**Primary Search/Rescue Practice Drill**

**Objectives:**

* Conduct a primary search on a fire scene and rescue a victim
* Recognize the need to implement the Incident Command System (ICS)
* Establish a safety officer
* Call for resources (Emergency Medical Services (EMS) and mutual aid)
* Advance a hose line into a structure while searching for victims
* Remove a victim
* Maintain accountability throughout the operations

**Materials:**

* 8+ students
* Firefighter Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)
* Rescue manikin (or student actor)
* Search ropes (2)
* Firefighting hand tools (ax and/or Halligan are the minimum needed)
* Self-contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA) (students will not be on air for this drill)
* Mask black out devices (wax paper recommended)
* Personnel Accountability Tags (PAT)
* Radios (5)

**Student Roles:**

* Incident Commander (IC) (radio): in charge of the incident
* Safety officer (radio): instructor
* Search Team 1 Member 1 (radio)
* Search Team 1 Member 2
* Search Team 2 Member 1 (radio)
* Search Team 2 Member 2
* Rapid Intervention Team (RIT) Member 1 (radio)
* RIT Member 2
* Dispatch (radio)

**Setup:**

* Scene size-up: There is a one-story commercial structure with smoke showing and with a known worker still inside. The presence of the victim is confirmed by employees that were already evacuated, but the location of the victim is unknown
* Instructor notes:
* Have the rescue manikin (or student playing the role of the victim) inside the building, in a location that is not close to the entry point and is difficult to find.
* (Note: This activity may be done in a large classroom.) If a student plays the role of the victim, he or she should remain silent and act as if in an incapacitated state.
* Go with students but remain silent unless a safety issue arises. Take note of students’ performances, specifically what is done well and what needs improvement. Use your notes for a discussion to follow the drill.
* If at any point any member of the team lets go of the safety rope or gets separated by 10 feet from his or her partner, call for a MAYDAY and have the RIT make entry with a separate safety line. Have the team that needs help become additional victims. Use discretion with this aspect of the activity and adjust it to the levels of student understanding and ability.

**Directions:**

* Have the first arriving unit give a size-up and start Incident Command.
* Have the IC note the arrival times, the entry/exit times, the victim located/extricated times, etc.
* Have students don PPE with their masks blacked out so that rescue members cannot see.
* Have Team 1 make entry and follow search guidelines (i.e. Use a safety line tied off at the entry point, start an aggressive primary search with rescue in mind, follow the wall and make sweep, then move toward the center). Have the students remain on their hands and knees.
* Upon finding the victim, have Team 1 call for Team 2 to make entry and assist.
* Have Team 2 follow the rescue line and use the radios as needed.
* Upon Team 2 arriving at the victim, have the teams drag the victim out following the safety line.
* The drill is complete once all of the rescue personnel and victim(s) exit the building/room.

**Assessment/Conclusion:**

Allow the IC to begin the discussion by giving a detailed breakdown of the times and a summary of how things occurred. Allow the IC to make suggestions based on the actions that were taken. After the IC concludes his or her summary, give the students a rundown of what you saw acting as the safety officer. The following are potential (group or individual) discussion questions:

* What went as planned during this rescue?
* What did not go as planned during this rescue?
* If this exact incident occurred again, how would you change your plan of attack (given that you had the same job)?
* How did the safety line help or hurt the rescue?