUTHORITY AND REFERENCES**

- MCA Title 50, Chapter 6 (Emergency Medical Services)
- ARM 37.104 (EMS Agency and Provider Rules)
- Montana BOME Prehospital Treatment Protocols (default or agency-specific, as approved by the Medical Director)
- National EMS Scope of Practice Model
- CCRFD Mutual Aid Agreements (Montana Fire Services Mutual Aid)
- OSHA Bloodborne Pathogens Standard (29 CFR 1910.1030) and Montana OSHA
- NFPA 1500/1581 (Fire Department Occupational Safety, Health, and Wellness)

**Medical Oversight:** Provided by the CCRFD Medical Officer. All providers operate under the Medical Director's oversight and approved protocols.

#### **4. DEFINITIONS**

- **ECP:** Emergency Care Provider licensed by the Montana BOME.
- **QRU:** Quick Response Unit – non-transporting initial response vehicle/personnel.
- **BLS/ALS:** Basic Life Support / Advanced Life Support per scope of practice.
- **Patient Care Report (PCR):** Official electronic or paper documentation of care (e.g., ImageTrend or equivalent).
- **Full Completion:** Successful passage of the course with issuance of a certificate of completion or continuing education (CE) credit.

#### **5. GENERAL RESPONSIBILITIES**

- **Fire Chief / Probationary Chief:** Overall EMS program responsibility, including licensing, training, equipment, and compliance.
- **EMS Officers / Training Officer:** Day-to-day EMS coordination, quality reviews, and training.
- **Licensed ECP Members:** Maintain current Montana ECP license, complete required CE, respond per this SOP, and document all care.
- **All Members:** Prioritize scene safety, use appropriate PPE, and follow Incident Command System (ICS).

#### **6. EMS RESPONSE PROCEDURES:**

##### **A. Dispatch and En Route**

- Respond via Lewis & Clark County 911 dispatch or mutual aid request.
- Use emergency warning devices only when necessary per Montana law and CCRFD policy.
- Minimum response staffing: Two licensed ECPs when possible (or per mutual aid).

##### **B. Scene Arrival and Safety**

- Establish scene safety and request additional resources as needed.
- Assume or integrate into ICS; designate Incident Commander (IC) if first arriving.
- Use BSI/PPE per protocol (gloves, eye protection, masks, gowns as indicated).

##### **C. Patient Assessment and Care**

- Perform primary and secondary surveys per BOME protocols.
- Provide care within individual ECP scope and Medical Director standing orders.
- Request ALS intercept or transporting ambulance (e.g., St. Peter's or Montana Medical Transport) early for critical patients.
- For refusals or AMA: Follow BOME refusal policy and document thoroughly.

##### **D. Patient Handover and Transport Coordination**

- Provide verbal report and PCR to transporting agency.
- Remain on scene until patient is transferred or released by IC.

- CCRFD does not transport; coordinate with licensed ambulance services.

## **7. Post-Incident**

- Decontaminate equipment and personnel.
- Complete PCR within 24 hours (or per agency software timeline).
- Participate in critical incident stress debriefing if needed.

## **8. EQUIPMENT AND SUPPLIES**

- Maintain all QRU equipment per agency license requirements and manufacturer guidelines.
- Daily/weekly checks documented on department forms.
- Restock from approved suppliers only.
- Expired supplies removed and replaced immediately.

## **9. DOCUMENTATION AND QUALITY ASSURANCE**

- All patient contacts require a complete PCR.
- Submit copies to Medical Director (St. Peter's Hospital) for review as requested.
- Annual or as-needed QA/QI reviews by EMS Officer/Medical Director.
- Track response times, interventions, and outcomes for improvement.

## **10. INFECTION CONTROL AND EXPOSURE**

- Follow CCRFD Exposure Control Plan (separate document).
- Report exposures immediately to Chief and seek medical evaluation.
- Hepatitis B vaccination offered to all members at no cost.

## **11. TRAINING, CONTINUING EDUCATION, AND REIMBURSEMENT POLICY**

All licensed ECP members must maintain current Montana licensure and meet BOME recertification requirements (e.g., EMT: 40 hours CE every 2 years under NCCP model; AEMT: 50 hours; Paramedic: 60 hours; EMR per current rules).

