

WASHTENAW AREA MUTUAL AID ASSOCIATION POLICY

Reference Number:	103
Subject:	Box Alarm Cards Construction
Approved Date:	March 3, 2020
Effective Date:	April 1, 2020
Revision Number:	1
Signature of Approval:	

WAMAA PRESIDENT – James Rachwal

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this policy is to provide a unified countywide procedure for development and utilization of the Multiple Alarm System (Box Cards).

SECTIONS:

- I. Definitions
- II. Apparatus Terminology / Definitions – Resource Typing
- III. Procedure
- IV. Box Alarm System / Methods For Requesting Mutual Aid Resources
- V. Box Card Development / Construction Procedures
- VI. Apparatus Staffing
- VII. Updating Box Cards

I. DEFINITIONS

See the definitions policy for all applicable definitions.

II. APPARATUS TERMINOLOGY / DEFINITIONS – RESOURCE TYPING

Air Supply - A vehicle designed and operated to provide a quantity of purified breathing air, as defined by NIOSH / MIOSHA. This classification includes those vehicles with mobile cascade systems having a minimum of 4 bottles of 4500 psi or greater and / or mobile units having mobile compressors.

Staffing 1-2

ATV / Gator / Mule / Polaris - A small, open motor vehicle having one or two seats and three or more wheels fitted with large tires or tracks, which are designed for use over rugged terrain. May be configured for brush / field fires or EMS uses, or both.

Staffing 1-2

Boat - A water vessel, which may or may not be motorized with a hull length less than 20'.

Staffing 2-4

Brush Unit - A vehicle having a pumping capacity of 150 gpm, or greater, and a water tank capacity of at least 200 gallons. Unit could be foam capable or not. The unit shall have hose and equipment similar to that recommended by NFPA 1901.

Staffing 1-2

Chief - A command officer trained and capable of performing in any of the command staff or general staff positions within the incident command system.

Staffing 1-2

Engine - A combination vehicle having a pumping capacity of 1000 gpm or greater, a water tank capacity of at least 250 gallons and hose and equipment similar to NFPA 1901.

Staffing 2-4

Marine - A motorized water vessel with a hull length greater than 20'.

Staffing 2-4

Rescue - A unit specifically equipped for rescue functions. (Non-transporting) The unit should be equipped for multiple type incidents, such as MVA with extrication, water type rescue.

Staffing 2-4

Squad - A unit that is specifically equipped for providing EMS equipment, but may not be equipped for extrication incidents. May also carry personnel and equipment for fire suppression operations (SCBA, TIC, hand tools etc.).

Staffing 2-4

Tanker - A water-transporting vehicle having a minimum capacity of 1500 gallons. The unit shall have hose and equipment similar to that recommended by NFPA 1901.

Staffing 1-4

Truck (Ladder / Tower) - A vehicle with a powered aerial ladder capable of reaching a minimum height of 75 feet. This unit shall have hose and equipment and may or may not include a pump and booster tank.

Staffing 2-4

Utility - Typically a pickup style vehicle designed to carry equipment, or pull a trailer however, may be a staff sedan, SUV, van etc...

Staffing 1-4

III. PROCEDURE:

Each department's fire chief is responsible for the development and implementation of their department's multiple alarm system as addressed in this policy. All departments shall work off the same multiple alarm card template established by the division commander for Washtenaw County. It is highly encouraged to standardize operations as much as possible.

The following provides guidance and direction on development of box cards utilized by Washtenaw County fire departments.

IV. BOX ALARM SYSTEM / METHODS FOR REQUESTING MUTUAL AID RESOURCES:

For the purpose of standardizing terminology there shall be three ways of requesting mutual aid companies.

1. Move-Up:

For the purposes of covering vacant Fire stations without a response to the scene by mutual aid companies, the Incident Commander may instruct dispatch to begin a move-up to cover vacant fire station(s). The dispatcher shall then locate what geographical area the incident is located in and call the departments listed under "change of quarters" section and request that they either stand-by at their respective stations if that is the direction, or fill-in at the designated requesting department's stations with the equipment specified.

2. Special Call:

This method is used to summon a particular piece of equipment to an incident.

EXAMPLE A

I.e... "Central from 23 Command, special call Pittsfield Fire with an engine".

I.e... "Central from 23 Command, special call Pittsfield Fire for their jaws and extrication equipment".

