

**DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA  
FIRE AND EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT**

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**BULLETIN NO. 60**

**AUGUST 2006 (Revised)**

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Bulletin No. 60 revises and replaces Old Bulletin No. 64 issued March 1996.

**COLD WEATHER GUIDELINES**

The following guidelines will go into effect whenever the temperature or wind chill factor reaches 32 degrees or lower. Compliance and enforcement of these guidelines will be the responsibility of the respective Battalion Fire Chief, company officer or supervisor.

**Section 1. Apparatus**

When on the scene of an emergency that does not require the use of the pumps or power take off (PTO), engage the pumps or PTO, this will allow water or hydraulic fluid to circulate and help to prevent freezing.

1. You should be able to open the tank fill valve on most pumping apparatus. This will allow water to circulate from the tank to the pump.
2. Carry snow melt or sand on the apparatus.
3. Technicians should operate intakes and discharges frequently during the tour of duty, paying particular attention to the front and rear intake valves, to ensure proper operation.
4. Use tap water while in quarters to thaw out frozen gates (intake valves, discharge etc.).
6. Keep all apparatus, including reserve, inside.
7. Bleed air tanks at 0700 hours and 1900 hours daily, more frequently if moisture is a problem.

**Section 2. Personnel**

1. Have extra sets of clothing in your locker. Recommended.
2. Skull, stocking cap or ski mask may be worn, plain solid black or dark blue with no markings at all.
3. Sweat shirts (plain black or dark blue) are recommended only as a change of clothing, not to be worn to assume duty. When and if other garments dry, members shall change back to uniform clothing.

4. Utilize second set of PPE gear when first set is wet.
5. Company officers shall review, with their units, the hypothermia section of the Emergency Care and Transportation of the Sick and Injured Manual.

#### **Section 4. Civilians and Pets**

1. Maintain extra blankets (auto accidents, building evacuations, etc.).
2. Notify Emergency Management Agency 202-727-6161 and request the “Mass Casualty Van”.
3. Look for signs of hypothermia.

#### **Section 5. Exposure Rehabilitation**

1. Supervisory personnel are expected to make good judgments whenever their personnel and/or apparatus have been exposed to extremely cold weather. Responsible members shall coordinate with their superiors the placing out of service of their unit.
2. Units must be placed out of service with the approval of the battalion fire chief or EMS supervisor concerned and be placed back in service via the same authority.
3. All members should know and be alert for signs of hypothermia.
4. Should an incident arise within the Department requiring additional units (Mass Casualty Incident, etc.), the Office of Unified Communications will contact the Battalion Fire Chief or supervisor of the unit(s) out of service for cold exposure rehabilitation and have the unit(s) placed back in service as soon as possible.
5. The Incident Commander should request the Rehab Unit through the Office of Unified Communications for incidents of extended durations.