### **Mandatory Training:**

- Annual skills verification and protocol review.
- ICS 100, 200, 700, 800 (or higher as assigned).
- Bloodborne pathogens and infection control (annual).
- Department-specific QRU operations and equipment training.

### **Reimbursement for Classes**

CCRFD recognizes the value of professional development and supports member education to maintain and enhance EMS capabilities.

\*The Department will reimburse 100% of tuition, registration fees, and required textbooks/materials for any approved EMS-related class, certification, or continuing education course upon full completion.

**Procedure:**

1. Obtain pre-approval from the Fire Chief or Training Officer before enrolling (submit course description, cost, and relevance to EMS/fire operations).
2. Successfully complete the class with proof of full completion (certificate, transcript, or CE credit).
3. Submit original receipts and proof of completion within 30 days of course end.

4. Reimbursement issued via department check or direct deposit within 45 days. "Any class" includes (but is not limited to) initial ECP licensure courses, refresher programs, ALS upgrades, specialized training (e.g., PALS, ACLS, ITLS, PHTLS, wilderness medicine, instructor courses), and approved online or in-person CE. Non-EMS classes require specific Chief approval if they support department operations. Reimbursement is subject to annual budget availability; priority given to required recertification and department-needed skills. Members who fail to complete a pre-approved class are responsible for costs.

**12. MUTUAL AID AND SPECIAL OPERATIONS**

- Participate in Montana Mutual Aid per agreements.
- Mass Casualty Incidents (MCI): The use START has transitioned to RAMP triage effective 1/1/2026; establish treatment/transport areas per BOME/Medical Director guidelines.
- Hazardous Materials, Technical Rescue, Wildland: Coordinate with specialized teams; provide medical support only within scope.

**13. DISCIPLINE AND COMPLIANCE**

Violations of this SOP may result in corrective action up to suspension of EMS duties or termination per CCRFD policies. The Chief and Board reserve the right to revise this SOP as needed.

**ACKNOWLEDGMENT**

All CCRFD members providing EMS services must read, understand, and sign acknowledgment of this SOP annually.

**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Printed Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

This SOP is a living document. Contact the Fire Chief/Medical Officer for questions or updates.

**Canyon Creek Rural Fire District**

7560 Duffy Lane • PO Box 464 • Canyon Creek, MT 59633

Station: (406) 368-2266 • Chief: (406) 565-8764

***Adopted in support of our mission to protect life and property through professional, volunteer emergency medical services.***



## **Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) Canyon Creek Rural Fire District**

**Title:** Issuance, Accountability, Maintenance, and Return of Department-Owned Gear and Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

**Effective Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Revision Date:** As Needed

**Reviewed/Approved By:** Fire Chief and Board of Trustees

### **1. Purpose**

The purpose of this SOP is to establish standardized procedures for the issuance, accountability, maintenance, inspection, cleaning, repair, and return of all gear and PPE owned by the Canyon Creek Rural Fire District (CCRFD). This ensures the safety and health of department members, compliance with applicable standards, and proper stewardship of department property. Gear and PPE are critical for protecting personnel from hazards encountered during fire suppression, emergency medical services (EMS), and other operations. This SOP aligns with National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) standards, including NFPA 1851 (Selection, Care, and Maintenance of Protective Ensembles for Structural Fire Fighting) and NFPA 1971 (Standard on Protective Ensembles for Structural Fire Fighting).

### **2. Scope**

This SOP applies to all CCRFD volunteer members and probationary members. It covers all department-owned gear and PPE, such as:

- Structural firefighting ensembles (bunker coats, pants, liners, helmets, hoods, gloves, boots).
- Wildland firefighting gear.
- EMS protective clothing.
- Tools, radios, and other equipment issued for operational use. This does not apply to personally owned items unless they are approved for department use and integrated into inventory.

### 3. Definitions

- **Gear/PPE:** Any equipment or protective clothing issued by CCRFD for operational duties, designed to protect against thermal, physical, chemical, or biological hazards.
- **Issuance:** The process of assigning gear to a member, including fitting, documentation, and training.
- **Accountability:** Tracking and responsibility for gear condition, location, and use.
- **Maintenance:** Routine care, cleaning, inspection, and repair to ensure gear remains serviceable.
- **Return:** The process of surrendering gear upon separation from the department or when no longer needed.
- **Equipment Officer:** Designated personnel responsible for gear management (may be the Fire Chief or appointee in a small rural district like CCRFD).

