

# EAST COUNTY FIRE & RESCUE

## POLICIES, PROCEDURES & GUIDELINES

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**SUBJECT: Lost or Stolen District Property**

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APPROVED BY: \_\_\_\_\_

  
Board Chair

REVIEWED: \_\_\_\_\_

BY: \_\_\_\_\_

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### **POLICY:**

Equipment and supplies purchased by the Fire District remain the property of the Fire District, unless otherwise documented in Agency policy.

Equipment and materials assigned to Members for use in delivery of Agency goals & objectives becomes the responsibility of those Members. Therefore, care, maintenance and protection of those Agency materials and supplies is directly assigned to those Members, and those Members are accountable to the Fire District for performance of that care, maintenance and protection.

Members also have a responsibility for the care, maintenance and protection of equipment and materials that are not assigned directly to them when using such equipment and material in the delivery of Agency goals & objectives. Members shall use due care in the use of such items and shall ensure that such equipment and materials are returned or replaced for future use.

### **1.0 Member-Assigned Equipment and Materials**

- A. Members shall possess no Agency equipment that is not documented by the Fire District and assigned to said member.
- B. When not using assigned equipment (turnouts, radios, wildland gear, etc) at Agency incidents and activities, the Member shall take reasonable precautions to protect such equipment:
  - a. Lock vehicle or home
  - b. Keep gear locked in the trunk
  - c. Obscure equipment with turnout bags, etc.
  - d. Keep equipment out of sight
- C. When using Member assigned equipment at Agency incidents and activities, the Member shall take reasonable precautions to protect such equipment:
  - a. Do not set portable radios or other equipment on running boards, side steps, compartment tops, etc., of apparatus or other vehicles
  - b. Do not set equipment in the travel path of apparatus or near their wheels
  - c. Keep your gear together, not strewn about the scene— monitor your gear
- D. Maintain equipment and materials in good working order.
  - a. Clean it when dirty
  - b. Have it repaired when damaged
  - c. Periodically inspect its condition and operation
  - d. Report it missing to an Officer within 48 hours of its loss, or within 48 hours of when the Member notices that it is missing.

- E. Members can be held financially responsible for Assigned equipment and materials when theft, loss or damage occurs and the Member is found to have NOT made reasonable attempts to protect such assigned equipment and materials.
- F. The Fire District can require the return of assigned equipment when Members fail to exercise due care and/or reasonable precautions in the storage and/or use of such equipment and materials.

## **2.0 Common Use Equipment and Materials**

- A. Members need to exercise due care when using equipment and materials that are provided in stations, on apparatus, etc., for use in the delivery of Agency goals & objectives:
  - a. Use equipment appropriately, within the manufacturer's guidelines, and exercise due care to avoid unnecessary damage to such equipment.
  - b. Return equipment to its assigned location.
  - c. Perform a quick area search for stray equipment prior to leaving the scene.  
Apparatus drivers/operators are responsible to check for the return of all equipment to their rig PRIOR to leaving the scene.
  - d. Check for the presence of equipment and restock after return to the Station.  
Return to the scene as quickly as possible if equipment is found to be missing.
  - e. Clean dirty equipment.
  - f. Have damaged equipment repaired.
  - g. Notify an Officer when equipment is found to be missing.
  - h. Notify the Administration when replacement (disposable) supplies are running low
- B. Members can be disciplined for
  - a. Causing excessive damage to equipment through misuse
  - b. Using excessive amounts of supplies.
  - d. Unauthorized use of Agency equipment or supplies.
  - e. Theft of Agency equipment or supplies
- C. Members can be held financially responsible for:
  - a. Negligent use of Agency equipment or supplies
  - b. Deliberate damage to or destruction of Agency equipment or supplies

## **3.0 State Auditor's Office**

- A. Revised code of Washington (RCW 43.09.185) requires that all state agencies and local governments **immediately** notify the State Auditors Office (SAO) in the event of a known or suspected loss of public funds or assets or other illegal activity. (See part 3, Chapter 8, Section A, in BARS Manual for details).

B. Accounting records must be protected from loss or destruction. All original records related to a loss should be secured in a safe place, such as a vault, safe or other locked file cabinet, until the SAO has completed an audit.

C. The Fire District is not required to report the following to the SAO:

1. Normal and reasonable "over and short" situations from cash receipting operations. Record these transactions in the accounting system as miscellaneous income and expense, respectively, and monitor the activity by cashier for any unusual trends.
2. Reasonable inventory shortages identified during a physical count. Record inventory adjustments in the accounting system.
3. Breaking and entering or other vandalism of property.

D. Please do not attempt to correct the loss without reporting to the authorities identified above. In addition, RCW 43.09.260 requires written approval of the State Auditors and

Attorney General before state agencies and local governments make any restitution agreement, compromise, or settlement of loss claims covered by RCW 43.09.185.

#### **4.0 Notification of Law Enforcement**

- A. The Fire Chief shall cause law enforcement to be notified when equipment and/or materials are thought to have been stolen from District apparatus and/or facilities.
  - a. A police report shall be filed and a copy obtained for Fire District records.
- B. Members shall cause law enforcement to be notified when Fire District equipment and/or materials that were under their supervision are thought to have been stolen.
  - a. A police report shall be filed and a copy obtained and forwarded to the Fire Chief for Fire District records.
  - b. Any member who is unwilling to file a theft report with Law Enforcement shall be held financially responsible for the loss.

#### **5.0 Insurance Claims**

- A. The Fire Chief shall provide the Board with his recommendation on making or not making an insurance claim for lost or stolen items.
  - a. The Board shall have the final determination on whether or not the Fire Chief files such an insurance claim.

#### **6.0 Interpretations/Questions**

- A. Contact any Chief Officer if you have questions about this policy.
- B. The Fire Chief shall have the final authority when interpreting or enforcing this policy.
- C. Members retain the right to appeal the Chief's decision to the Board of Fire Commissioners.