

**City of Seaside**  
**SOP #11 - PROCEDURES AT FIRES**

1. General

- A. Ordinarily the first and primary responsibility of the Police Department at a fire is prevention of interference with the work of the Fire Department. Such interference arises from vehicular traffic in most cases, but may be caused by pedestrians and crowds, particularly in the case of larger fires. In deciding whether to establish an area blockade and, if so, to what extent, officers must be governed by the circumstances of each fire, including such factors as the extent of the fire, the present or potential congestion of the area from vehicles and persons, the number of fire fighting apparatus now and potentially at the scene, and the manner in which fire hose is or will be laid.
- B. No vehicular traffic should be allowed within the block in which the fire is located, or beyond that if such traffic would in any way hinder the fighting of the fire or crossing of fire hose.
- C. Officers shall be governed in this respect by the California Vehicle Code, Section 21707, which states: "No motor vehicle, except an authorized emergency vehicle or a vehicle of a duly authorized member of a fire or police department shall be operated within the block wherein an emergency situation responded to by any fire department vehicle exists, except that in the event the nearest intersection to such emergency is more than 300' therefrom, this section shall prohibit operation of only within 300' of the emergency, unless directed to do so by a member of the Fire Department or Police Department, sheriff, deputy sheriff, or member of the California Highway Patrol. The emergency shall be deemed to have ceased to exist when the official of the Fire Department in charge at the scene of the emergency shall so indicate. Officials of the Fire Department or Police Department shall make every effort to prevent the closing off entirely of congested highway traffic passing the scene of any such emergency.
- D. No person shall be permitted to drive his vehicle over any fire hose unless it is protected by hose guard and such travel is permitted or authorized by the Fire Department. Officers shall be governed in this respect by section 21708 of the California Vehicle Code which states: "No person shall drive or propel any vehicle or conveyance upon, over or across, or in any manner damage any fire hose or chemical hose used by or under the supervision and control of any organized Fire Department. However, any vehicle may cross a hose provided suitable jumpers or other appliances are installed to protect the hose."
- E. In the event a blockage of the fire area is necessary, traffic will be diverted at such intersections and in such a manner as to allow a minimum of congestion within the immediate or nearby areas. Where a blockade of a fire area is necessary, sufficient personnel shall be assigned to allow for complete coverage. The officers first at the scene shall make a preliminary survey and request whatever additional assistance may be necessary.

- F. At fires of long duration steps should be taken to barricade the area making use of street barricades, rope, etc., in a manner that will serve to protect and yet allow for more efficient distribution of police personnel. Fire lines should be established around the immediate vicinity of the fire as may be needed to prevent spectators from approaching too close to the scene of the fire and who will either be a source of interference or who may be injured.
- G. In small fires in isolated areas the fire lines may be maintained by officers alone; however, in more serious fires or fires in congested areas equipment such as barricades and rope may be necessary in order to more efficiently utilize the services of the officers available and present at the scene. The circumstances of each fire will determine the methods to be used in establishing such fire lines.
- H. At the scene of any fire the senior fire officer in charge is in command of both fire and police personnel. Contact and coordination shall be conducted with the Battalion Chief. When the Battalion Chief is not on scene, contact the engine Captain.