### 4. Responsibilities

- **Fire Chief/Assistant Chief:** Overall authority for this SOP; approves issuance, repairs, and retirements; ensures compliance with standards.
- **Equipment Officer:** Manages inventory, issuance, inspections, and records; coordinates cleaning, repairs, and returns; conducts annual reviews.
- **Department Members:** Responsible for proper use, routine maintenance, reporting damage or issues, and returning gear in good condition. Members are personally accountable for loss or negligent damage, which may require reimbursement.
- **All Personnel:** Must use universal precautions when handling potentially contaminated gear and report health/safety concerns immediately.

### 5. Procedures

#### 5.1 Issuance

1. Gear shall be issued only to qualified members who have completed required training and probationary periods
2. The Equipment Officer will:
  - Assess needs based on member's role (e.g., structural vs. wildland).
  - Ensure proper fitting and compliance with NFPA standards.

- Document issuance using an Inventory Log or digital system, including: member's name, date, item description, serial/manufacturer number, condition, and month/year of manufacture.
  - Provide training on use, care, and manufacturer's instructions.
3. Members must sign an acknowledgment form accepting responsibility for the gear.
  4. CCRFD retains ownership of all issued gear; members may not alter, sell, or transfer it without approval.
  5. Probationary members may receive temporary gear; full issuance occurs post-probation.

## 5.2 Accountability and Records

1. All gear will be tracked via ImageTrend Inventory database and manual log, including issuance, maintenance events, inspections, and retirement.
2. Members must report lost, stolen, or damaged gear immediately to the Equipment Officer.
3. Annual inventory audits will be conducted to verify gear status.
4. Records shall be retained for at least 5 years after gear retirement or per Montana state requirements.

## 5.3 Maintenance and Inspection

1. **Routine Inspection and Cleaning:** Performed by the member after each use or exposure.
  - Inspect for soiling, contamination, rips, tears, thermal damage, or malfunctioning components (e.g., closures, liners).
  - Clean per manufacturer's guidelines: Brush off debris, rinse with water, use mild detergent if needed; air dry away from sunlight. **Do not use home washers or public laundries.**
  - Document inspections in the log.
2. **Advanced Inspection:** Conducted annually or if issues are suspected, by a qualified contractor or in-house if certified.
  - Includes complete liner checks for gear in service >2 years.
  - Tag unserviceable gear "Out of Service" and notify Quartermaster.

3. **Decontamination:** For contaminated gear (e.g., biohazards), use specialized cleaning; do not return to service until cleared.
4. Gear must not be stored in living quarters or exposed to public view when soiled.

#### 5.4 Repair and Retirement

1. **Repairs:** Minor repairs by approved vendors; major issues require evaluation for retirement. Document all repairs.
2. **Retirement:** Gear shall be retired if it fails inspections, exceeds 10 years from manufacture date (per NFPA), or is irreparable. Retired gear may be disposed, donated for training, or destroyed per policy. Document retirement details.

#### 5.5 Return

1. Gear must be returned upon resignation, termination, extended leave (>6 months), or when no longer needed.
2. The Equipment Officer will:
  - Inspect returned gear for condition and completeness.
  - Document return in the log, noting any damage or missing items.
  - Clean and prepare for reissuance if serviceable.
3. Failure to return gear will result in an invoice billing for replacement costs, or legal action.
4. Members must return gear in clean condition; a fee may apply for excessive damage due to negligence.

#### 6. References

- NFPA 1851: Standard on Selection, Care, and Maintenance of Protective Ensembles for Structural Fire Fighting.
- NFPA 1971: Standard on Protective Ensembles for Structural Fire Fighting.
- Manufacturer's care instructions for specific gear.
- Montana Fire Service Guidelines and applicable state/federal regulations.

#### 7. Attachments

- Gear Issuance Acknowledgment Form.



**Form Number:** CCRFD-ISS-01 **Purpose:** This checklist ensures proper documentation and accountability during the issuance of structural firefighting gear, wildland firefighting gear, radios, and related components. It aligns with CCRFD SOP 200-01 (Issuance, Accountability, Maintenance, and Return of Department-Owned Gear and PPE) and NFPA 1851/1971 standards. All items must be inspected for compliance, fit, and condition prior to issuance. Issued items remain CCRFD property.

