

## SEVERE WEATHER RADIO OPERATIONS

**Page Number:** **Effective Date:** **Reviewed with changes**

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04/08/2021

04/08/2021

**Supersedes Editions:**

05/08/2013; 01/01/2012; 04/01/2011; 04/01/2007

**Category:**

Operational

**Purpose:** *Severe Weather 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. For communication procedures, the Jefferson County Severe Weather Radio Procedures are incorporated by reference as if fully set forth herein.
2. Severe Weather WARNINGS shall be transmitted by MetroSafe as soon as practical by initiating the All-Firefighter Tone which shall state the Severe Weather Warning. If a Severe Thunderstorm Warning escalates into a Tornado Warning, MetroSafe shall broadcast alert tone #3 (weather tone) across all fire channels simultaneously.
3. The Shift Chief or Captain has the authority to implement OFPD's Severe Weather Operations procedure which shall remain in effect until terminated.
4. The Shift Chief or Captain has the discretion to assign any OFPD member to the Station 1 radio room for communication purposes.
5. MetroSafe shall use the Unit Dispatch model based on call priority. If OFPD staffs additional companies, MetroSafe shall be informed of their status. Fire 5, the primary operations channel, shall be used to report a unit's change in status unless directed by MetroSafe to another operations channel.
6. All routine/administrative radio communications shall be done on FD TAC 80. Radio communications on high priority runs shall remain on their assigned fire channel until such time that the incident is under control and then communications shall be moved to FD TAC 80.
7. All radio communications shall be brief.
8. OFPD command cars shall be on call at all times.
9. Upon arrival and evaluating the situation, the first on-scene unit at a storm related incident shall BRIEFLY inform MetroSafe of the conditions, whether the unit can handle the matter or if additional resources are required. The majority of situations can be reported using the following phrases:

*"Unit 80xx can handle"*

*"Power wire down, notify LG&E"*

*"Wires are blocking the road"*

*"Report is unfounded"*

*"No need for fire department"*

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

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Last printed 4/9/2021 11:17:00 AM

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10. Any need to report a situation to Louisville Gas and Electric or Public Works shall be made to MetroSafe on MUTUAL AID 1. The unit should inform Station 1 Radio they will be switching channels. An example of a communication on MUTUAL AID 1 is as follows:

“Car 8009 to Radio on MUTUAL AID 1”

“Radio: Go ahead Car 8009”

“Advise Louisville Gas & Electric of wires down at this location and we will be standing by”

Or

“Notify Public Works we have a tree down across the roadway at \_\_\_\_\_”

LG&E shall be notified by Emergency Services utilizing the definitions set forth by Louisville Gas & Electric:

- Level 1: Loss of life or property (house fire, vehicle accident or imminent danger of loss of life or property (wires down)
- Level 2: Is a non-life-threatening situation where an emergency management agency is on site needing LG&E's assistance and will stand by for LG&E arrival.
- Level 3: Damage to LG&E property (pole struck or down) but no emergency management agency is on site or is clearing.

When units clear they shall return to the assigned operations channel.

11. If EMA activates EOC, the fire service representative at EOC shall monitor MUTUAL AID 1. Communications between a fire unit and EOC shall be done on MUTUAL AID 1
12. Whenever Urban and Suburban fire districts are dispatched to the same, or potentially the same incident, MetroSafe shall inform units that Urban/Suburban will also be responding during dispatch. Urban/ Suburban companies responding to the same, or potentially the same incident shall remain on their primary channels during the response, typically Fire 1 for Urban fire and Fire 5/ Fire 6 for Suburban fire.

After signaling “On Scene” for an incident that is a working structure fire, units/companies shall switch apparatus and portable radios to the assigned operations channel used by the fire district having primary jurisdiction for the incident. The unit/company shall advise MetroSafe of the change while signaling on scene.

An example for Okolona Fire Protection District would be the following: “Engine 8033 on scene, switching to Fire 1”

Or

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An example for the City of Louisville Fire Department coming into Okolona would be the following:  
“Engine 1 on scene, switching to Fire.

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 home, 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 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, as the hazard is not as easily recognized.
14. Should it be necessary for a unit or member to remain at the scene of wires down for times greater than two hours initially, the Shift Chief or Captain shall take reasonable steps to assign relief personnel.
15. MetroSafe will advise when Operation Weather has been terminated. At this point, MetroSafe shall activate the alert tone #3 (weather tone) on all operational channels and state “Attention all departments, Operation Weather has been terminated, normal operations will resume”.

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