

## OSWEGO TOWN VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT

### EMERGENCY ESCAPE AND SELF-RESCUE ROPE SYSTEM FOR INTERIOR STRUCTURAL FIREFIGHTERS

September 2010

---

#### I PURPOSE

- A. Establishes the Oswego Town Volunteer Fire Department guideline regarding the use of the Emergency Escape and Self-Rescue Rope System.
- B. Defines the department and the qualified Interior Structural Firefighter in the use and training of the Emergency Escape and Self-Rescue Rope System.
- C. Defines the department responsibility in the care use and inspection of the Emergency Escape and Self-Rescue Rope System and its components.
- D. Effective date – September 2010

#### II RESPONSIBILITIES

- A. Chief Officers and/or their designee will enter the receipt of all Emergency Escape and Self Rescue Rope Systems into inventory.
- B. Chief Officers and/or their designee have the joint responsibility to ensure all personnel are in compliance with this Guideline.
- C. Chief Officers and/or their designee have the joint responsibility to ensure all training and documentation is in compliance with all applicable laws and regulations.
- D. All Interior Structural Fire Fighters will wear their Emergency Escape and Self Rescue Rope System on all structural fire responses.
- E. Emergency Escape and Self-Rescue Rope System will consist of the following components:
  - (1) Escape Harness
  - (1) 35-50 ft of Escape Rope
  - (1) Auto-locking Escape Device
  - (2) Screw lock carabineers
- F. Incident Command will be responsible for ensuring that all Mutual Aid Interior firefighters, responding on Structural Fire related alarms, are equipped with appropriate Emergency Escape and Self Rescue Rope systems.

## IV TRAINING

- A. Training should include hands-on use of the Emergency Escape and Self Rescue Rope System in a controlled environment. Firefighters should be informed of the limitations of the Emergency Escape and Self Rescue Rope System. Firefighters should be instructed on how to perform the inspection of the Emergency Escape and Self Rescue Rope System.
- B. A record of such instructional training including the name of the Firefighter being trained, the name of the competent person delivering the training and the date on which the training was provided should be maintained.
- C. Complete Emergency Escape and Self Rescue Rope systems will be maintained for training purposes. Systems issued to individual members **will not** be used for training.
- D. All Interior Structural Firefighters will be trained by a competent instructor on a semi-annual basis on the use (including inspection) of the Emergency Escape and Self-Rescue Rope System.
- E. Each interior firefighter will demonstrate proficiency with the Emergency Escape and Self Rescue Rope System on a minimum yearly basis.

## II PROCEDURE

- A. In the event an Interior Structural Firefighter becomes trapped by an uncontrolled emergency situation such as a rapid-fire advance, the use of the Emergency Escape and Self-Rescue Rope System provides the firefighter with the equipment to utilize a non-conventional opening, such as a window to escape the emergency.
- B. All Interior Structural Firefighters operating in a structure during interior firefighting activities will be equipped with an Emergency Escape and Self-Rescue Rope System.
- C. When a Firefighter determines it necessary to evacuate a structure at an elevation higher than the first floor of a structure using the Emergency Escape and Self Rescue Rope System, the firefighter will declare a May Day informing Incident Command of their situation. The Firefighter will escape the life-threatening situation by utilizing any convenient route of escape. In the case of a non-conventional route such as a window, the firefighter will deploy the Emergency Escape and Self Rescue Rope System issued and lower themselves in a controlled manner using the Emergency Escape and Self Rescue Rope System as it was designed and as trained in its use. The firefighter will lower themselves to:
  - 1. The ground if enough escape rope is available

2. A lower floor safe from the danger to be pulled in by responding rescuers (Rapid Intervention Team)
  3. To a safe position and stand-by to be rescued by portable ground ladder, or aerial device.
- D. The Safety Harness is integrated into the pants of the turnout gear. External harnesses may be utilized in training evolution where necessary. The Emergency Escape and Self-Rescue Rope System will be stowed in the thigh pocket of the turnout gear pants.
- E. Incident Command or their designee will communicate the type of rescue that will be attempted to the Firefighter(s) on the incident scene.
- F. Incident Command or their designee will declare an end to the May Day at the conclusion of the emergency escape evolution.

## V INSPECTION AND MAINTENANCE

- A. All components of the Emergency Escape and Self Rescue Rope System will meet NFPA 1983 Standard on Life Safety Rope and Equipment for Emergency Services 2006 Edition.
- B. When an Emergency Escape and Self Rescue Rope System becomes soiled, it will be cleaned following the manufacturers washing instructions.
- C. Inspection of the Emergency Escape and Self Rescue Rope System will be completed **monthly** and after every use. The Emergency Escape and Self Rescue Rope System should be visually checked for cuts, chafed areas, glazed surfaces, discolorations and other damage such as dirt and mildew. The Escape Rope should be inspected by holding it firmly in one hand, pulling the rope between the thumb and index finger about 18 inches at a time, while feeling for broken fibers, soft or hard spots and variations in rope diameter. If any of the above is found, the Escape Rope should be taken out of service immediately.
- D. If the Emergency Escape and Self Rescue System has been subjected to a shock load, fall arrest or any other abuse, the rope should be taken out of service, the rest of the system components shall be inspected for any damage or wear and retired if necessary.

## VI RECORDKEEPING

- A. In order to accurately track the history and use of the Emergency Escape and Self Rescue Rope System, recordkeeping must be maintained. A log will be kept for each Emergency Escape and Self Rescue Rope System issued to Interior Structural Firefighters. The log will contain the following information:
- Description (Manufacturers name and model number) of the Emergency Escape and Self Rescue Rope System
  - Date of issuance
  - Dates of inspection
- B. A checklist will be stored in each member's individual locker space at the fire station. It is the responsibility of the individual member to check their rope system on a monthly basis and sign off on the checklist that this has been completed. Any member not completing their monthly check will be suspended from interior firefighting until their equipment has been inspected.

## VII REFERENCES

- A. Risk Assessment Work Sheet on file in the Commissioner's Office
- B. 12NYCRR Part 800.7
- C. NFPA 1983 2006 Edition
- D. GEMTOR, Inc. – Harness manufacturer
- E. Sterling Fire Tech Escape System