



## Ladder Testing

### SCOPE

This guideline shall apply to all members of the Stoney Point Fire Department (SPFD) and shall be adhered to by all members.

### PURPOSE

The purpose of this SOG is to establish guidelines for proper cleaning, inspection, maintenance, and testing of all department ground ladders. This SOG applies to all department ground ladders used for purposes such as; fire fighting, rescue operations, Haz-Mat incidents, training, and maintenance on department grounds. This will ensure all ground ladders are ready for use and/or properly taken out of service.

### REFERENCE

N.F.P.A. 1932 – Standard on Use, Maintenance, and Service Testing of In-Service Fire Department Ground Ladders.

### INSPECTION OF DEPARTMENT GROUND LADDERS

1. All department ground ladders shall be cleaned, visually inspected, and operationally inspected on a monthly basis. These inspections will also be conducted on new ground ladders prior to being placed in-service, after each use, and after a repair is made.
2. Visual and operational inspections should include, but not limited to:
  - a. Heat sensor labels for a color change indicating heat exposure (*Note: if any heat sensor label becomes black, remove the ladder from service at once*).
  - b. Rungs for snugness and tightness.
  - c. Bolts and rivets for tightness.
  - d. Welds for any cracks or apparent defects
  - e. Beams and rungs for cracks, breaks, gouges, wavy conditions or deformation.
  - f. Check for snugness of the halyard/cable when ladder is in the bedded position.
  - g. Assure dog assemblies work properly.
  - h. Assure pulleys turn freely.

Policy Number

**6A.012**

Page 1 of 4



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- i. Check the condition of the ladder guides and for free movement of the fly section.
  - j. Check the halyard/cable for fraying, burns, kinks, uneven wear, or other condition requiring replacement.
  - k. Assure roof hooks rotate and lock in-place properly (if applicable to the ladder).
  - l. Butt spurs and/or rubber boots for excessive wear or damage.
3. A **visual and an operational** inspection shall be conducted on a ladder, which is suspected of being unsafe, it shall be tested in accordance with **NFPA 1932: Standard on Use, Maintenance, and Service Testing of In-Service Fire Department Ground Ladders**. Such ladder shall immediately be taken out-of-service until such inspection has been completed and successfully passes such inspection.
  4. Any signs of failure during a visual and operational inspection shall be deemed grounds to remove the unsafe ladder from service until necessary repairs are made.

#### MAINTENANCE

1. Ladders shall be kept free of moisture and dirt as much as possible.
2. Ladder parts are to be wiped with candle wax/paraffin. Use wax at contact points between rungs, guides and rails, particularly in the fly sections. Add additional wax as needed on the bottom side of lock fingers to allow them to slide easily over the rungs. a. Candle wax/paraffin is the only lubricant to be used on moving parts of a ladder (i.e.: no oil or silicone spray lubricant).
3. For cleaning purposes, use only a mild detergent to wash ladders. It is permissible to use brake cleaner on stubborn, oily and greasy areas. Once the ladder is inspected, cleaned and dried thoroughly, apply wax to all parts of the ladder following instructions for application. On extension ladders, the areas that the guides slide over should be double checked to be sure they are clean.
4. Extension ladders with ropes and/or wire cables that become frayed or kinked shall be removed from service and replaced in accordance with the manufacture's recommendations.
5. All ladders have identification numbers attached. Extension and single ladders will have reflective tape on the top portion of the rails to assist with visibility during the night and/or smoky conditions. If reflective tape is damaged or missing, it shall be replaced immediately.

Policy Number

**6A.012**

Page 2 of 4



6. A permanent record shall be kept on ladder testing and when an inspection is conducted and damage is found.

### **CLEANING**

1. Cleaning of department ladders should be in accordance with the manufacturer's recommendations. Clean should be done using warm soapy water with a soft bristle brush.
2. Materials such as grease, slim, tar, sap, etc. may be cleaned off using safe solvents. Always refer to the manufacturer's recommendations before using harsh cleaning chemicals on department ground ladders.
3. Once the ladder has been washed, rinse the ladder off and wipe it dry.
4. All department ladders shall be cleaned each month during monthly inspections and after each use.

### **C. TESTING**

1. All department ground ladders shall be tested annually. Test procedures must meet *NFPA Standard 1932, Fire Service Ground Ladders* in order to remain in operation. In addition to annual testing, any ladder meeting the following criteria shall be removed from service and tested:  At any time a ladder is suspected of being unsafe. After a ladder has sustained a fall. After the ladder has been subjected to overloading  After the ladder has been subjected to impact loading or unusual conditions of use  After heat exposure.
2. All ladder testing and repair will be conducted under the direction of the designated "Ladder Inspections Officer". The ladders shall be prepared in accordance with Operations Policy "Ground Ladder Inspection and Maintenance" prior to the testing date.
3. All findings exposed during testing and visual & operational inspections shall be documented in the Stoney Point Fire Departments "Ladder Inspection Log Book" for records keeping.

### **REPAIR**

All repairs shall be in accordance with the manufacturer's recommendations and N.F.P.A. Standard 1932. Before any department ladders are repaired, the member must consult these standards.

**Policy Number**  
**6A.012**  
**Page 3 of 4**



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**RESPONSIBILITY**

The full time paid Captain is ultimately responsible for ensuring ladder inspection are conducted. It will be up to this supervisor to appoint a designated "Ladder inspection Officer" to maintain and ensure compliance of ground ladder inspections within this SOG. The designated member shall be a full time employee to ensure that these inspections are executed in accordance with this SOG. A full time member shall be required due to the critical importance of ladder inspections and the requirement of full time staff to work on assigned shifts.

**Policy Number**

**6A.012**

**Page 4 of 4**