Section: 4.5   **High Call Volume Emergency Dispatching**

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SCOPE

This guideline applies to all South Metro Fire Department personnel. This guideline is used in coordination with Dakota Communications Center (DCC) dispatchers.

PURPOSE

This guideline describes the process for dispatching of calls from one of the fire stations during the times of extremely high call volume (severe storm events).

PROCEDURE

When the 911 dispatch center becomes overloaded with calls for fire department responses, the logging, prioritizing and dispatching of fire responses should be taken over by fire department personnel. The following procedure should be used:

1. When the number of calls being received begins to exceed the number which can be reasonably handled by the on-duty crews, the Captain or Acting Captain on-duty shall initiate the fire department dispatching procedure.

2. Ask the DCC to do a full callback of off-duty personnel. Off-duty personnel should report to their fire stations and wait for assignment. When it is apparent that multiple responses will be required, callback personnel should be divided to staff as many units as needed for the duration of the emergency conditions.

3. Chief officers will report to Fire Station #1 where they will establish fire department dispatching. This will preferably be done in the Duty Crew Room where there is access to telephone, radio and computer resources.

4. Chief officers will fill the positions of Call Taker and Dispatcher (Storm Command). If no Chief officers are available, the ranking callback personnel shall assume these roles.

    •   The Call Taker is responsible for receiving and recording call information from the DCC. When possible an open phone line with the DCC should be maintained. Call information should be recorded on the incident log. The DCC will not be maintaining a recorded of units and times for each call. This must be done by fire department personnel.

    •   The Dispatcher is responsible for prioritizing and dispatching appropriate department resources. Dispatching of department resources should be done on the talkgroup SM OPS 2.

5. Fire department units will report their arrival, size-up, status changes, etc., to the Storm Command on SM OPS 2 as they normally would on FIRE MAIN. The department dispatcher will record information as appropriate on the Incident Log.

6. This mode of operation will continue until all incidents are appropriately handled and call volume has subsided. When Command feels that levels will remain at normal levels, this procedure call be terminated and callback personnel can be released.

In the event of a major emergency, one of the Storm Command positions may be released to assume the role of incident Commander at the specific emergency.