



**MEXICO FIRE  
DEPARTMENT**

**SAFETY POLICY**

**AUGUST 1997**

# **MEXICO FIRE DEPARTMENT SAFETY POLICY**

## **Philosophy :**

It is the philosophy of the Mexico Fire Department to provide a safe work environment for its members to work in and to provide the citizens a service that will preserve life, property and safety against any fires, accidents and disasters of which causes are natural and/or man made, without putting any member of the Mexico Fire Department at any unnecessary risk or harm necessary to perform his/her duties.

## **Purpose :**

The purpose of this policy is to create a safe work environment and to prevent injury and / or harm to its members and its assisting department members.

To make sure that the department and its members are in compliance of OSHA and NFPA regulations and standards.

To provide members with guidelines to safely perform their duties without injury and harm to themselves and to the public.

To provide proper training so as its members can perform their duties safely within the guidelines of OSHA and NFPA regulations.

To promote health and safety to its employees and members, and to record and maintain records of all training, injuries and medical documents of its members.

To enforce its policy and to act properly on all aspects of its policy.

To inform and to educate its members of safety and health issues at all times.

To promote and encourage safe work habits and awareness at all times.

## **Statement :**

The members of the Mexico Fire Department can be proud of the safe record that it has. This is due to the pride and professionalism that each and every member takes in their job. It is the goal of this department to maintain this attitude and to keep a service in which its members and the citizens of the Town of Mexico can be proud of.

It's an honor and privilege to work with and to be a part of such an outstanding organization.

Sincerely Yours,

Chief, Gary Wentzell

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**Responsibility :**

**It shall be the responsibility of all members of the Mexico Fire Department to comply and adhere to the safety policy set forth by this department.**

**It shall be the responsibility of the Mexico Fire Department's safety officer or his / her designee to monitor and to enforce this policy and to record and document all issues or incidents pertaining to this policy.**

**Any outside department who responds as a mutual aid respondent, will be expected to follow this policy and shall come under the jurisdiction of the Mexico Fire Department's safety guidelines and control.**

**It shall be the responsibility of the safety officer to report to the chief or his/her designee and to inform all officers, fire fighters and squads any issues concerning safety and policy while at an emergency scene and/or fire.**

**In the event that the safety officer is not present at an incident, the chief or his/her designee shall be responsible for appointing a person as a safety officer for that incident. That person shall be responsible for the duties of safety officer for that incident.**

**It shall be the responsibility of all officers to make sure that the personnel under their command are in compliance with this policy and OSHA and NFPA rules and regulations.**

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## Health :

All new applicants must have a physical and show documentation of said physical before he/she will be assigned to a position according to their ability due to physical or medical restrictions.

While employed by the Mexico Fire Department, all members shall be responsible to report any medical problems that effect their safety, performance and ability to perform their duties and/or effect the health and safety of fellow members of this department.

The safety officer shall maintain a file on all members health records which will remain confidential.

The chief will be informed of any medical issues which could change the status or duties of a member and shall retain the right to meet and discuss with the other officers of the department a remedy that will benefit both the member and the department. The resignation of the member will be the absolute last resort. We recognize that this is a volunteer force and that we can be flexible enough to find a place for the member, as long as it does not effect the safety and health of the member and/or his/her fellow members. This may include restriction to heights, donning scba's, outside work, lifting traffic squad, etc..

## General Rules

### A. General Safety Practices :

1. Protect yourself from injury by observing all safety rules and using protective equipment provided.
2. Learn the hazards surrounding your work and the job.
3. Do your own looking and thinking and do not depend on others when safety is involved.
4. Ask questions when something looks wrong.
5. Do not start a task or job if you feel you have not received the proper instructions. Ask the officer in charge of your task or job for more complete instructions.
6. Go to an officer if special conditions cause you to think you must violate a safety rule to perform your task or job.
7. The department has safety rules designed to protect fire fighters from injury. deliberate violation of these rules is cause for discipline
8. Reporting for duty under the influence of alcohol or any controlled substances,

or

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bringing such intoxicants on the job is strictly prohibited. Such an action creates serious safety concerns for all fire fighters.

Accordingly, any fire fighters who are found to be in violation of this policy will be removed from the scene at his/her expense and be dealt with on a case by case basis.

