

Santa Barbara City Fire Department - Standard Operating Procedures Training Operations	Code: T-III-3
Search Guidelines	
Chpt: III Structure fires	Revised: 6/20/03 Pages: 2

I. PROCEDURE

- A. The following procedures will help assure a swift and safe rescue operation once the team enters a burning structure:
- B. Always wear full Structure PPE when performing search and rescue operations in a fire building. (See [S-IV-2](#) structure PPE)
- C. Both members should have portable radios and some form of hand tool and hand light. Never enter a structure empty handed.
- D. Always work in pairs.
- E. Maintain voice contact with your partner.
- F. When using the anchor method, do not exchange roles with partner until you are in a clear atmosphere.
- G. Always locate more than one building egress by observing the building exterior before entry.
- H. Search on hands and knees when visibility is obscured.
- I. When ascending or descending stairs, crawl. Keep head upwards.
- J. Pause occasionally during search to listen for cries of help, coughing, or moaning.
- K. Start the search from an outside wall. Open windows as soon as possible to permit ventilation. However, do this only if ventilation will not cause the spread of fire.
- L. Sweep arm or leg gently under beds to search for victims
- M. Search all closets and cupboards, including shower stalls
- N. Completely search one room before moving to the next.
- O. After searching a room, mark it so other crews will not duplicate the search.
- P. Close the entry door to prevent fire spread.
- Q. If rooms or buildings are too hot to enter, reach in the doorway with the handle of a tool. Many victims will be found just inside a door or window.

II. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS:

Search Guidelines

- A. Always look for extension of fire and report such extensions to a superior officer.
- B. If a fire is discovered on a floor above the fire floor, call for a charged hose line.
- C. If you find a victim, notify command immediately. Relay number of victims, condition, location, and direction of egress.
- D. Once victims have been rescued, place them in proper custody so that they will not attempt to reenter the building