



SOUTH LYON FIRE DEPARTMENT

Manual of Procedures 111

PUBLIC EDUCATION - COMMUNITY EVENTS

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I. PURPOSE

The ability to prevent loss of life and property from fire through education is the best form of fire protection that a fire department can give to its community.

The majority of the requests for public education are for children. As a general policy, the fire department will not give demonstrations to children less than 4 years old. The cognitive learning ability of these children has not developed enough for them to understand what is being taught. There is more to fire prevention than just giving children a tour of a fire engine. The entire purpose of our efforts is for the public to understand fundamental basics of fire prevention, fire safety, and basic fire department operations. We want to prevent them from ever having to call the fire department by instilling with them at a young age simple fire prevention techniques.

Although, National Fire Prevention Week is the first full week in October, the South Lyon Fire Department believes that fire education is an ongoing venture and conducts fire education throughout the year.

Requests for a fire station visit or attendance at a community event should be made to the public education officer twilson@southlyonfire.com or by calling 248-437-2616. Requests for service via phone shall be forwarded to Lieutenant Wilson.

SLFD receives a large number of requests to attend community events, because of this and staffing requirements SLFD will commit up to 1 hour of attendance for approved events. Requests for a longer duration or repeat events will be forwarded to a chief officer for approval.

Requests for a ride in a fire truck will be handled on a case by case basis and will require the approval of a chief officer. Requests shall be denied if the individual or group requesting intend to monetize the ride.

II. CURRICULUM

The South Lyon Fire Department's curriculum is based off of the National Fire Protection Association's (NFPA) curriculum and materials. If any member of the public questions the legitimacy of the fire department's information, please refer them to NFPA's website: www.nfpa.org

Most offsite presentations or station tours should last approximately thirty to forty-five minutes. Group size should be limited to thirty (30) children or less at a time. The group may be split into two groups with one group of firefighters giving the apparatus and equipment portion while another group of firefighters give the classroom portion. The groups would then switch after approximately twenty minutes and repeat the presentation to the other group. Thus, sixty (60) children may be accommodated in one hour, but this usually requires at least two firefighters to accomplish. The tour is broken down into two equal parts "classroom" and "equipment" each of which should last 15-20 minutes each.



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III. BEFORE THE PRESENTATION

- A. Inspect the station and apparatus. Clean up any pop cans, trash, etc. The group should never see a firefighter cleaning a personal vehicle while a tour is going on. Advise the firefighter cleaning that there is a tour coming in, and he or she can continue once the tour is over.
- B. Review the request form in the memo book.
- C. Make sure all firefighters are dressed alike.
- D. The training room should be setup just like a normal school classroom with the firefighter and posters at the front of the room and the children sitting facing him or her. If over eighteen (18) children are expected, then the tables should be broken down and chairs should be arranged facing the front of the room. If there are more children than chairs, then children can sit on the floor, but chairs should be provided for the adults.
- E. One firefighter needs to have all of his/her turnout gear and SCBA in the training room and be prepared to don in front of the group.

IV. GROUP ARRIVAL

- A. All tours shall start in the training room
- B. When the group first arrives, introduce all the firefighters that will be helping with the presentation and yourself. For young children groups, always use first names; i.e. Chief Mike, not Chief Kennedy. Welcome them to the South Lyon Fire Department and explain the presentation will last about one hour with half in the class room portion of the training and the other half looking at the apparatus.
- C. Explain that if there is an alarm, you may have to respond. If the alarm comes in during the tour, they should return to the training room and wait for further instructions.

V. PRESENTATION BOARDS

SLFD has several large poster boards to assist firefighters when giving a presentation. They help the children learn the material, and they provide notes that firefighters can follow to make sure the correct information is disseminated. All the firefighter has to do is go over the information on the posters. These posters are meant for children from preschool through the third grade.

These posters shall be used whether the presentation is at the fire station or off site. The educational portion and turnout gear donning should last approximately 25 minutes and shall be done prior to the station tour.

- A. Poster 1 - Smoke detectors
 - i. Are our best friend in a fire; they do not prevent fire or stop fire, but let us know when a fire is still small so we can get out and get to safety.
 - ii. Run on batteries just like their toys.
 - iii. Must be checked by an adult to make sure the batteries work.
 - iv. Every time we hear the smoke detector we must get out of the building.
- B. Poster 2 - Two ways out
 - i. We must have two ways out of every room in our house in case one is blocked by fire or smoke.
 - ii. Must know how to open all doors and windows.
 - iii. Use the closest exit.
 - iv. Sleep with the bedroom door closed- helps keep smoke and fire out.
 - v. Check the door before you open it, if warm find a second way out.
 - vi. If on the first floor, you can crawl out the window.



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- vii. If on second floor keep door closed, open the window, stay calm, scream for help, do NOT hide, do NOT jump, they have time as long as they keep their door closed.
 - viii. When the fire department gets there, one firefighter walks around the building to check for trapped people, firefighters will then get a ladder to get them out.
 - C. Poster 3 - Stay low and go
 - Just because we come across smoke does not mean we have to turn around, we can stay low and go. Have the children repeat the phrase "Stay low and go."
 - i. Smoke and heat like the ceiling. There is good, clean air by the floor so we can breath, see, and get to safety.



