

# Columbia Fire Department

## Media Guide



*Serving our community since 1893*



# Mission Statement

It is the mission of the Columbia Fire Department to continue our proud tradition of providing the highest level of service to our customers; the citizens and visitors of Columbia.

Through our most valuable resource, our employees, we will identify and respond to the changing needs of our community in a prompt, efficient, and professional manner.

Through constant diligence and teamwork with other departments and community partnerships, we will strive to provide education and resources to prevent fires and mitigate emergencies.

# Media Guidelines

This guide is intended to assist the media with obtaining timely information from the Columbia Fire Department and to provide the media with a basic outline of how information is released. This is a reference guide only and is not intended to cover every situation.



The Columbia Fire Department will pursue, cultivate and encourage fire department / news media relations with the philosophy that news gathering agencies perform a vital public service by providing information that the public needs to know. The Columbia Fire Department Public Information Officer (PIO) will be responsible for coordinating communications between the Columbia Fire Department and the news media. The PIO will provide the news media with information concerning all major incidents and information for other events as requested, that the Columbia Fire Department is involved with.

# Public Safety Radio Frequencies

The Columbia Fire Department operates on an assigned frequency of 154.190 MHZ VHF. All emergency dispatch alarms and pertinent information are transmitted over this frequency.

The Boone County Joint Communications Center (BCJC) located in Columbia at 123 Main Street does all dispatching of alarms to the Columbia Fire Department.

Other fire and law enforcement radio frequencies in the area:

Boone County Fire District Dispatch	154.430 MHZ
State Fire Mutual Aid	154.280 MHZ
Emergency Medical Services	155.340 MHZ
Main Law Enforcement Columbia & Boone County	155.310 MHZ
Law Enforcement Point-to-Point	155.370 MHZ
Law Enforcement Mutual Aid	155.475 MHZ
Missouri State Highway Patrol	42.120 MHZ
Missouri State Highway Patrol	42.060 MHZ
Jefferson City Fire Department	154.400 MHZ



## How Information is Released to the Media

**Public Service Announcements:** PSA's are provided to the media concerning safety tips and educational matters of the Columbia Fire Department. All PSA's are available at [www.como.gov/fire/](http://www.como.gov/fire/).

**Formal Press Release:** The formal press release is a prepared statement of fact, written or oral. Responsibility for the preparation and distribution of the formal press release shall rest with the Columbia Fire Department PIO with the approval of the Fire Chief or his/her designee.

**Press Conference:** In matters necessitating a press conference the news media will, under normal circumstances, be informed of the time and place by the PIO by the most expedient means.

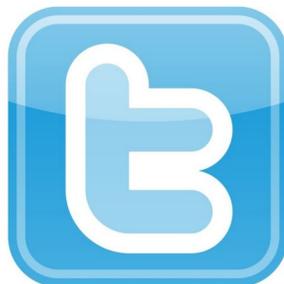
**Twitter:** Follow us on Twitter at @CoMoFire\_PIO

**Facebook:** Find us on Facebook at Columbia, MO Fire Department

**Rave:** The Columbia Fire Department uses Rave Alert Emergency Notification to communicate to the community during large scale emergencies.

**Website:** Members of the public and media can visit [www.como.gov/fire/](http://www.como.gov/fire/) for information about the Columbia Fire Department.

**Public Information Calls:** You can contact the Columbia Fire Department PIO by phone Monday through Friday during normal business hours at 573-874-7557.



# Guidelines for Media Response to Emergency Incidents

## Emergency Incidents—General

1. Columbia Fire Department Incident Commanders will only request a PIO for major incidents which are defined as:
  - Multi-alarm fire incidents involving industrial or commercial occupancies.
  - Fire incidents involving fatalities or serious injuries
  - Any incident involving multiple fatalities or serious injuries.
  - Hazardous materials emergencies or incidents requiring major evacuations.
  - Extended or complicated rescue operations.
  - Any incident involving death or serious injury to Fire Department personnel.
  - All serious accidents involving fire vehicles that result in injury or fatality to civilians or fire personnel.
  - Serious aircraft or railroad accidents.
2. Park your vehicle away from the scene to avoid interfering with the positioning of fire apparatus that may arrive after you. Do not drive over hose lines.
3. Be aware that fire scenes have hazards. Overhead wires, collapsing structures, toxic smoke and high pressure hose lines are a few to be aware of.
4. When the PIO arrives they will direct you to a location that is safe and allows you to do your jobs.



