

POLSON FIRE DEPARTMENT

Operating Guidelines

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January 23, 2012

360.00 Helmet/Video Camera Use

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Helmet/Video Camera Policy

360.00 --PURPOSE: The purpose of this policy is to provide for procedures for establishing the collection of video images during training and incident responses for the specific and limited purpose of enhancing fire fighter training and safety.

360.01--Scope: This policy shall apply to all personnel involved in the fire department operations occurring on any training or incident, including but not limited to fires, medical emergencies, crashes, or any other call for service for the fire department.

360.02--Terminology: The following terms shall be used during incident operations, post-incident analysis, and training activities related to using video cameras.

1. Video: Media suitable for playback after the incident or training. This also includes still photography or still frames captured from a video camera.
2. Video File: An electronic container for video streams or information.
3. Editing: Modification of the video.

Procedure:

- A. This policy shall apply to all responses for the fire department either from call to service or training.
- B. All video collected while conducting fire department operations is the sole and exclusive property of the Polson Fire Department.
- C. Video will be collected while conducting fire department operations in compliance with department policies and with in the guidelines of Montana Law.

- D.** Video may be edited for content as it relates to the video's value as a training tool. Video may only be edited after a check with administration has been done.
- E.** Video deemed of little or no training value will be deleted after 60 days provided that neither item **I** or **J** do not apply.
- F.** Any video taken on scene is reviewable by the fire department administration and can be sequestered if necessary upon request.
- G.** Video is not to be distributed or shared in anyway without prior administration approval.
- H.** Gathering video shall not interfere with the performance of fire ground duties. Gathering video is a **very** low priority task. If the camera becomes a distraction, stop usage immediately.
- I.** In any case where, upon administration review, it appears that the video depicts evidence of a crime, or evidence of potential value in a personal injury action, the department will catalog and preserve the video file for a period of three (3) years. For this purpose, the video of any extrication will qualify along with any other call for service.
- J.** If administration receives a request from any source to maintain any video from an incident response, the video shall be immediately placed into a durable storage device and cataloged and preserved. There will be a notation on the incident run sheet that of the request and where it is stored. The request will be given in writing at time of request and attached to incident run sheet. No Exceptions.

General Usage:

- 1.** Turn the camera on en route to the incident or training. Then forget about it. Do your job.
- 2.** If a member of the public expresses concern about the camera usage, stop usage immediately. This is an example of the camera becoming a distraction for the fire fighter and may interfere with the fire fighter's ability to perform fire ground tasks.
- 3.** Remember that video gathered may become evidence in a criminal or civil court of law.
- 4.** Upon return from an incident where video footage has been obtained, the footage is to be given to the Chief to be recorded onto a DVD and placed with the incident run sheet so that there will be a original copy on file. The DVD will be labeled as original. The video footage on the camera is to be deleted immediately upon the

successful copying onto the DVD. This is to be done before the next run or as soon as possible.

5. Failure to do this will be considered a minor violation as far as disciplinary polices are concerned.
6. THE SOLE PURPOSE OF THE VIDEO IS FOR ENHANCING FIRE FIGHTER TRAINING AND SAFETY.