



Virginia Task Force 2

Urban Search and Rescue

Administrative Manual

4.03 Site Safety Plan
March 2019

US&R Site Safety Plan

ISSUE STATEMENT

To establish a guide to safe operations for team members and outside agencies training at the VA-TF 2 US&R site.

REQUIRED ACTIONS

General Safety Concerns

- At all times the students shall be responsible for their own personal safety. This responsibility includes the utilization of appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) for their particular environment and activity. Only American National Standards Institute (ANSI) approved PPE shall be permitted or utilized on the US&R site.
- Each squad shall designate a Safety Officer who will oversee each squad member's safety during the various evolutions. The squad Safety Officers shall have authority to **STOP** operations for their squad should a serious safety hazard exist. In the event the squad Safety Officer should **STOP** the operation, they shall immediately contact and inform the squad leader, the component staff member (s) and the site Safety Officer.
- In the event the student observes what they perceive as a safety concern, they shall immediately report their safety concern to their squad safety officer, leader and staff member. Should the safety complaint have validity and cannot be immediately corrected, the person in charge shall shout **STOP!** and the operation shall cease immediately, the students and staff members evacuated and the operation shall not proceed until the hazard has been corrected. In the event the hazard cannot be corrected, the area of concern shall immediately be cordoned off with fire line tape and, as soon as possible, inform the site Safety Officer. In the event of an actual emergency, the staff members will assume the role of command until the situation has been mitigated.
- At no time shall a student be permitted to begin an activity without authorization from staff members. Before beginning any activity, the students shall clearly explain to the staff member(s) their intentions before changing, removing or compromising any structural integrity that could jeopardize their own or their teammates' safety. Clear and concise communication shall be maintained between the students, staff and any parties involved with that particular operation.
- Due to the potential of slip, trip, fall, pinching, crushing and impalement hazards that are prevalent on the site, students should be aware of their surroundings at all times.
- Horseplay of any nature will not be tolerated.
- Use of tobacco products are not permitted on the US&R site. Only in designated areas is tobacco products permitted. Please see staff personnel for designated tobacco areas.



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- **All** injuries shall be reported to the Lead Instructor or Supervisor immediately. All documentation shall comply with Administrative Directive 4.01.
- **Only** certified and approved (by the staff Safety Officers) operators shall operate the on site heavy equipment.
- Visitors shall be required to adhere to all safety requirements listed.
- In the event a student consistently displays unsafe acts or behavior that could jeopardize their own or fellow teammates' safety, they shall be immediately removed from that particular operation and may be disallowed from any further activity.
- Hydration is strongly encouraged for the students. If at any time a student feels they are dehydrated, they should inform their squad leader and the student should be immediately placed in rehab and intake of fluids induced.
- Due to the students constantly entering and exiting the many component structures, students should be encouraged to utilize the Indoor/Outdoor (IO) mirror safety glasses. The Indoor/Outdoor safety glasses are great all-around safety eye protection, which is versatile for inside and outside activities. At no time are students permitted to wear dark shaded safety glasses for night operations.
- The following emergency alerting system shall be used on the US&R site:
 - Evacuate – **Three Short Blasts (1 second each)**
 - Cease Operations – **1 Long Blast (3 seconds duration)**
 - Resume Operations – **One Long & One Short Blast**

Site Specific Safety Concerns

Raking & Shoring: Hazards Associated: Slip, trip, fall & pinching

- When on the Raking & Shoring site, students shall utilize: helmet system, eye, hand, ear protection and steel-toe boots. During staff member lectures or end-of- the-day clean-up, students may remove appropriate safety apparel but only by direction or approval by staff members.
- Appropriate hearing protection shall be utilized. Due to the high impact noise from hammering inside the Smoke House, students shall utilize hearing protection whenever they are engaged in any high impact noise activity inside the Smoke House, operating circular saws or when directed by staff members.
- Properly fitted hand protection is strongly encouraged for the student's protection. Should a particular glove impede or hinder a student while performing their activity, only at the discretion of the staff member, may a student remove their gloves and continue their activity. Often times, student's wear a glove that is not properly fitting and this impedes, hinders and often times creates a more hazardous environment for the student.
- When operating the chain saws, students shall utilize: chaps, helmet system with hearing and face shield protection, eye, hand and foot protection.



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Lifting & Moving: Hazards Associated: Crushing, over exertion, pinching, caught-between, slip, trip & fall

- When on the Lifting & Moving site, students shall utilize: helmet system, eye, hand, and steel-toe boots. During staff member lectures or end-of-the-day clean-up, students may remove appropriate safety apparel but only by direction or approval by staff members. During the Lifting & Moving activities on the “O” Course, should a student perspire profusely and the perspiration should impede the student’s visibility, only by direction of staff member may a student remove and continue their activity without utilizing their eye protection.
- Clear and concise communication is critical in this component. With the exception of staff members, only the squad leader or their designee shall give commands to their squad members during heavy activities of hauling, lifting or moving. In the event of unauthorized squad/division members giving commands and adding confusion to the activity, staff members shall immediately order “**STOP!**” remove the students from the “O” Course or Air Bag Region and debrief the students involved. Due to the high severity or consequence of injury in this component, improper, lack of communication or confusion shall not be tolerated.
- During hauling operations, students shall be aware of their surroundings at all times. During these operations, thousands of pounds of concrete are being utilized and students must be totally aware of the crushing, pinching and caught-between possibility.
- During hauling operations, at no time shall students place their fingers or any part of their body in a position to be pinched/crushed with the metal roll-bars, wedges, etc. and the concrete weight being moved/transported.
- Before any activity of moving, lifting or transporting collapse trainer, students shall clearly explain to staff members their intentions before beginning their operation. During lifting operations, at no time shall students place themselves or any part of their body under the weight being moved, lifted or transported. Students shall utilize proper hand signals for crane operations and shall cease operations should any type of confusion occur. During actual lifting operations, only one student shall give proper hand signals while the rest of their squad members shall remain at a safe distance that has been determined by the staff member.

