



HELICOPTER LANDING ZONE OPERATIONS

SCOPE

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

PURPOSE

To establish the procedures by which helicopter landing zones shall be established and operated by Stoney Point Fire Department.

DEFINITIONS

Guideline - a general rule, principle, outline of a policy

Helicopter Landing Zone – (HLZ or LZ) designated and established area for the safe landing of helicopters

Member – any career, volunteer, staff, and auxiliary personnel affiliated with the department

Shall - indicates a mandatory requirement

GUIDELINES

During the course of routine emergency medical rescue responses, incidents requiring rapid transport of a patient may become necessary. It is important for Stoney Point Fire Department members to understand the procedures for the establishment and operation of a helicopter landing zone to support these incidents.

Helicopter Medical Evacuation

Medical evacuation by helicopter is available for patients requiring rapid transportation to a hospital or specialized trauma center where ground transportation would be lengthy. These patients include, but are not limited to:

- Trauma patients requiring urgent surgery
- Patients requiring specialized treatment (burns, pediatric, pregnant, or neurological)
- Patients with extended extrication times

The Incident Commander may request that MEDEVAC is placed on standby, however, only a Cumberland County Emergency Medical Services Supervisor or Paramedic shall give take off instructions to the Helicopter Medical Evacuation crew.

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Establishing the Helicopter Landing Zone

The Incident Commander shall designate a location for a helicopter landing zone near the incident scene that provides access for both the helicopter and ground vehicles. An Engine (first out at Station 13 is assigned a Helicopter Landing Zone Kit) to establish the helicopter landing zone. The Engine shall move to the designated location and survey the area.

- Avoid dusty areas if possible
- Crew shall ensure the open area is at least 100 feet by 100 feet
- Crew shall ensure there are no hazards to the helicopter
 - powerlines
 - trees
 - stumps
 - ditches
 - excessive slope
 - other hazards
- Crew shall mark the corners of the Helicopter Landing Zone with cones for daylight and non-flashing lights for limited visibility operations
- Crew shall position Engine to shine headlights across the landing zone
- Crew shall extend and charge a hose line for emergency use
- Company Officer or senior Firefighter shall assume role as Landing Zone Control
 - monitor LZ East channel on portable radio
 - give helicopter crew a description of landing zone conditions and potential hazards (trees, powerlines, light poles etc. near the landing zone or approach) via radio
 - communicate with helicopter crew and Incident Commander
- Prepare for transfer of patient from Cumberland County Emergency Medical Services to MEDEVAC crew
- Be prepared to use Hand and Arm Signals in the event that communications are interrupted or not possible due to incompatibility (North Carolina National Guard helicopters, or other MEDEVAC assets without compatible radio communications)

