Firefighter Safety Vocabulary Teacher’s Guide

Incident Command (IC): Has ultimate responsibility for the overall safety of every operation.

Safety Officer: Is responsible for evaluating hazards and recommending appropriate safety measures.

Incidence Command System (ICS): Used in Command and Control of emergency incidents to ensure safe operations.

Freelancing: Acting independently of orders or SOPs or SOGs. It is extremely dangerous and has no place on the fire ground.

Employee Assistance Programs (EAP): Provide help with a wide range of problems. It can be used with complete confidentiality and without fear of retribution.

The Buddy System: Never work alone; If one Team member needs to leave the structure, the entire team must leave; Maintain visual, vocal, or physical contact with each other at all times.

Personnel Accountability System: Provides an up-to-date accounting of everyone at the incident and how they are organized. Systems may vary depending on department.

Rehabilitations: Personnel should not return to duty until they are rested and refreshed. Any Firefighter exhibiting signs and symptoms of heat exhaustion, chest pain, or discomfort should stop and seek medical attention immediately.

Critical Incident Stress Debriefing (CSID): Provides and forum for personnel to discuss anxieties, stress, and emotions triggered by difficult calls. Most departments have CSID staff available 24 hours a day.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE): It is an essential component of a firefighter’s safety system. It must provide full body coverage and protection from a variety of hazards.

Personal Alert Safety System (PASS): It is an electronic device that sounds an audible signal if a firefighter is motionless for a set time period or if activated by the firefighter.

SCBA: Either open or closed circuit. Open circuit is most common and is a tank of compressed air; the exhaled air is released into the atmosphere. A closed circuit has air pass through a mechanism that removes carbon dioxide and adds oxygen within a closed system; It is seldom used for structural firefighting.