Breaching & Breaking: Hazards Associated: Crushing, pinching, over exertion, burns, slip, trip & fall

- When on the Breaching & Breaking site, students shall utilize: helmet system, eye, hand, knee, elbow, respiratory protection and steel-toe boots. During staff member lectures or end-of-the-day clean-up, students may remove appropriate safety apparel but only by direction or approval by staff members.
- Concrete slabs shall be considered UNREINFORCED.
- Before breaching & breaking, students shall inform staff members of their intentions before beginning operations. Upon approval from staff, only then may students begin their operation. At no time shall students be permitted to breach or break any structure without prior approval from a staff member.



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- During breaching and breaking operations of concrete substances, utilization of respiratory protection shall be maintained. Due to the fact that concrete dust creates respiratory complications of the sinus and produces flu like symptoms, students must adhere to this policy without exceptions.
- Before entering any confined spaces, (Double-T's, House of Pain, etc.) students and staff shall first take air monitor readings. Should any hazardous (low oxygen, hydrogen sulfide, explosive, etc.) reading occur, students and staff shall not enter the confined space until the atmospheric hazard has been corrected.
- During cutting & burning operations, students and staff shall utilize the safety apparel listed above and in addition to: leather jackets or aprons, eye cutting lenses or full face welders shield w/ lenses, welding gloves, Nomex hood and if appropriate, respirator. Also, during any cutting or burning operation, a fully charged **water** extinguisher shall be readily available. Sulfur based extinguishers shall not be permitted for usage on the US&R site.
- Intentionally dropping, throwing or mishandling of pneumatic/hydraulic tools will not be tolerated! Many pneumatic/hydraulic tools are under extreme pressures and students who do not respect these pressures can cause serious harm to themselves and their teammates. Any student who handles pneumatic/hydraulic tools in a reckless manner shall immediately be removed from the Breaching & Breaking site and may be disallowed from any further activity.
- Extreme caution shall be used when students are utilizing sledge/mal hammers near other students/teammates in order to avoid accidental contact.
- During chipping of concrete operations, students shall attempt to minimize flying concrete debris whenever possible. Flying concrete debris creates medical difficulties of the eyes and respiratory glands and can cause crushing and pinching injuries. Students shall use extreme caution when breaching & breaking concrete.
- Before and during overhead breaching & breaking operations, students shall utilize appropriate personal protective equipment approved by staff members.
- During wet-cutting/grinding saw operations, students shall ensure ample water supply source is available before and during cutting operations. In the event during wet-cutting/grinding saw operations the water supply source should be deleted, the wet-cutting/grinding saw operation shall cease immediately and shall not continue until ample water supply source has been corrected.

Rubble Piles: Hazards Associated: Crushing, impalement, over exertion, pinching, caught-between, slip, trip & fall

- When on the Rubble Piles' site, students shall utilize: helmet system, eye, hand, knee, elbow, respiratory protection and steel-toe boots. During end-of-the-day clean-up, students may remove appropriate safety apparel but only by direction or approval by staff members.
- Concrete slabs shall be considered **UNREINFORCED**.
- Clear and concise communication is critical in this final evolution. With the exception of staff members, only the squad or division leader or their designee shall give commands to



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their squad/division members during heavy activities of hauling, lifting, moving, breaching, breaking, raking & shoring. During the final evolution, with all the divisions and squads working in the Rubble Piles', clear and concise communication is absolutely critical! In the event of unauthorized squad/division members giving commands and adding confusion to the activity, staff members shall immediately order "**STOP!**", remove the students from the Rubble Piles' and a PAR shall be taken. After the PAR and accountability has been taken, the staff members shall debrief the squads/division of the seriousness of their situation.

- Visitors are welcomed to observe the final evolution occurring on the Rubble Piles', but **only** from the command station. Please refer to "General Safety Concerns" for visitors' safety.
- All other safety issues regarding the Rubble-Piles', please refer to "General Safety Concerns" or "Site Specific Safety Concerns."

Staff Members: Lead Instructors, Instructors, Technicians and Logistical Support

- Instructors and technicians shall facilitate activities and logistics at the assigned – designated work sites.
- Prior to the start of the exercise the Lead Instructor will inspect the operational training area for any potential safety hazards. All safety hazards identified should be corrected or cordon off with yellow fire line tape to designate the area being off limits to personnel. Prior to the start of the evolution, all students should be made aware of the safety concern and the significance of the fire line tape.
- Instructors and technicians are responsible for assuring that all participants utilize safe work practices during practical exercises.
- Instructors and technicians will maintain communications between work sites and staff.
- Instructors, technicians and the designated Safety Officer have the authority to interpret and enforce any and all safety issues.
- Severe weather presents the potential for health and safety hazards to all persons attending and participating in an exercise. Extreme heat can cause heat exhaustion or heat stroke, and extreme cold can cause frostbite, hypothermia, or slippery surfaces. An impending severe storm can bring lightning or high winds. Such situations warrant the careful consideration of limiting activity, waiting for the storm to pass, or postponing the exercise.
- In the event of an actual emergency the site facilitators will assume the role of command until the incident has been mitigated. The crew assigned to the site and the team at the next closest site will initiate rescue efforts until the local jurisdiction can respond and assume this role. At that time the onsite crew will assume a support role only. Allowing the local jurisdiction to perform the rescue. The emergency number for the City of Virginia Beach is "911", and the activation of their local EMS will be handled by the onsite facilitators.