3. BOX Alarm System

This system is used to preidentify the necessary resources for given emergencies by alarm number.

V. BOX CARD DEVELOPMENT / CONSTRUCTION PROCEDURE:

Each Washtenaw County Fire Department are required to develop box cards; the box cards identify the required resources for the type of emergency in a given response area.

The authority having jurisdiction (AHJ) completes the information and determines other criteria, which is defined further in this procedure in order to construct their tailored box alarm cards.

The box alarm card has the sections, which need to be constructed. The following provides guidance as to how to construct the cards based upon the needs of the AHJ.

DEPARTMENT NAME	BOX ALARM TYPE: STRUCTURE FIRE - NON HYDRANT	EFFECTIVE DATE:
BOX ALARM #	LOCATION OR AREA:	DEPARTMENT ABBREVIATION
LOCAL DISPATCH AREA:		
ALARM LEVEL	ENGINES TANKERS AERIALS RESCUES EMS CHIEFS	SPECIAL EQUIPMENT CHANGE OF QUARTERS/COV
Still Alarm		
Box Alarm		
WASHTENAW COUNTY MABAS BOX:		
ALARM LEVEL	ENGINES TANKERS AERIALS RESCUES EMS CHIEFS	SPECIAL EQUIPMENT CHANGE OF QUARTERS/COV
2nd Box Alarm		
3rd Box Alarm		
4th Box Alarm		
5th Box Alarm		
6th Box Alarm		
FIRE CHIEF SIGNATURE:	DATE:	
STRUCTURE FIRE - NON HYDRANT		

DEPARTMENT	CHIEF SIGNATURE / DATE	DEPARTMENT	CHIEF SIGNATURE / DATE
Ann Arbor City Fire			
Ann Arbor Township Fire			
Augusta Township Fire			
Belleville City Fire			
Chelsea Fire			
Clinton Fire			
Dexter Area Fire			
Green Oak Township Fire			
Hamburg Township Fire			
Manchester Township Fire			
Milan Area Fire			
Northfield Township Fire			
Pittsfield Township Fire			
Putnam Township Fire			
Salem Fire			
Saline Fire			
Scio Fire			
South Lyon City Fire			
Sumpter Township Fire			
Superior Township Fire			
Van Buren Township Fire			
Ypsilanti City Fire			
Ypsilanti Township Fire			

Department Name Section:

This box should contain the name of the fire department completing the box alarm card. In the event a fire department provides service to another community, this box card will continue to contain the name of the fire department, not the name of the community.

Box Alarm Type Section:

Each Washtenaw County Fire Department would complete a box card for structure fires and may also construct cards for hydrant and or rural (non-hydranted) areas, and may choose to add additional cards as listed below. This area would be color coded to assist with rapid identification between the various alarm types:

- Red / Black Lettering – Structure Fire / Non-Hydrant
- Gold / Black Lettering - Structure Fire / Hydrant
- Black / White Lettering – Mass Casualty Incident (MCI)
- Green / Black Lettering - Wildland
- Red / White Lettering – Heavy Rescue
- Blue / White Lettering - RTF

Effective Date Section:

The date the card has been approved to go into effect.

Box Alarm Number Section:

Each box alarm must have a unique number. All box alarm cards for Washtenaw County will begin with the county number, 81.

Each box alarm card in the county must have a unique box alarm number. In order to ensure two agencies do not use the same number, each agency will begin their box alarm card number with their two-digit radio agency prefix.

EXAMPLE: Ann Arbor Township would be 12

A box alarm card will cover a defined geographic area in a community. Each area will be assigned a letter. The first area will begin with A and if applicable, additional areas will follow alphabetically. Departments with multiple areas will begin lettering in the farthest Northwest area with “A” and then will proceed alphabetically typically in a clockwise direction.

In order to minimize the total box alarm cards for the entire County, it is also recommended to use the fewest number of box alarm cards possible. Each agency would add a suffix for each box card, after the two-digit radio prefix.

EXAMPLE: 81-18-A.

Some possible numbering systems include:

- One box alarm card for the entire community (A)
- One card for half the community (West or North side A), a second card for the other half (East or South side B)

- One card for each quadrant of the community (NW A, NE B, SE C, SW D)
- One box card for each fire station (E13, E16, E15)
- One box card for each station response area (Ann Arbor Fire Station 3 = 3A, 3B, 3C)
- One for each map section of the community
- One for each quarter map section of the community

Example: Blank Township decides to use a box alarm card for each quadrant of the township, their box alarm cards are lettered 81-18-A, 81-18-B, 81-18-C, and 81-18-D.