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- D. Poster 4 - Home Fire Escape
 - i. Need to have a meeting spot in front of the home so everyone will go to the same spot once they get outside.
 - ii. Examples-mailbox, fire hydrant, end of driveway, etc.
 - iii. If no one is outside when you get outside go to neighbors and have them call 911.
 - iv. Call 911 for police, fire, or ambulance.
 - v. Never go back into a burning building.
 - vi. They are the most important thing in that home, their only job is to get out.
 - vii. They do NOT have time to look for other family members, pets, or toys; the firefighters will try to save people, pets and belongings.
 - viii. They need to let the firefighters know where trapped people might be in the home.
 - ix. Ask the students to practice with their family when they get home
- E. Poster 5 - Burns
 - i. Ask the children to raise their hands and tell you some things in the home that get hot.
 - ii. After receiving 4 or 5 answers, review the answers.
 - iii. Danger of grabbing pots and pans on the stove or things in the oven.
 - iv. Other hot items-coffee, water, light bulbs, furnace, etc.
 - v. We always want to stay away from things that are hot.
- F. Poster 6 - Stop, Drop, and Roll
 - i. Just like with burns we want to prevent our clothes from catching on fire
 - ii. Anything with a flame can catch our clothes on fire-campfire, candles, etc.
 - iii. Have one student demonstrate stop, drop, and roll. If you have the whole class practice it, it usually results in bedlam. However, for younger children (under 4), it is good to have them all practice stop, drop, and roll.
- G. Poster 7 - Matches and lighters
 - i. Tools for adults, not toys for kids.
 - ii. If you see a book of matches or a lighter, do not touch it or pick it up; let an adult know and the adult will put it in a safe spot.
 - iii. Matches and lighters only start fire, which burns people or other things.

VI. TURNOUT GEAR DONNING

After going through the posters, one firefighter should don full turnout gear and SCBA and go on air. This donning shall be done slowly and each step in the process needs to be explained. While one firefighter is gearing up, another firefighter should explain the equipment, and that firefighters can get burned too. Once, in gear the firefighter should crawl around the classroom and let the children touch his/her gloved hand.

VII. APPARATUS / STATION TOUR

After the classroom part is over, have the children line up and follow you out to the station. Explain to them that when in the apparatus bay, they must stay in the group, and there is dangerous equipment on the rigs. They should not grab or touch anything without asking first. Make sure you prop the training room door open, so they can return in the event of an alarm.

- A. Tell them the basics of each piece of apparatus. Explain the different functions of the apparatus when you get to that apparatus: rescue, trailer, engine, and ladder. They do not care that E-2 has a 1250 gpm Hale pump on a KME chassis.
- B. Always watch the clock. You should spend no more than twenty-five minutes in the apparatus bay.



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- C. Do NOT open every compartment and tell them each piece of equipment. Keep it simple. Show them the unusual stuff like the thermal imager, hydraulic tools, and ventilation saws.
- D. Explain to the group why South Lyon has a 95' aerial even though we do not have high rise buildings.
- E. Have the kids go through the back of Ladder 1. Ideally, one firefighter should be on one side sending kinds through to the other side where another firefighter is positioned.
- F. Turn on the lights and siren, after letting the children and parents know it is going to be loud.
- G. Return everyone to the training room, answer any questions, and thank them for coming. Pass out plastic stickers and coloring books.
- H. The most important message that you can give to the public is the value of working smoke detectors. There is no other item that surpasses smoke detectors for saving lives from fire.
- I. NEVER give out false information. If unsure, refer the question to the Fire Chief. It is okay not to know. Know what you are talking about. Often, members of the public may be off duty or retired firefighters.
- J. Members of the public shall not to wear or try on firefighter gear or helmets. This is a sanitary issue. Our gear can be sweaty and possibly have some sort of contagion on it. This policy applies even if staff has just recently washed their gear.
- K. Be courteous and look professional.
- L. Be nice.

VIII. COMMUNITY EVENTS

- A. Be engaged. Staff needs to consider themselves as a sales person for the fire department. Go up to children / families who are in proximity and offer junior fighter badges, coloring books, and to sit in the apparatus.
- B. Equipment doors on the apparatus shall be opened up to show equipment. Staff are responsible to keep an eye on the apparatus to ensure members of the public do to handle or remove equipment from the apparatus.
- C. Members of the public shall not to wear or try on firefighter gear or helmets. This is a sanitary issue. Our gear can be sweaty and possibly have some sort of contamination on it. This policy applies even if staff has recently washed their gear. When at a community event, turnout gear needs to be hidden or placed in a closed compartment.
- D. Fire streams may be used to cool spectators during periods of extreme heat. This needs to be coordinated with event staff. At no time will members of the public be allowed to handle fire streams without the direct supervision and control of SLFD staff. Solid or straight streams shall not be directed at the public. Streams used for cooling must be at a wide fog and low pressure (less than 50 psi).
- E. Staff shall avoid prolonged congregation with other emergency services workers. This can display a negative public perception.
- F. You are ALWAYS under the watchful eye of the public and elected officials while at community events. Be mindful of what you are doing and how it looks to others.
- G. NEVER give out false information. If unsure, refer the question to the Fire Chief. It is okay not to know. Know what you are talking about. Often, members of the public may be off duty or retired firefighters.
- H. Lights and sirens are usually not appropriate or welcome while parked at community events.
- I. Be courteous and look professional.
- J. Be nice.



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IX. STAND-BY EVENTS

When the fire department is at an event for a specific fire suppression or EMS stand-by function, the readiness of crews and equipment in preparation for a potential response shall take precedence over other cursory activities. However, SLFD personnel shall engage with the public as appropriate.

X. TOT FINDER DECALS

Staff may receive inquiries about the Tot Finder decals that were popular in the 1980s and 1990s. These were decals that people would put on bedroom windows that were supposed to let firefighters know the location of child bedrooms. The National Fire Protection Association no longer endorses this program, and the South Lyon Fire Department is no longer distributing or recommending that the people use these decals.

Rationale for no longer using window decals

- A. The fire department will attempt to search all rooms regardless of a sticker.
- B. People would move and never take the stickers down making them inaccurate.
- C. They encouraged children to wait for rescue rather than attempt to evacuate on their own.

Approved by
/s/ Chief Robert Vogel