

## SEVERE THUNDERSTORM OPERATIONS

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**Purpose:** *Severe thunderstorms can result in numerous calls for service, stretching fire department resources to their full limits and occasionally beyond. This procedure is intended to result in as efficient as practical operations as possible during such events.*

**Procedure:**

1. The Jefferson County Severe Weather Radio Procedures are adopted by reference as part of this document.
2. The duty officer, any chief officer of the station one supervisor on duty has the authority to implement the department's Severe Thunderstorm Operations procedure. It is advisable to do so after receiving the first call for service relating to a Severe Thunderstorm that has resulted in a Severe Thunderstorm Warning to be issued for Jefferson County. The procedure shall remain in effect until terminated by the duty officer or other chief officer.
3. The station one radio room shall be staffed by at least one person and preferably two persons.
4. All radio communications should be done on Okolona channel 8. The MetroSafe radio room is tremendously busy during such events and only the most essential information should be communicated to them on fire channels.
5. All radio communications shall be as brief as possible.
6. Those persons assigned fire department command cars are requested to be available for response when needed, should the persons be in the fire district area.
7. Command cars available for response should contact Station 1 Radio to report their availability for response.
8. Station 1 Radio will assign which units to respond to which calls for service. Units should not self-initiate response rather they should wait until instructed to do so. This procedure is applicable to any and all calls for service the occur during severe weather, including fire and EMS calls.
9. Whenever possible, station service vehicles should be the first units to respond to calls of wires down, so as to keep fire apparatus available for other incidents of greater magnitude.
10. The first responding unit to a call for service during Severe Thunderstorm shall track their own times by noting their responding time, on scene time and time the scene was cleared. Station 1 Radio will not be tracking responding units time due to the workload at Station 1 radio. Units shall notify Station 1 Radio when they begin response, arrive on scene and clear the scene. Station 1 Radio will whenever possible state the time to assist the unit in noting their times. The person in charge of the first arriving unit at each incident will be responsible for completing the incident report for that incident. *Station 1 Radio will not be entering incident reports for calls related to severe weather.*

*Standard Operating Procedures are meant only to be guidelines. Actual conditions may warrant alternative actions.*

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11. Upon arrival and evaluating the situation, the first unit at the scene of a storm related incident shall BRIEFLY inform Station 1 Radio of the conditions, and whether the unit can handle the matter or if additional resources are required. Brevity is the key, the majority of situations can be reported using the following phrases:
  - “Unit 80xx can handle”
  - “Send x more unit(s) to assist”
  - “There is a power wire down, notify LG&E to respond”
  - “The wires are blocking the road”
  - “The report is unfounded”
  - “There is no need for the fire department”
12. Any need to report a situation to Louisville Gas and Electric shall be done through Station 1 Radio.
13. If a member on the scene of wires down feels that cordoning off the area of the wire down with fire line tape is an option, the member shall request a command car to respond to the scene to evaluate the situation and approve this action. (It should be noted that in everyone’s homes there are energized electrical cords that present the same degree of danger and we do not find it necessary to monitor these situations. The placement of fire line tape probably exceeds the level of protection from energized power wires that is presented in one’s home). It should further be noted, however that wires falling on metal fences or other similar situations may necessitate department standby until relieved by LG&E personnel or representatives.
14. Should it be necessary for members to remain at the scene of wires down for times greater than two hours initially, Station 1 Radio should take reasonable steps to assign relief personnel. If Station 1 Radio has stood down, then this shall be the station 1 supervisor’s responsibility.
15. There is a computer in the radio room having access to e-mail, which is an option for communication purposes. The e-mail address is [radio@okolonafire.org](mailto:radio@okolonafire.org). The password is the same for the electronic bulletin board and will also be noted near the computer.