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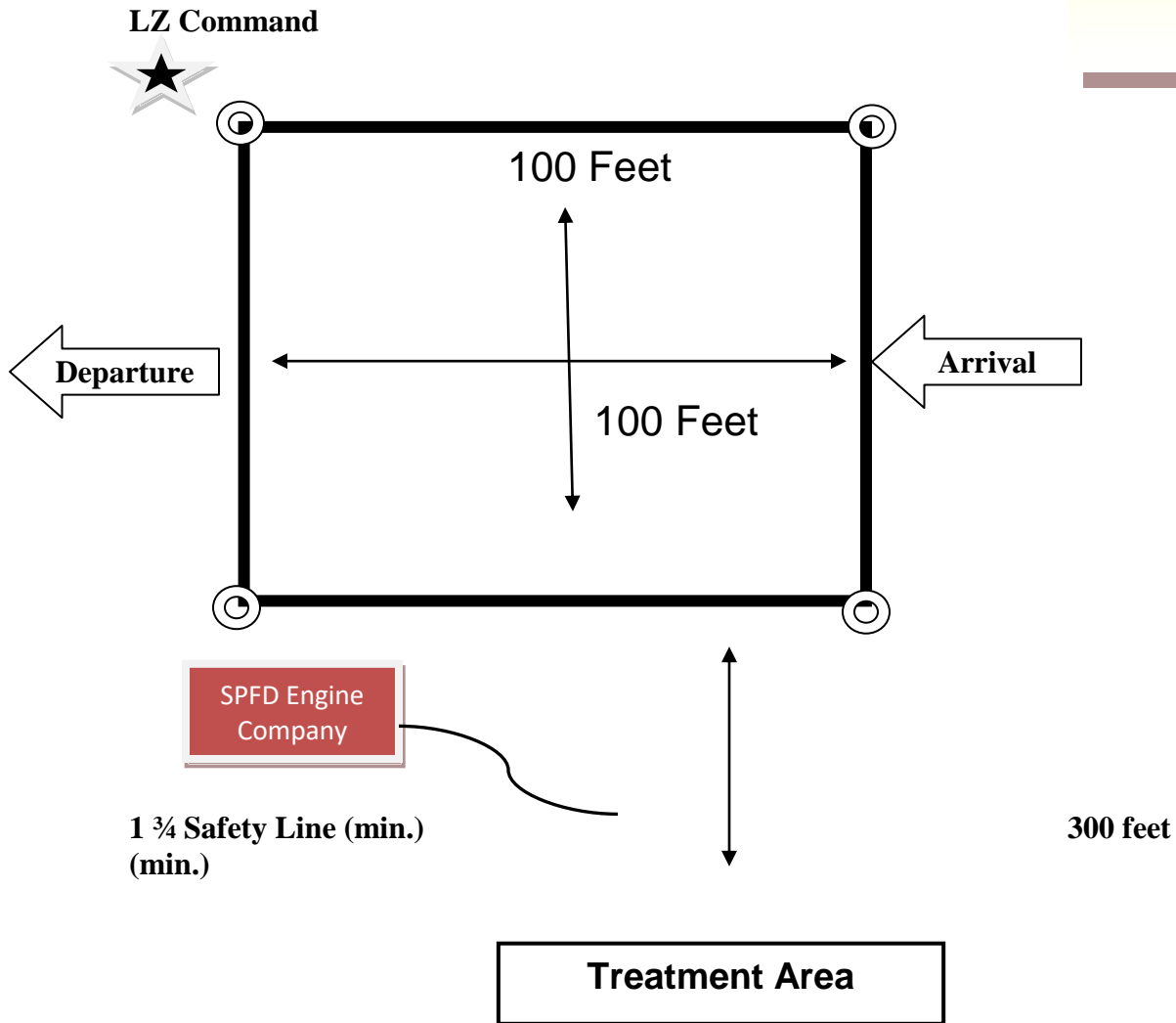


Helicopter Landing Zone Selection

- Concrete
- Asphalt
- Grass
- Compacted dirt, moistened to prevent flying dust

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SPFD
Apparatus





Approved Hand and Arm Signals

**MOVE
RIGHT**



Left arm extended horizontally; right arm sweeps upward to position over head.

**HOLD-
HOVER**



The signal "Hold" is executed by placing arms over head with clenched fists.

**MOVE
LEFT**



Right arm extended horizontally; left arm sweeps upward to position over head.

TAKEOFF



Right hand behind back; left hand pointing up.

**MOVE
FORWARD**



Combination of arm and hand movement in a collecting motion pulling toward body.

LAND



Arms crossed in front of body and pointing downward.

**MOVE
REARWARD**



Hand above arm, palms out using a noticeable shoving motion.

**MOVE
UPWARD**



Arms extended, palms up; arms sweeping up.

**RELEASE
SLING LOAD**



Left arm held down away from body
Right arm cuts across left arm in a slashing movement from above.

**MOVE
DOWNWARD**



Arms extended, palms down; arms sweeping down.

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Safety Considerations for Operating with Helicopters

Be prepared for the following potential safety issues whenever assigned to establish or work on a Helicopter Landing Zone:

- Wait for the crew to direct any approach toward the helicopter
 - wait for the helicopter to land before approaching
 - establish eye contact with the pilot before approaching
 - wait for crew to direct any movement towards helicopter
 - only approach the helicopter from the front or sides
 - approach in a crouch
 - stay away from the tail rotor
- Landing Zone crew shall appropriate personal protective equipment
 - wear helmets with chinstrap secured
 - eye protection, or helmet face shield
 - turn out pants and boots
 - turn out coat as needed
 - gloves as needed
- Secure all loose items to prevent them flying into the rotor blades

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References

29 CFR 1926.551

Helicopter landing zone selection (National Wildfire Coordinating Group)

Helicopter landing zones: Setup & safety (Firehouse)

Landing a helicopter: What firefighters need to know to help (FireRescue1)