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# Fire Station Safety

## 911.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The purpose of this policy is to establish safety procedures for the Blue Ridge Fire District members to follow, with the intent of reducing or eliminating workplace injuries or illnesses to both members and the public.

This policy does not repeat procedures already covered in the Communicable Diseases Policy that relate to fire station safety.

## 911.2 POLICY

It is the policy of the Blue Ridge Fire District that all members should be involved in daily activities that are designed to provide a safe and healthy workplace and reduce or eliminate injuries or illnesses, both in the field and in the fire station. This policy addresses safety activities in the fire station. All members are expected to follow the procedures outlined in the policy, for the safety of themselves, other members and any visitors to the fire station. Safety practices specific to incident type or task are addressed in other policies.

## 911.3 PROCEDURE

For the safety of all occupants, the on-duty Captain at each fire station is responsible for ensuring the following procedures are applied to activities conducted in the fire station:

(a) Personal protective equipment (PPE)

1. Use adequate eye and face protection when there is a risk of eye injuries, such as punctures, abrasions, contusions or burns as a result of contact with flying particles, hazardous substances or projections. This includes, but is not limited to, working with grinders, drills, saws, welding equipment, mowers, edgers and while working under vehicles.
2. Use hand protection when the work involves exposure to materials that are likely to cause cuts, burns or exposure to chemicals (e.g., working with trimmers, pruners, other tools).
3. Wear hearing protection in compliance with the Hearing Conservation and Noise Control Training Policy.

(b) Housekeeping and personal hygiene

1. Maintain all rooms, kitchens, offices, hallways, stairways, storage rooms and apparatus rooms in a clean, orderly and sanitary condition.
2. Clean and repair the source of water leaks quickly to avoid mold growth.
3. Smoking is prohibited in the building or near any entrance, exit, window or ventilation system, as provided in the Smoking and Tobacco Use Policy (ARS § 36-601.01).

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4. Avoid using compressed air to blow dirt, chips or dust from clothing while it is being worn.
  5. Maintain cooking appliances and eating utensils in good working order.
  6. Clean kitchen hoods and vents at least monthly. Ensure the hood light is installed and functioning.
  7. Provide and clearly label first-aid supplies.
  8. Post signs in all restrooms reminding employees/visitors to wash their hands.
- (c) Cooking
1. Use caution while cutting food with a kitchen knife. Be sure the item is secure on a flat surface before attempting to cut it.
  2. Use potholders to avoid burns when removing hot items from the oven and/or stovetop.
  3. Do not let pot handles extend over the counter.
- (d) Safe lifting
1. Store heavy or awkward objects at approximately waist level to prevent unnecessary lifting.
  2. Use team lifting for heavy or awkward objects that need to be lifted above the waist level. Do not attempt to lift or carry more than you can easily handle. Injuries frequently occur from lifting items, such as out-of-county bags, drug boxes, map boxes, etc.
  3. Practice safe-lifting techniques: Use the legs to lift; keep the back straight and do not twist while lifting; keep the body as close as possible to the object being lifted.
- (e) Walking surfaces and exits
1. Ensure all primary exit routes are obvious, marked with an "Exit" sign and free of obstructions.
  2. Remove any objects that block hallways and/or passageways.
  3. Clean up or repair potential slip or trip hazards immediately on apparatus bay floors, kitchen floors, bathroom floors, hallways, outdoor walkways, etc.
  4. Ensure stairways are in good condition with standard railings provided for every flight having four or more risers.
  5. Ensure handrails are of sufficient strength and proper design for all stairways and floor openings.
  6. Ensure all areas of the building are adequately illuminated.
  7. Ensure beds are located to cause minimum interference during dressing.
- (f) Apparatus floor
1. Mark ladders, pike poles and other items projecting from the apparatus clearly with brightly colored flags, stripes or other identification.

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2. Exercise caution and use handrails when exiting apparatus.
  3. Maintain apparatus doors in a safe, operable condition.
  4. Maintain adequate clearance for vehicles under apparatus doors.
- (g) Equipment, machinery and tools
1. Observe safety precautions when operating all equipment, machinery and tools.
  2. Avoid using defective equipment, such as ladders with broken rungs or power equipment without proper safety protection. Repair or replace defective equipment before use.
  3. Mount all equipment and machinery securely to the surface on which it sits.
  4. Ensure grinders and grinding wheels are adequately guarded. Guarding must include work rests, tool rests, eye shields and spindle/nut/flange coverage.
  5. Work rests and tool rests on grinders shall be within 1/8 inch and 1/4 inch respectively to the grinding wheel.
  6. Ensure all power tools are adequately grounded.
  7. Store maintenance hand tools safely when not being used. They shall be maintained and periodically inspected to ensure they are in a safe and operable condition.
  8. Portable ladders shall be adequate for their purpose, in good condition and have secure footing.
  9. Fixed ladders shall be equipped with side rails, cages or special climbing devices.
- (h) Electrical wiring, fixtures and controls
1. Maintain 36 inches of clear access around all electrical control panels.
  2. Label electrical switches and circuit breakers with their purpose.
  3. Ensure all electrical outlets have cover plates that are secured to the wall outlets.
  4. Ensure all extension cords are properly grounded and approved.
  5. Avoid using flexible cords and cables as a substitute for fixed wiring.
  6. Avoid hanging electrical cords on pipes, nail hooks, etc.
  7. Check all electrical cords for fraying or exposed plug wiring.
  8. Ensure all electrical tools do not have damaged power cords or plugs, worn switches, defective ground circuits or other faults that could render them unsafe for use.
- (i) Fire extinguishers and fire prevention
1. Ensure fire extinguishers are of the proper type for the expected hazards.
  2. Maintain portable fire extinguishers in a fully operable condition.

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3. Ensure fire extinguishers have a durable tag securely attached to show the maintenance or recharge date.
  4. Test the fire alarm system at least annually.
  5. Ensure a qualified person services the sprinkler system at least annually.
  6. Check smoke detectors periodically to ensure they are working properly.
  7. Maintain at least 18 inches of clearance below all sprinkler heads.
- (j) Hazardous materials and exposure prevention
1. Label all hazardous materials containers with the name of the hazardous material, applicable hazard warning and the name and address of the manufacturer, importer or responsible party.
  2. Evaluate compatibility of hazardous materials before they are stored. Incompatible hazardous materials shall be separated by distance, partitions, dikes, berms or secondary containment.
  3. Store hazardous materials separately from food, food preparation and eating areas.
  4. Store ignitable liquids in an approved, vented, flammable and combustible liquids storage cabinet.
  5. Use safety containers with self-closing lids for the storage of flammable liquids and soiled oily rags.
  6. Store cylinders of compressed gas in an upright position, away from combustible materials.
  7. Avoid wearing or storing turnout gear in the living quarters or buildings.
  8. Clean living quarters thoroughly on a regular basis, including vacuuming or frequently washing blankets, drapes and upholstered furniture.
  9. Wash clothing regularly, taking care not to spread contamination by taking clothing home.
  10. Use vehicle exhaust collection systems effectively by following all guidelines and manufacturer's recommendations.
  11. Perform regular vehicle inspection and maintenance to minimize diesel particulate and gas emissions.
- (k) Communicable diseases - If a member has been exposed to a hazardous material or a communicable disease, follow the reporting procedure in the Communicable Diseases Policy.
- (l) On-duty physical fitness activities - For safety guidelines during physical fitness, see the Physical Fitness and the Wellness and Fitness Program policies.