



FEDERAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY

INSTRUCTION

Date
June 22, 2000

Number
NETC 6000.3

Procedures for Honoring a Fallen Firefighter

1. Purpose. This instruction continues the policy and procedures for recognizing a fallen firefighter at the National Emergency Training Center (NETC). The policy and procedures in this instruction are limited to lowering flags to half-staff and the preparation of a "Firefighter Death Notice" which will be posted on a stand at the Fallen Firefighter Memorial. The instruction does not apply to recognition at the Annual Fallen Firefighters Memorial or the engraving of a name on the Memorial.
2. Applicability and Scope. The provisions of this instruction are applicable to all Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) employees and contractors assigned to NETC at Emmitsburg, Maryland.
3. Supersession: This instruction supersedes NETC Instruction 6000.3, Procedures for Honoring a Fallen Firefighter, dated May 5, 1999
4. Authority. Federal Fire Prevention and Control Act of 1974, Public Law 93-498.
5. Reference. Organization and Functions, 44 CFR 2.16(a)(2).
6. Policy. Recognition of firefighters who have given their lives while on-duty in the line of duty is an important motivation to increasing the professional development of the fire service and others responsible for fire prevention and control. Upon proper notification, the flags at the National Fallen Firefighter's Memorial located on the grounds of NETC, will be lowered to half-staff for a three day period of time in addition to the partial day when notification was received and acted upon by NETC. Information on the firefighter's death is obtained from State Fire Marshals offices, Fire Chiefs or fire department personnel, and incident reports.
7. Responsibilities.
 - a. The Assistant Administrator, Management Operations and Student Support, U.S. Fire Administration, is responsible for administering procedures to be followed in the event of notification of the death of a firefighter.
 - b. The Security Contract Project Officer, Management Operations and Student Support, is responsible for instructing responsible personnel in handling the notification of death of firefighters received during non-business hours and in properly displaying the flags at the Memorial at half-staff.
 - c. The National Fire Data Center (NFDC) designee for firefighter fatalities from the Fire Management and Technical Programs Division, is responsible for verifying the information obtained under 8.a. below.

8. Procedures.

a. Notification of a firefighter death is normally received via incoming telephone call which is forwarded to NFDC. If initial notification is received by someone outside the NFDC, the call should be referred to that office during duty hours. Notification during non-duty hours will be received by the security desk officer. The officer receiving the call shall request the following:

- (1) Name of deceased firefighter(s).
- (2) Individual's status, i.e., volunteer or career firefighter.
- (3) His/her age.
- (4) Date of death.
- (5) Add Date of Incident.
- (6) Add Approximate Time of Incident.
- (7) Date of funeral, if known.
- (8) Fire Department, Chief's name and telephone number.
- (9) Fire Department Address.
- (10) Add "Preliminary Determination of the" Cause of death.
- (11) Caller's name, position and telephone number.

(12) The caller must be given the following statement verbatim, "You may or may not be aware of the Public Safety Officers' Benefits Program. Survivors of a deceased firefighter should file a claim for benefits with: Public Safety Officers' Benefits Program, U.S. Justice Department, 633 Indiana Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20531, or telephone the benefits program office at (202) 307-0635 as soon as possible. Information on the Public Safety Officers' Benefits Program may also be obtained via the World Wide Web at the following address: <http://www.usfa.fema.gov/ffmem/psob.htm>."

b. During non-duty hours the Security Officer secures the information required, records it, prepares an e-mail with the recorded information and addresses it per the listing found in the Officers' Handbook of Instructions. The hard copy record will be sent to the NFDC's designee, who will verify the information obtained in 8.a. above as soon as practicable on the next workday.

c. In the event of a major catastrophe or multiple firefighter deaths that have been witnessed on a major news network, the Security Officer will contact the Security Contract Project Officer to secure approval to immediately lower the flags at the Memorial to half-staff until 4:00 p.m. on the day of the funeral, or if the date is unknown, for four days after the date of death. In the absence of the Security Contract Project Officer, approval may be secured from the Assistant Administrator, Management and Operations, or his designee.

d. After verification of information, the NFDC will confirm the information with the Site Administration Branch.

e. If the notification is received by any other office at NETC during non-duty hours, the call will be immediately transferred to Security at extension 1111. No further action is necessary.

f. The Office of the Assistant Administrator, NETC Management and Operations, will ensure the preparation of a "Firefighter Death Notice." The Notice will be placed on the "stand" at the Fallen Firefighter's Memorial. The Educational and Academic Support Branch will be contacted to determine if the firefighter attended class at the National Fire Academy.

g. When removed from the "stand," the "Firefighters Death Certificate" shall be delivered immediately to the NFDC's designee.

Ronald P. Face, Jr.
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U.S. Fire Administration