**Member Information:**

- Member Name: \_\_\_\_\_
- Member ID/Number: \_\_\_\_\_
- Role (e.g., Firefighter, EMS, Probationary): \_\_\_\_\_
- Date of Issuance: \_\_\_\_\_
- Issuing Officer: \_\_\_\_\_

**Instructions:**

- Check off each item as issued.
- Record size (where applicable, e.g., S/M/L/XL or specific measurements).
- Record quantity (e.g., 1 coat, 2 pairs of gloves).
- Assess and record condition: New (unused), Good (minimal wear, fully functional), Fair (some wear but serviceable per NFPA), Needs Repair (tag out of service until fixed).
- For radios and components, record make, model, and serial number.
- Member must initial each section to acknowledge receipt and responsibility for care/maintenance.
- Scan/photocopy completed form for records; retain per SOP (minimum 5 years).

**Section 1: Structural Firefighting Gear (NFPA 1971 Compliant)**

This includes bunker/turnout gear for interior structural operations. Ensure proper fit and no damage.

Item	Size	Quantity	Condition	Checked (√)	Notes/Issues	Member Initials
Bunker Coat	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Bunker Pants	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Suspenders (if applicable)	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Helmet	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Helmet Liner/Insert	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Protective Hood	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Gloves	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Boots	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Face Shield/Goggles	N/A	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Moisture Barrier/Liner (if separate)	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Other (e.g., SCBA Interface)	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

## Section 2: Wildland Firefighting Gear (NFPA 1977 Compliant)

This includes gear for brush/wildland operations. Focus on lightweight, breathable materials.

Item	Size	Quantity	Condition	Checked (√)	Notes/Issues	Member Initials
Wildland Jacket/Shirt	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Wildland Pants	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Helmet (Wildland-Specific)	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Goggles/Eye Protection	N/A	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Gloves	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Boots	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Bandana/Neck Gaiter	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Fire Shelter	N/A	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Backpack/Hydration Pack	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Other (e.g., Web Gear, Tools)	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

### Section 3: Issued Radio and Components

Radios are critical for communication. Ensure compatibility with CCRFD frequencies and test functionality. Record all details for tracking.

Item	Make	Model	Serial Number	Quantity	Condition	Checked (√)	Notes/Issues	Member Initials
Primary Radio (Handheld/Portable)	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Spare Battery	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Charger (Desktop/Wall)	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Vehicle Charger (if applicable)	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Speaker Microphone	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Earpiece/Headset	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Antenna (Replacement/Spare)	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Carrying Case/Holster	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Other Components (e.g., Programming Cable)	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

**Acknowledgment and Signatures**

I, the undersigned member, acknowledge receipt of the above items in the specified condition. I understand my responsibility for proper use, maintenance, reporting of issues, and return upon separation from CCRFD. I have been trained on care per NFPA standards and SOP 200-01. Failure to maintain or return gear may result in reimbursement or disciplinary action.

- Member Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

- Issuing Officer Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_
- Witness (if required): \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Post-Issuance Actions:**

- Enter details into CCRFD inventory database.
- File original in member personnel folder; provide copy to member.

This checklist shall be reviewed annually or as gear standards evolve (e.g., transition to NFPA 1970). For questions, contact the Equipment Office.

DRAFT



## **Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) Canyon Creek Rural Fire District**

**Title:** Dispatch and Response to Incident Calls

**Effective Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Revision Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Reviewed/Approved by:** Fire Chief and Board of Trustees

### **1. Purpose**

The purpose of this SOP is to establish clear, consistent procedures for the dispatching and response of Canyon Creek Rural Fire District (CCRFD) personnel and apparatus to emergency incidents within the district and mutual-aid areas. This ensures timely, safe, and effective service to the community.

### **2. Scope**

This SOP applies to all CCRFD members, including firefighters, officers, auxiliary personnel, and duty chiefs responding to incidents within the district or under mutual-aid agreements with neighboring agencies in Montana.

### **3. Authority**

This SOP is issued under the authority of the Fire Chief and the CCRFD Board of Trustees. It aligns with:

- Montana Code Annotated (MCA) provisions for rural fire districts
- Lewis and Clark County 9-1-1 Dispatch Center protocols
- Mutual-aid agreements with surrounding fire districts and state agencies

## 4. Definitions

- **IC (Incident Commander):** First arriving officer or qualified firefighter assuming command.
- **Dispatch Center:** Lewis and Clark County 9-1-1 Communications Center.
- **Responding Unit:** Any CCRFD apparatus or personnel responding to an incident.
- **Tones:** Audible alerting tones used by dispatch to notify CCRFD of an incident.
- **Priority Response:** Emergency response using lights and sirens.
- **Non-Priority Response:** No lights or sirens; used for non-emergent calls.

