Confined Space Rescue Response

314.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

This policy provides guidance on various confined space entries.

314.1.1 DEFINITIONS

Definitions related to this policy include:

Confined space - An area with limited access and egress, with the possible existence of hazards such as oxygen deficient, flammable or toxic atmosphere or physical hazards (e.g., tanks, pipes, culverts, sewers, vaults, manholes, voids in a structural collapse or any area not intended for continuous human occupancy).

Confined space entry - Entry occurs when any part of an entrant's body breaks the plane of an opening to a confined space.

Confined space entry permit - An Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) required list of all hazards inherent to a confined space and the protections necessary for an entrant.

314.2 POLICY

It is the policy of the Fresno County Fire Protection District to provide training and equipment to members to reasonably ensure their safety while performing confined space rescues.

314.3 PROCEDURES

District members should be trained to identify and measure atmospheric hazards within confined spaces. Reasonably practicable attempts at self-rescue or nonentry rescue should be made prior to any entry rescue operation.

District members should adhere to National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) safety standards when performing a confined space rescue.

Any time there is questionable action or lack of movement by the worker inside the confined space, a verbal check should be made. If there is no response, District rescue personnel should conduct a survivability profile and a risk analysis, based on the information documented on the entry permit.

314.3.1 PRECAUTIONS

No ignition sources should be introduced into the confined space when atmospheric hazards are attributable to flammable or explosive substances or lighting and electrical equipment.

Members should perform continuous atmospheric monitoring during all confined space rescue operations. If atmospheric conditions change adversely, members should exit the confined space until appropriate precautions for any new hazards are developed and implemented.

Work-time should be closely monitored because heat stress emergencies may be caused by a warm atmosphere inside a confined space.

314.4 TACTICAL GUIDELINES

314.4.1 PRIMARY ASSESSMENT

- Upon arrival, the first-in company should establish command and provide a Report of Conditions.
- Assess immediate hazards to rescuers, contact witnesses or otherwise look for clues as to the cause of the confined space emergency.
- Conduct a survivability profile of the victims, including the number, location and condition of the victims and how long they have been trapped.
- Establish communication with the victims, if possible.
- If applicable, locate any confined space permit indicating information about the space.
- Make a determination whether the operation will be a rescue or a recovery.

314.4.2 SECONDARY ASSESSMENT

- Determine the type of confined space and what type of products are used or stored in the space.
- Identify any known hazards that are present (e.g., electrical, mechanical, stored energy).
- Determine the stability of the confined space and conduct a hazardous materials size-up.

314.4.3 INCIDENT COMMANDER RESPONSIBILITIES

- Determine if adequate technician-level trained personnel are on-scene to safely complete the rescue.
- Determine if the proper equipment is at the scene to safely complete the rescue (e.g., atmospheric monitoring equipment, explosion-proof lighting and communications, self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA), ventilation equipment and victim removal equipment).
- Establish a perimeter and ventilation, if needed, and make assignments that include a hazards officer.
- Ensure all utilities are locked-out, including electrical, gas and water.
- Evaluate the structural stability of the confined space and surrounding area.
- Remove or restrict the flow of any product in or flowing into the confined space.
- Ensure all entry and back-up personnel are wearing the proper level of personal protective equipment (e.g., helmet, gloves, proper footwear, eye protection, appropriate skin protection, a Class III harness and safety tag line, SCBA and any

additional equipment deemed necessary for the safety of personnel, given the totality of the circumstances.

- Ensure the appropriate method of extrication is determined and constructed.
- Ensure District-approved procedures are followed to perform the rescue.

314.4.4 VICTIM ASSESSMENT

- If possible, the entry team should bring a supply of breathable air for the victims.
- Rescuers shall not remove their SCBA and give it to the victims.
- If indicated and practicable, complete C-spine precautions should be taken.
- After treatment for immediate life-threatening injuries, the victims should be packaged appropriately for extrication (e.g., backboard, rescue basket).

314.4.5 VICTIM TRANSFER

Immediately after reaching the point of egress, the victims should be transferred to awaiting medical personnel.

314.5 TERMINATION OF THE RESCUE

At the conclusion of the rescue, the Incident Commander should:

- Ensure all rescue personnel are accounted for.
- Ensure all tools and equipment used for the rescue/recovery are removed (unless there has been a fatality, then consideration may be given to leaving tools and equipment in place for investigative purposes).
- Ensure proper decontamination procedures are implemented if personnel or equipment have been contaminated during the operation.
- Determine if a formal critical incident stress debriefing or a routine debriefing and critique are warranted, and if so, implement as appropriate.