

DALTON FIRE DEPARTMENT

Standard Operating Guideline

S.O.G.: FO- 15

Effective: 04-01-2017

Revised: 03-27-2018

Reviewed: 03-22-2022

Fire Chief Signature

DATE

Policy: Fire Investigations

Scope: All Personnel

Reference: NFPA 921, 1021, 1033

Procedure:

Investigation

- Investigate all fires to determine their origin and cause
- Call out a certified department fire investigator as necessary if one is not on scene
 - The incident commander will notify the on call investigator as soon as possible.
- Delay non-essential overhaul, salvage, and other incident operations that may damage evidence at the fire scene until cleared by the fire investigator
- Maintain custody of the fire scene until the fire scene investigation is complete
- Document the fire investigation in the incident report
- Use the most current edition of the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) 921 Guide for Fire and Explosion Investigations as a reference during fire investigation, National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) 1021, National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) 1033 Standard for Professional Qualifications for Fire Investigator
- Only investigators should communicate cause and origin with owners/occupants
- Press release should be completed as soon as possible by the officer in charge or investigator and forwarded to PIO list

Certified Fire Investigators

- Fire investigations shall be conducted by a certified department fire investigator with the following exceptions:
 - Minor fires where a clear accidental cause can be determined and no serious injuries or deaths occurred as a result of the fire
Example: Cooking fire contained to stove

- Minor trash or outside fires with no witnesses or suspects (unless signs of intentional, deliberate, or malicious setting) and no injuries or deaths occurred as a result of the fire
- Vehicle fires when the owner does not have insurance and no serious injuries or deaths occurred as a result of the fire

Investigators Procedures

- Shall conduct themselves in a professional manner
- Shall report to Incident Commander to gather any information that has already been determined
- Obtain consent form from owner/occupant
- Begin the proper fire investigation form and scene investigation
- Collect and secure evidence with chain of command form
- Determine the need for outside agency assistance

Outside Agency Assistance

- Dalton Police Department may be requested for assistance in the following situations:
 - Fire involving fatalities
 - Suspected incendiary fires
- Georgia State Fire Marshal's office may be requested/notified for assistance in the following situations:
 - Fires involving fatalities
 - Suspected incendiary fires
 - Fires with large dollar loss
- Building Inspector's office shall be notified of all structure fires

Enforcement

- Enforcement of this standard operating guideline is the responsibility of the department's officers.