

Stephenson County Fire Chief's Association Inc.

MABAS Division 17



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Incident Photography Policy

1.0 PURPOSE

This directive outlines the taking, obtaining and usage of photographs related to Emergency Fire/Rescue scenes within the Division.

2.0 SCOPE

With the proliferation of digital cameras, camera phones and the use of the internet, taking, posting and sharing of Emergency Scene photographs has become an issue within the Fire Service. While we are not able to regulate photos taken from outside the perimeter of a scene, we do have the responsibility to regulate what happens within our scenes. While it is not our intent to suppress the public's right to know, we do want to be able to show the positive side of our Emergency Response.

3.0 DIRECTION

All emergency personnel responding to a scene are expected to participate in the treatment of victims and mitigation of hazards that are present unless specifically directed by the Incident Command. Emergency personnel may be allowed to take photos during their personal down if appropriate.

If a person responds to a scene on their own, with the intent of taking photos within the perimeter of the Emergency scene, that person must identify themselves and request permission from the Incident Command prior to taking any photos. That person must abide by all rules and requirements or restrictions stated or implied by the IC, not in conflict with this policy. Persons must wear the proper Personal Protective Equipment for the environment that they are/may be exposed to.

These photos taken at an emergency scene are considered the personal property of the photographer as long as they are never published. It is recommended that a copy of the photos, if requested, be provided to the responding agencies for the purpose of documentation and training. Any other use (publication in print or on internet) must be agreed upon between the photographer and Incident Commander.

4.0 PHOTO DETAILS

The details of any photos taken at a scene are intended to document the incident scene and the activities of the Emergency Personnel. Photographers must follow common sense guidelines regarding patient confidentiality. To do that, names, faces, license plates and photos of actual victim are not to be shown when possible.

5.0 ADOPTION

This directive was adopted by MABAS Division #17, and accepted as a policy at its regular meeting on November 3, 2010.