## FELTON FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES

ARTICLE: I SOP: 1404

SECTION: 1400 GENERAL ORDERS

SUBJECT: SPEAKING TO THE MEDIA, RELATIVES, AND/OR

**BYSTANDERS** 

PURPOSE: To provide for a consistent method of informing the media, relatives, or

bystanders with information concerning emergencies involving FFPD.

SCOPE: These procedures are to be followed by all personnel.

## PROCEDURE:

As a public agency, all activities of FFPD are a matter of public record. Any person has the right to ask for information and records that involve FFPD. A great deal of tact and public relations savvy must be used to protect the name and honor of all involved. The following items serve as a guide for a tactful release of information.

## FIRE FIGHTER'S

- 1. Direct inquiries up the chain of command. The Officer in Charge should be the person who the media talks with.
- 2. At large incidents, a Public Information Officer (PIO) should be appointed by the Incident Commander (IC). The PIO will be directed to handle all media questions.

## OFFICER'S

- 1. When asked, answer. Do not offer on your own accord.
- 2. State the obvious facts. Nature of the emergency, report the conditions found and actions taken. Do not speculate.
- 3. Do not offer names, addresses, phone numbers of people involved. Time must be given for authorities to notify the victims relatives.
- 4. If asked who is involved, and the person is at the scene of the emergency, direct the media towards the person.
- 5. Do not give any information whatsoever regarding minors.
- 6. Speaking to bystanders or neighbors is touchy. Unknowingly, you might be giving information to a person who will use the information in a harmful way. You must hold your tongue without being rude or insulting.