

**PENNINGTON COUNTY FIRE SERVICE BOARD (FSB)  
BEST OPERATING PRACTICES (BOPs)**

EMERGENCY OPERATIONS	Date	BOP#
STRUCTURAL MAY-DAY	Addition: 12/12/2018	FSB200
	Revision: 1/1/2024	

<b>PREMISE:</b>	Firefighters sometimes face extraordinary circumstances that require urgent assistance from other firefighters to avoid significant injury and/or death (e.g.: structural collapse, injured/unconscious firefighter, lost/missing firefighter, SCBA air emergencies, entanglement, entrapment, extreme fire conditions.) The act of calling for this type of assistance is called a “May-Day.” A commonly held set of practices for calling a May-Day will facilitate an efficient and organized response to assist a firefighter in need of assistance.
<b>PURPOSE:</b>	The purpose of this BOP is to establish common language, practices, and trainings when calling and handling a May-Day.
<b>SCOPE:</b>	This BOP shall apply to all fire department personnel engaged in emergency scene activities.

**OPERATING PRACTICE:**

- 1) This BOP is written in conjunction with the assistance of the Rapid City Fire Department to ensure consistency between agencies throughout Pennington County.
  - a) Rapid City Fire Department
    - i) SECTION: General Emergency Operations
    - ii) SUBJECT: Firefighter Survival
    - iii) SOP#: 109
- 2) **PROCEDURE**
  - a) One must identify the need for a May-Day. Any firefighter, of any rank or position who finds themselves in need of assistance shall call a May-Day to avoid significant injury and/or death. These situations may include, but are not limited to being lost, entrapped, entangled, victim of a fall, low on air or experiencing any SCBA emergency, personal health emergency, or facing extreme fire conditions beyond their ability to control.
  - b) All crew members entering the Hazard Zone must have a portable radio. The minimum crew size shall be two and will remain in contact with each other. Crews must work under an assigned supervisor.

- c) The May-Day shall be called immediately upon experiencing and/or observing the emergency in order to provide Command and Rapid Intervention Crew (RIC) maximum time and opportunity to respond. May-Days can be cancelled if the firefighter is able to self-rescue. PAR shall be called to verify all personnel are accounted for.
- d) The firefighter shall transmit May-Day three times in a row (i.e., MAY-DAY, MAY-DAY, MAY-DAY) over the fireground or command channel. The May-Day shall be repeated until acknowledged by either Command or Dispatch.
- e) Once a May-Day is acknowledged by the firefighter in distress or the firefighter that located the member in distress, they shall give an update on why they called the May-Day and provide the following information:
  - i) Who – who you are to include how many firefighters.
  - ii) What – what the emergency is,
  - iii) Where – where you are located. Describe any information that might direct rescue crews to their location.(1) Example:
  - Firefighter: *"May-Day. May-Day. May-Day."*
  - Command: *"Resources with the May-Day. Go ahead."*
  - Firefighter: *"This is L11, roof. I am on the roof and a firefighter has fallen through the roof."*
- f) If more information is needed (or the Who, What, Where were not provided) regarding the May-Day, Command will request additional information from the firefighter who called in the May-Day.
- g) As soon as the firefighter has called the May-Day the Personal Alert Safety System (PASS) device must be manually activated and remain activated until rescued or they have self-extricated. PASS can only be deactivated during radio communication with Command then reactivated.
- h) Command will deploy the initial RIC and designate a second RIC as per FSB104. The RIC will not self-deploy.
- i) Command shall consider appointing another officer to manage the May-Day.
- j) Command shall inform the dispatcher(s) that a May-Day has been called and that the RIC has been deployed.
- k) Command shall conduct a PAR, as needed, during and after the May-Day. The PAR may help in locating interior teams who can assist with the May-Day.
- l) RIC will remain on the same channel as the operations personnel for the May-Day so that all personnel are in communication. All personnel shall keep radio traffic to a minimum. It is important for RIC and the May-Day firefighter/crew to be aware of the interior conditions. (May-Day stays on same channel. If the frequency gets too busy, all other operations move to another frequency).
- m) All other companies shall continue with their initial assignment unless ordered by Command to assist the RIC with the rescue. The original incident (fire) cannot be ignored.
- n) Command will assign one ambulance and crew to the May-Day.
- o) Command will request a second ambulance and crew to the incident for normal operations.

- p) Command will request an additional alarm for resources due to the energy/fatigue that may be involved with the May-Day. The original fire and incident will still need to be handled.
- q) After the May-Day, Command shall consider getting those involved with a May-Day into a debrief and allow relief crews to continue with the incident.
- r) Command shall also consider if a Chaplain and/or other resources are needed to help with the May-Day.

### **3) RESPONSIBILITY**

- a) Command will have the overall responsibility for all fire ground operations and assign a Safety Officer (if one has not yet been established).
- b) The Safety Officer, or other designated officer, will be responsible for keeping Command informed of the progress during the rescue operation and additional needs.
- c) The ambulance crew assigned to the distressed firefighter(s) and RIC will be responsible for the treatment/rehabilitation of those firefighters.
- d) It is the responsibility of all the firefighters on the scene to work in a safe manner and to ensure the safe return of all members.
- e) Interior firefighters will continue their original operations of ventilation, extinguishing the fire, searching for victims.
- f) Exterior firefighters may consider assistance that involves throwing ladders to upper floors and/or the roof.