9. Proper clothing can protect against scrapes, bruises, cuts, blood pathogens and hot surfaces. When working at a scene, fire fighters must wear required safety equipment provided.

10. Immediately correct or report to the officer in charge of your task or job, hazardous conditions, unsafe equipment or work methods.

11. Be alert to avoid actions endangering the safety of anyone.

12. Call attention of fellow fire fighters unsafe practices or conditions.

If you have any question regarding these policies or others, please contact any officer or the safety officer.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Gary Wentzell  
Fire Chief

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## **Reporting Injuries**

1. A fire fighter who sustains an injury while on duty must immediately report any injury to the safety officer at the scene. The fire fighter must then report to Med Care if at scene for treatment and assessment. Reporting is an absolute must.
2. Should a fire fighter receive medical treatment from a physician, such treatment and name of physician giving treatment will be reported to the safety officer.
3. A fire fighter must report to an officer any damaged or weakened equipment which could cause injury.

## **Traffic Control**

Vehicle traffic at a scene shall be handled by the traffic squad and / or local law enforcement agency.

1. The traffic squad shall be in control of all vehicle and pedestrian traffic entering and leaving the scene . The Traffic Squad shall coordinate with the Chief or his / her designee what should be done to meet the needs of the situation at that particular incident.
2. All non fire fighting personnel shall not be allowed to enter the work area of a scene unless authorized by the Chief or his / her designee. This is for their safety.
3. A Traffic Squad member shall at his / her discretion or at the request of an officer reroute traffic to protect firefighters, equipment and / or public from harm and / or damage.
4. All firefighters responding to a call shall observe all traffic laws and not put themselves and / or public in an unsafe situation. This shall include observing all traffic signs and signals, not passing emergency equipment and not passing school buses with it's lights flashing.

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## **Lifting**

Most strains and back injuries occur when lifting and setting objects by hand. For this reason it is important that you know and follow the proper lifting techniques.

1. Consider the size, weight and shape of the object to be carried or moved. Do not lift more than can be handled comfortably. If necessary get help.
2. Set feet solidly. One foot can be slightly ahead of the other for increased effectiveness. Feet should be far enough apart to give good balance and stability ( approximately the width of the shoulders ).
3. Get as close as possible. Bend legs about 90 degrees at the knees. Crouch, do not squat. It takes about twice as much effort to get up from a squat.
4. Keep the back as straight as possible. It may be far from vertical, but it should not be arched. Bend the hips, not at the middle of the back.
5. Grip the object firmly. Maintain that grip while lifting and carrying. Before changing or adjusting this grip, set the object down again.
6. Straighten the legs to lift the object, and at the same time bring back to a vertical position. A good tip is to look up at the sky or ceiling when beginning to lift.
7. Never carry a load you cannot see over or around. Make sure the path of travel is clear. Carry the object close to the body.
8. Never turn at the waist to change direction or to put down an object. Turn the whole body and crouch down to lower the object. Grip the object firmly, keep it close and keep the back straight ( not arched ). To keep hands from being pinched against the floor, put one corner of object down first, so that the fingers can be removed from under the object.

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## **Ladders**

All ladders shall be inspected semiannually by the fire fighters as part of their training and after each call if used to ensure integrity.

1. Check ladder to see if side rails are sound and not bent, stressed or cracked.
2. Inspect rungs to see if they are loose, cracked or bent and that they are in good shape.
3. Check pulleys and ropes on extension ladders. Make sure pulleys turn freely and that the ropes are not frayed or worn.
4. Check the safety feet ; make sure that they are not rusted, cracked and are in good condition.
5. Check the lock assembly on extension and step ladders.

Defective ladders will have a caution tag fixed to them, so the problem can be corrected. Ladders requiring structural repairs will be destroyed.

## **General use of ladders**

Ensure boots are not greasy, muddy or otherwise slippery prior to climbing a ladder.

Always climb or descend ladder with your face toward the ladder. Always make sure you have someone at the foot of the ladder as an anchor.

Special use of ladders during fire fighting tactics will be conducted at least once per year as part of each fire fighter's training.

Before ascending or descending a ladder, both hands should have a firm grip of the ladder.

