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Ocean City Fire Department  
Standard Operating Guidelines

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## Operations

Subject: Flammable Fuel Spill and Gas Leaks  
Revised: 7-1-09  
Effective: 10-20-09  
Approved: 9-24-09 (Fire Chief)  
Section: 422.00

### 422.01 Purpose

To establish guidelines for the handling of flammable fuel spills or leaks.

### 422.02 Policy

It shall be the policy of the Ocean City Fire Department to follow these guidelines in the handling of flammable fuel spills and gas leaks, and to insure the safety of the personnel and citizens.

### 422.03 Procedure

#### A. Upon Arrival

1. When approaching the area, slow down or stop if necessary to assess any visible action-taking place. It may be necessary to “stage” incoming units away from the scene.
2. Attempt to determine hazardous area (flammable vapor area) using the gas detector.
3. Give report on conditions and request additional equipment or special equipment, if needed.
4. Request utilities company or gas company, if needed.
5. Determine if rescue or evacuation problem exists.
6. Formulate a plan of action based on initial size-up plan.
  - a. Safety of citizens and firefighters.
  - b. Evacuation of endangered area if necessary
  - c. Control of situation.
  - d. Stabilization of the spilled material.
  - e. Disposal or removal of spilled material.
  - f. Notify appropriate agencies due to type of spill and amount of spill, if necessary.
7. Coordinate with law enforcement personnel for evacuation and traffic control.

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B. Safety

1. Avoid commitment of personnel and apparatus until a complete size up, including weather conditions has been made.
2. All personnel should be in full protective equipment including self-contained breathing apparatus.
3. Keep all bystanders a safe distance away from the hazardous area.
4. Remove all ignition sources in the hazardous area.
5. Be aware the some flammable liquids or gases give off toxic vapor whether they are burning or not.
6. If the flammable liquid/gas is leaking from a burning tank or cylinder, keep clear of the container ends. If the whistling sound from the pressure relief valves in the container becomes louder evacuate the area, explosion is imminent.
7. In the case of a tank fire, fire streams must be used to cool the vapor area of the tank, the area above the liquid level.
8. Do not extinguish tank or cylinder fires unless a shut off can be effected.
9. If personnel must operate in a dangerous position, they must be protected with another fire stream.
10. Do not park apparatus in low areas because flammable vapors may have accumulated there.

C. Confinement

1. Unless hazard to life is involved, any efforts to remove spill by flushing into any drainage system should be avoided.
2. Isolate the spill by the use of dykes and absorbent materials.
3. Spill fires, which are flowing to an area where they can burn safely, should be allowed to do so.
4. Direct spills away from exposures if possible.
5. The biggest problem with spills is containment of the spilled material, the more water that you add, the larger the containment problem becomes.

D. Control

1. Use fog streams to dissipate the vapors if possible, without disturbing the liquid.
2. Approach the fire or leak from upwind.
3. Determine if water can be used on the specific gravity of the spilled material.
4. The use of foam can prevent ignition of spilled material.
5. Attempt to shut off leak by shutting off valves or plugging the container.
6. Heavy streams can be used to divert flames from exposures. Burning fuel must be flushed from under and around tanks.
7. Recover the fuel by absorption or use of vacuum trucks.