Location or Area Section:

This box should contain a brief description of the geographic area covered by this box alarm card.

- Example: Map Section #13
- Example: Southwest Quadrant of the Township
- Example: City / Township wide

Department Abbreviation:

This oversized box will have the department’s abbreviation (AAFD, PTFD etc....)

Local Dispatch Information Section:

This box identifies the primary dispatch center for the hosting department.

Alarm Levels:

This section establishes the resources requested by alarm number. It should be noted that the STILL Alarm is usually a reduced amount of resources from the complete first alarm assignment. The decision to dispatch a STILL ALARM vs. BOX ALARM dispatch is made by the dispatcher based on the AHJ established dispatch criteria by incident type. For example: A department may request that the resources listed under a STILL ALARM be dispatched for a contained appliance fire in a house, but would have a full FIRST ALARM assignment be dispatched for the report of a house fire.

It should also be understood that the resources dispatched for a FIRST ALARM assignment includes the resources listed under STILL ALARM plus those listed under BOX ALARM, thus it is recommended that the resources requested in the STILL ALARM plus the BOX ALARM add up to a consistent resources response package.

On each alarm level, The AHJ would list the apparatus that are due to respond for each alarm level. It is recommended that each alarm level for structure fires bring 3-4 more apparatus to the scene, and provide for station coverage if needed.

It is also recommended that when constructing the box cards that the AHJ evaluates travel time of the responding mutual aid departments to the middle of the response area being constructed to assure that the closest mutual aid company is due to respond, and then record this on a spreadsheet. This can be done utilizing various GIS types of technology, or by utilizing string, a map, a ruler, and a spread sheet.

Once all of the resources have been determined and a distance is established, the AHJ will need to determine what resources they wish to be dispatched for the type of card being constructed per alarm level.

It is strongly recommended that each alarm level be consistent in the resource request.

EXAMPLE:

Hydrant Area

Still Alarm:

- 1 Engine
- 1 Truck

Box Alarm:

- All resources listed under STILL ALARM plus
- 2 Engines

Additional Box Alarms: (2nd thru 6th Alarms)

- 3 Engines
- 1 Truck

Rural Area

Still Alarm

- 2 Engines
- 1 Tanker
- 1 Truck

Box Alarm

- All resources listed under STILL ALARM plus
- 2 Tankers

Additional Box Alarms: (2nd thru 6th Alarms)

- 2 Engines
- 3 Tanker
- 1 Truck

This is vital so that the incident commander is easily trained and can remember what number or resources are due to respond per alarm level. This will also aid the AHJ in the event that they have multiple calls in their area.

I.e. If Scio Fire had two reported structure fires, the incident commander could have a first alarm assignment be dispatched to one of the reported fires, and instruct dispatch to dispatch their second alarm assignment to the second fire. Both incidents would have a consistent response package.

Departments when laying out their list of resources, they may wish to identify a priority number on various requested pieces of equipment. For example, a department may not wish to have the three closest tankers respond, and not have any personnel to operate hose lines, or to ladder the structure. The department may wish to create a ranking system

such as the example listed below for a non-hydrant area. In this case the response package per alarm level is:

- 2 - Engines
- 3 - Tankers
- 1 – Truck

ENG.	TANK.	TRUCK
3rd	1st	4th
6th	2nd	
	5th	

The first resource sought out is a tanker, the second resource is a tanker, the third resource is an engine, the four resource is a truck, the fifth resource is a tanker, and the last resource is an engine. This will hopefully assure that there is water on scene, people to use the water, and a truck company.

It is also recommended that no department being requested to provide mutual aid resources is completely stripped. Typically a smaller department can provide a single resource, where as a larger department is able to provide 2-3 resources without depleting their department to the point they would be challenged to provide services to their own response area.