## 5. Dispatch Procedures

### 5.1 Call Receipt

1. All emergency calls are received and processed by the Lewis and Clark County 9-1-1 Dispatch Center.
2. Dispatch will tone CCRFD and announce:
  - Nature of the incident
  - Location
  - Units requested
  - Additional hazards or caller information

### 5.2 Dispatch Information Requirements

Dispatch should provide, when available:

- Exact address or GPS coordinates
- Type of incident (fire, medical, MVA, wildland, rescue, etc.)
- Caller-reported conditions
- Known hazards (weapons, chemicals, weather, road conditions)
- Access issues (gates, bridges, terrain)
- Other responding agencies

### 5.3 Radio Channels

CCRFD will operate on the designated county fire channel unless otherwise directed.

- **Primary:** County Fire Operations
- **Secondary:** Tactical channels assigned by dispatch
- **Air-to-Ground:** As assigned for wildland incidents

## 6. Member Response Procedures

### 6.1 Acknowledging Dispatch

Upon hearing tones:

Duty Officer or senior responding member will acknowledge via radio:

- “Canyon Creek copies, responding.”
- Members responding to the station should check in via radio or text group if safe to do so.

### 6.2 Response to Station

Members will:

- Respond safely and obey all Montana traffic laws.
- Not exceed safe speeds or drive recklessly.
- Ensure they are fit for duty before responding.

### 6.3 Apparatus Staffing

Minimum staffing requirements:

- **Engines:** 2 qualified personnel
- **Tenders:** 1 qualified driver/operator
- **Brush Trucks:** 1 qualified operator (2 preferred)
- **Rescue/Medical Units:** 2 personnel (at least one EMR/EMT if available)

If minimum staffing cannot be met, the apparatus does not respond unless approved by the IC.

## 7. Response Levels

### 7.1 Priority Response

- Structure fires
- Wildland fires
- Motor vehicle accidents with injuries
- Medical emergencies
- Hazardous conditions posing immediate threat

## **7.2 Non-Priority Response**

- Public assists
- Smoke investigations with no visible threat
- Standby assignments
- Non-emergent service calls

## **8. On-Scene Procedures**

### **8.1 Arrival Report**

First arriving unit provides:

- Unit identification
- On-scene status
- Initial size-up
- Establishment of command

### **8.2 Incident Command**

- The first qualified member assumes IC until relieved.
- IC will request additional resources as needed.
- IC will maintain communication with dispatch throughout the incident.

### **8.3 Personnel Accountability**

- All personnel must check in with IC or Accountability Officer.
- No freelancing is permitted.
- PAR (Personnel Accountability Reports) will be conducted as needed.

## **9. Mutual Aid**

### **9.1 Incoming Mutual Aid**

- Provide staging instructions
- Assign tactical channels
- Integrate mutual-aid units into the ICS structure

## 9.2 Outgoing Mutual Aid

- Requested by dispatch or neighboring agency
- Adequate coverage remains in district
- Approved by Duty Officer or Fire Chief

## 10. Clearing the Scene

### 10.1 Demobilization

- IC will release units as incident needs decrease.
- All equipment must be accounted for before leaving.

### 10.2 Return to Service - Upon returning to station:

- Apparatus must be refueled, restocked, and cleaned.
- Any damaged equipment must be reported immediately.
- Members must log their response in the district system.

## 11. Documentation - The IC or designated officer will complete:

- Incident report
- NFIRS documentation
- Any injury or exposure reports
- Mutual-aid documentation if applicable

Reports should be submitted within 24 hours unless otherwise approved.

## 12. Safety Considerations

- All responses must prioritize life safety, including responders.
- PPE must be worn appropriate to the incident type.
- Montana weather and terrain hazards must be considered at all times.
- No member may respond under the influence of alcohol, drugs, or impairing medication.

This SOP will be reviewed annually by the Fire Chief and Board of Trustees or after any major incident requiring procedural evaluation.