While ascending or descending, a hand-over-hand motion with one hand at a time with a firm grasp of ladder is necessary.

Always use the proper size and type ladder for a given situation. Ladders must not be used for bracing, floats, scaffold members or any other purpose other than that for which it is intended.

Place ladders so that they have a secure and level footing. Support points should be rigid and secure.



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## **Extension Ladder Safety**

Extension ladders must have their rung lock engaged and the rope must be drawn tight and securely tied to ladder rung when in use.

The horizontal distance from the foot of the ladder to the point directly below the top support should be approximately 25% of the height to the top support.

When a ladder is supported on an eave of a roof, a pipe, the edge of a platform or similar support, the ladder will extend three rungs above eave or edge of support. When ascending to a roof, platform, etc. , the portion of the ladder extending above roof is for support while stepping from the ladder to the roof.

## **Step Ladder Safety**

Step ladders will not be used as straight ladders.

Step ladders must always be used in the full open and locked position, never closed or partially closed.

As with any tool, a step ladder must be inspected prior to use. Ladders that are broken must be taken out of service and tagged for repair or disposal.

**DO NOT** climb or work on the top two steps of a ladder. This does not apply to a collapsible ladder with a platform at the top that is designed for standing and working.

## **Working From ladder**

Both straight and extension ladders are designed to afford access to an area, and can be worked from safely while facing the ladder.

Never lean off the side of a ladder; instead relocate it to the appropriate position. If relocation is impossible, other forms of access ( i.e. ladder truck ) will be used.

When a job requires the use of both hands, the man on the ladder should employ a leg lock by putting one leg over a rung and toes of this foot hooked around a rung below ( extension ladders only).

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## **Personal Protective Equipment**

### **A. Seat Belts**

All department owned vehicles shall be equipped with seat belts.

Seat belts and similar restraints shall be worn by all operators and all vehicle occupants whenever the vehicle is in motion.

Seat belts shall be properly adjusted to provide the maximum level of protection. The lap belt shall cross the pelvis area, not the abdomen. Shoulder harnesses shall fit across the collarbone area. Shoulder harness shall fit snugly, but allow for freedom of movement.

### **B. Eye Protection Policy**

Safety glasses with side shields will be worn when fire fighters are at risk of exposure to blood borne pathogens.

Face shields will be used while working in the hot areas ( areas of ground attack, overhaul and mop up phases ). Fire fighters donning SCBA's, the face mask is acceptable.

When using power saws, venting saws, etc. full goggles will be used along with face shield in the down position.

Goggles or safety glasses with side shields will be used when using bench grinders, power tools and hand tools that when used could produce debris that could cause potential eye injuries.

Special jobs will require special protection. Example : welding/cutting will require OSHA approved eye protection, like dark colored glass in welding hoods and cutting goggles.

### **C. Hearing Protection :**

Hearing protection will be worn when operating pumpers and power saws/tools.

### **D. Clothing :**

Full turnout gear will be worn at all calls except where it is determined by the Chief or his/her designee that the scene does not require it. Example : false alarms, fire inspections and/or non emergency functions.

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## **Clothing cont.**

It shall be the responsibility of all personnel to inspect and keep their gear in good condition. Any gear that needs repair will be turned into the department so it can be repaired.

Turnout gear will be inspected every 6 ( six ) months at the station during the monthly drill.

Shorts or sneakers will not be allowed to be worn at grass fires and/or brush and wood fires, hitch pants and boots shall be worn. Leather boots and long pants will be allowed, except where the scene will require more protection. All fire fighting personnel will be required to wear no less than a short sleeve shirt to cover the upper torso area at said calls. Again the degree of protection will depend on the hazards present at the scene as to the degree of protection needed. The Chief and/or his/her designee and the safety officer shall dictate the amount of protection needed as the scene conditions warrant.

## **E. Fall Protection :**

Safety harnesses will be worn by all fire fighters while working on the ladder truck.

## **F. House Keeping :**

The house keeping of your work area is your duty.

1. Keep all passageways, aisles, stairs and exits clear of debris, tools, equipment and other materials at all times.
2. Immediately clean up spilled materials which are flammable or hazardous to footing such as gasoline, kerosene, grease, oils, etc. .
3. Place trash in proper containers.
4. Return all unused materials to it's proper place.