Box Card Abbreviations:

Any box card created by a department needs to have the same codes, names, letters and abbreviations used to identify a fire department that matches what Washtenaw Central Dispatch center utilizes. For example, if Washtenaw Central refers to Ann Arbor City as a 2-letter code AA for their operations, using ACFD on a BOX card will only create confusion and delays to an incident. Below is the standard two letter codes associated with the fire departments for Washtenaw Central:

Washtenaw County

- | | |
|------------------------|------------------------|
| Ann Arbor City FD = AA | Pittsfield FD = PI |
| Ann Arbor Twp FD = AT | Salem FD = SM |
| August FD = AG | Saline FD = SA |
| Dexter FD = DX | Scio FD = SC |
| Chelsea FD = CH | Superior FD = SU |
| Manchester FD = MN | Ypsilanti City FD = YP |
| Milan FD = MI | Ypsilanti Twp FD = YT |
| Northfield FD = NF | |

Livingston County

- | | |
|-----------------------|----------------------|
| Brighton City FD = BR | Brighton Twp FD = BG |
| Hamburg FD = HA | Green Oak FD = GO |
| Putnam FD = PU | Unadilla FD = UN |

Ingham County

Stockbridge FD = SK

Jackson CountyColumbia FD = CB Grass Lake FD = GL
Henrietta FD = HE Napoleon FD = NA**Lenawee County**Cambridge FD = CG Clinton FD = CL
Ridgeway FD = RG Sand Lake FD = SJ
Tecumseh FD = TE**Monroe County**Dundee FD = DU Exeter FD = EX
LMR FD = MY**Wayne County**Canton FD = CA Belleville FD = BV
Northville Twp FD = NT Plymouth Twp FD = PT
Sumpter FD = SP Van Buren FD = VB**Oakland County**Lyon Twp FD = LT Northville City FD = NO
Novi FD = NV South Lyon FD = SL**Authorized Signature Section (Front of Card):**

This box would contain the signature of the fire department chief executive officer.

Box Alarm Type Section (Bottom of Card):

This area would be color coded to assist with rapid identification between the various alarm types:

- Red / Black Lettering – Structure Fire / Non-Hydrant
- Gold / Black Lettering - Structure Fire / Hydrant
- Black / White Lettering – Mass Casualty Incident (MCI)
- Green / Black Lettering - Wildland
- Red / White Lettering – Heavy Rescue
- Blue / White Lettering - RTF

Authorized Signature Section (Back of Card):

This box would contain the signature of all of the fire department's chief executive officer whose resources are listed anywhere on the resources section of the box alarm card. All WAMAA departments are listed. If the box alarm card utilizes non-WAMAA departments, those departments' chiefs and signatures should be obtained as well.

VI. APPARATUS STAFFING:

Staffing is challenging for all departments. The general guidance is that departments are encouraged to fully staff apparatus for mutual aid responses. This is not always possible as the County has multiple staffing models.

It is recommended that responding mutual aid departments adhere to the recommendations in the Section II of this document - **Apparatus Terminology / Definitions – Resource Typing**, however, if possible, up-staff the unit the maximum number of personnel. It should be understood that many departments will be able to fulfill the recommended number of personnel, but they may not be arriving in the responding apparatus, they may arrive in privately owned vehicles, or utility vehicles etc.

VII. UPDATING BOX CARDS:

Every box alarm card in use by WAMAA departments should be reviewed annually. There will be time devoted during each WAMAA Fire Chief Meeting for box alarm card presentations. Each department will present their cards to the group annually. During this time meeting signatures can be gathered. The WAMAA President will develop an annual box card presentation schedule.

Cards may be submitted without actual signatures, but it would be the responsibility to verify acceptance of the card by all departments being listed on each card. This can be done by email. In this case, the area requiring signatures would be completed by adding "Approved via email 0/00/00".

Example:

Augusta Township Fire	Approved via email 3-20-20
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Updating box cards process:

1. County Box Alarm Coordinator shall:
 - 1.1. Review the card
 - 1.1.1. Completeness
 - 1.1.1.1. All Sections Completed
 - 1.1.1.2. Signatures of all Mutual Aid Chiefs
 - 1.1.2. Proper Formatting
 - 1.1.3. Confirm Recommended Implementation Date (recommend 3-4 weeks' notice)
 - 1.2. Once reviewed, forward the card to the WAMAA website coordinator for posting
 - 1.3. Once reviewed, forward the card to all WAMAA department fire chiefs
 - 1.4. Once reviewed, forward the card to the Central Dispatches Communications Supervisor
2. Central Dispatch Communications Supervisor shall:
 - 2.1. Add the information to the CAD system on the designated implementation date.

ATTACHEMENTS:

- Washtenaw County Box Alarm Card Template – Structure Fire Non-Hydrant – FRONT
- Washtenaw County Box Alarm Card Template – BACK