

	TRAVIS COUNTY ESD #5 MANCHACA FIRE RESCUE Department Best Practices	<h1>A110.1</h1>
	Authorized by:  Fire Chief Chris Barron	Effective: 9/1/2020 Rescinds: Reference: AFD A110.2 Application: Shift Personnel
<h2>Still Box and Light Box Alarm</h2>		

I. Purpose

To provide guidelines for Light Box Alarm responses.

II. Background

Still Box and Light Box Alarms are utilized for fire emergencies in and around structures which do not require a full Box Alarm response. These call types require fewer resources, therefore, the fireground operational guidelines must be modified accordingly *from those used at a full Box Alarm*.

This document is a direct adaptation of the Austin Fire Department SOG on Still Box and Light Box Alarms. It has been adopted by Manchaca Fire Rescue as an Auto Aid partner to maximize standardization between partner agencies. Variations and additions to the language from the parent AFD document will be signified by text in italics. Generic changes that do not affect content such as formatting and changing "AFD" to "MFR" will not be noted.

III. Policy

- A. **ICS.** An incident command system will be utilized at all Light Box Alarm responses.
- B. **Typical use.** A Still Box or Light Box Alarm will be dispatched for fire emergencies in and around structures that do not justify a full Box Alarm response. Examples would include a backyard shed on fire without immediate exposures, a fire contained in an oven or a smoking electrical outlet.

The Still Box Alarm will normally be used for incidents when Fire Dispatch determines there is a need for air monitoring and/or smoke removal from a fire that is contained or reported to be out.

- C. **Response plan.** The response to a Light Box Alarm will be as indicated in MFR Policy G101 Level of Response.

- D. **Upgrade to Box alarm.** Upon arrival at any Light Box Alarm, Command will immediately upgrade response to at least a full Box Alarm when encountering any of the following conditions:
1. An occupied structure is involved in fire or is directly exposed to fire.
 2. Command determines that the incident will not be quickly brought under control with the currently assigned resources.
- E. **Two-in, Two-out.** Unless there is an immediate need for rescue, no interior operations will begin until there are two members available to function as the outside team.

IV. Best Practices

The following best practices should be followed at all firefighting and emergency scene operations, except where deviation can be justified by Fire Officers. Any significant deviation should be communicated to responding/on-scene units as soon as possible.

Refer to MFR Best Practices A101 Fireground Operations for Strategy and Tactics, Incident Management System, Size-Up, Risk Management, Placement of Apparatus, Company Level Accountability and Benchmarks.

A. Still Box Alarm

1. **Use.** The primary function of the Still Box Alarm is to ensure air quality and ventilation for incidents that are contained and pose no further threat of fire extension. The Still Box Alarm will only be Investigation mode.
2. **IDLH conditions.** While the initial conditions may be IDLH, the expectation is that two companies will be able to mitigate the incident safely.
3. **Tactical channel.** A Still Box Alarm will be assigned a tactical channel and be monitored by a Dispatcher. As soon as practical, the Dispatcher shall be released from monitoring the channel.
4. **Upgrade of alarm.** If there is any indication that a fire is not contained, the incident shall be upgraded to a Light Box Alarm or a full Box Alarm.

B. **Light Box Alarm.** *A light box alarm may be operated in the investigation mode, offensive strategy, or defensive strategy. Typically, the Light Box Alarm will be managed in the investigative mode or defensive strategy. The offensive strategy may only be considered under specific conditions as detailed below.*

1. **Investigative Mode.** Often the first arriving Company Officer will arrive on scene and need to investigate further before giving tactical assignments. In the initial radio report, the Company Officer shall communicate to all responding units that the Company will be investigating.
 - a. **Initial Tactical Assignments.** The first pumping apparatus, the aerial apparatus or Rescue, and the Battalion Chief will respond to the scene to investigate. The second pumping apparatus will respond to the scene and prepare to establish a backup team. The third pumping apparatus will stage at a hydrant in case a water supply is needed.
2. **Offensive Strategy.** *Typically, if the initial IC determines that they should be operating in the offensive strategy, the alarm should be upgraded to a full Box Alarm. An offensive strategy should only be utilized without upgrading if the fire problem is appropriate for the on scene resources and a company can be maintained on deck to serve as a RIC team. Otherwise, the alarm should be upgraded to a full Box Alarm.*
 - a. **Initial Tactical Assignments.** *The first pumping apparatus will respond to the scene and initiate fire attack. The aerial apparatus or Rescue will assume inside truck duties and the Battalion Chief will assume Command. The second pumping apparatus will respond to the scene and assume the backup team role. The third pumping apparatus will be ordered to the scene to provide a water supply and serve as an on deck company. Depending on location, water supply may be by hydrant supply, tender, or tying the water supplies of the second and third engines to the attack engine.*
3. **Defensive Strategy.** These operations are primarily characterized by exterior activities designed to minimize risk to personnel. Primary strategies should focus on personnel safety and incident stabilization. In the initial radio report, the Incident Commander shall communicate to all responding units that they will be operating in the defensive strategy. An example of a defensive strategy operation would be a shed fully involved, with no exposures, which can be extinguished with tank water.
 - a. **Initial Tactical Assignments.** The first pumping apparatus and first aerial apparatus or Rescue will report to the scene and begin exterior operations. The second pumping apparatus will report to the scene and establish a backup team to protect initial hose team and assist with extinguishment. The third pumping apparatus will stage at a hydrant in case a water supply is needed.