

Emergency Operations, SOG 280

WILDLAND FIRES

1. Scope. This standard was promulgated to regulate the management of incidents involving ground cover in the wildland/urban interface.
2. Definitions.
 - A. Anchor point: A term associated with attack methods, referring to an advantageous location, usually one with a barrier to fire spread, from which to start constructing a fire line. Used to minimize the chance of being outflanked by the fire while constructing the fire line. Most anchor points originate at or near the area of origin.
 - B. Backfiring: Intentionally setting fire to fuels inside the control line to reduce fuel and contain a rapidly spreading fire. Used in the indirect method only.
 - C. Brands: Pieces of burning debris carried aloft into the convective column. May be carried outside the perimeter of the main fire by wind, causing spot fires.
 - D. Brush: Shrubs and stands of short, scrubby trees generally three to twenty feet in height.
 - E. Tractor/plow line: A fire line constructed by a bulldozer.
 - F. Control line: A term used for all constructed or natural fire barriers used to control a fire.
 - G. Crown fire: Any fire that advances from top to top of trees or brush that is more or less independent of the surface fire.
 - H. Fire line: The part of a control line that is scraped or dug down to mineral soil. Normally only used in wooded areas. Generally not used on grass fires.
 - I. Fire perimeter: The entire length of the outer edge of the fire.
 - J. Head of a fire: The most active part of a wildland fire.

- K. Heavy fuels: Fuels of large diameter, such as logs, snags, and large tree limbs. These ignite slowly and burn slowly, but produce a large amount of heat.
- L. Mop-up: After the fire has been controlled, all actions required to make the fire “safe.” This includes trenching, falling snags, and checking all control lines.
- M. Rear of fire: The portion of a fire opposite the head. The slowest burning part of a fire.
- N. Wildland/urban interface: Where native vegetation comes in contact with structures and other manmade fuels.

3. Preplans.

- A. Each fire department shall be responsible for developing and maintaining preplans for wildland areas located within their districts. Preplans shall identify fuel loads and types, water sources, natural fire breaks, etc.
- B. Fuel Loads:

Type	Amount
Grass	1/4 – 1 ton per acre
Medium brush	7 – 15 tons per acre
Heavy brush	20 – 50 tons per acre
Timber	100 – 600 tons per acre

4. Operational Procedures.

- A. Direct attack: Personnel and resources work close to the fire’s edge and put it out there. Best to use on small, slow moving fires with light fuels.
- B. Indirect attack: Uses natural barriers and backfiring.
- C. Parallel attack: Made by hand crews and bulldozers when intense heat or fire spread precludes direct attack. Back off five to 50 feet and parallel the flank.

5. Safety Precautions.

- A. The level of protective clothing to be used shall be determined by the incident commander, but shall include as a minimum:
 - (1) Department-issued NFPA-approved wildland helmet, gloves, pants and shirt, and boots.
 - (2) If not in department-issued wildland turnout gear, personnel shall wear structural turnouts. This includes helmet, hood, boots, turnout pants, turnout coat, and gloves.
- B. Eye and respiratory protection shall be worn as conditions warrant.
- C. EMS personnel shall closely monitor all personnel to prevent heat exhaustion, dehydration, etc. A rehab sector shall be established whenever appropriate.
- D. The incident command system shall be used.
- E. Standard fire orders:
 - (1) Keep informed of weather conditions.
 - (2) Know what your fire is doing at all times.
 - (3) Base your actions on current and expected fire behavior.
 - (4) Plan escape routes for everyone and make them known.
 - (5) Post a lookout when there is possible danger.
 - (6) Be alert, keep calm, think clearly, and act decisively.
 - (7) Maintain good communications at all times.
 - (8) Give clear instructions and be sure they are understood.
 - (9) Maintain control of your personnel at all times.
 - (10) Fight the fire aggressively, but provide for safety first.

- (11) On grass fires, fight the fire from the burned area whenever possible.
- (12) Guard against getting your apparatus stuck in soft terrain. As a general rule, structural engines should not leave the roadway.