## **Vehicle accidents**

Due to the dangers associated with roadside emergencies Columbia Fire Department PIO's will not respond to vehicle accidents and we encourage media outlets not to respond either. Any information we can provide will be limited to the number of units responding and actions fire department personnel performed. We do not provide patient information or information on what caused an accident.

## **Press Releases and On-Camera Interviews**

Press releases for events the Columbia Fire Department responds to and on camera interviews for those events will be published / made available in a timely manner during normal business hours Monday through Friday. Please call the PIO at 573-874-7557 to request an on-camera interview. For events occurring after hours that do not fall into the category of major incidents, media information will be released no later than 9am the next business day.

Media information for larger emergency events will be released as information becomes available regardless of time of day or day of the week.



## Glossary of common fire department terms



**Advancing a Line** – Order to move hose line toward a given assigned area from point where the hose-carrying apparatus has stopped.

**Aerial Ladder** – A mechanically operated turntable ladder attached to a ladder truck, manufactured in various lengths as 65-, 75-, 85-, or 100-foot aerials with four sections at 25 feet each.

**Air Masks (S.C.B.A.)** – A self-contained breathing apparatus providing air supply from a tank of compressed air worn on the Firefighter's back.

**Alarm Assignment** – A designation of the units to respond to a given fire alarm or signal; the entire complement assigned to any given alarm. As "the entire first alarm assignment went to work." (Example: two quints, one engine, one ladder, one squad, Battalion Chief and Division Chief- a typical structure fire assignment).

**Arson** – Arson consists of maliciously/willfully starting a fire or causing an explosion with the purpose of destroying or damaging any building, occupied structure or property of another, utility line, fence or sign; or with the purpose of destroying or damaging any property, whether the person's own or another's, to collect insurance for such loss.

**Automatic Sprinkler** – An appliance for fire control and extinguishment by which water is piped to specifically designed orifices or sprinkler "heads" distributed throughout a property and operated automatically in the event of fire. During a fire, the sprinkler heads above the involved area activate one at a time; the entire system does not go off at once.

**Battalion Chief** – The Battalion Chief is a shift commander that reports to the shift Division Chief. Together they command, supervise and manage the fire personnel on a shift.

**Bunker Gear** -- Protective clothing worn when responding to an alarm or fire. Usually consists of boots and pants, coat and helmet. Also called turnout gear.

**Captain** – Officer in charge of a two company fire station, or any other position of comparable responsibility in the department. Captains wear white helmets and are the highest ranking company officer.

**Charged Line** – A line of hose filled with water, ready for use and always under pump or hydrant pressure.

**Chief** – A fire department officer of greater than company officer rank.

**Class A Fires** – Fires involving ordinary combustibles best extinguished by cooling action (water).

**Class B Fires** – Fires involving flammable liquids or gases usually extinguished by smothering agents (dry chemical—CO<sub>2</sub>).

**Class C Fires** – Fires involving energized electrical equipment (never use water to extinguish).

**Command Post** – A center of operations established at large and multiple-alarm fires by the incident commander to direct and coordinate firefighting activities.

**Communications Center** – Location from which 9-1-1 calls are answered, all alarm signals are transmitted, all units are dispatched, and where records are kept of the movements of emergency units.

**Division Chief** —The Division Chief is the highest ranking officer on a shift. Working with the Battalion Chief he/she commands, supervises and manages fire personnel for a shift.

**Engine** – A fire department pumping engine, sometimes called a "pumper," also carries an assortment of small ladders and firefighting tools/appliances.

**Evolution** – An agreed operational sequence requiring teamwork and covering various basic firefighting tasks such as the placement of hose and heavy ladders.

**Exposure** – Adjacent property that may be endangered by a fire in another structure or by an outside fire.

**Extension Ladder** – A ladder with two or more sections and can be extended to various heights. The extension ladder has a bed ladder and one or more fly ladders, the top being the tip. Most common lengths of fire department extension ladders are 24- or 30-foot extensions on engines/quints and 25-, 35-, 45-, or 50-foot extensions on ladder trucks.

**Extension (of fire)** – Spread of fire, usually during the course of firefighting operations, to areas not believed to have been previously involved as extension of fire through open partitions into the attic or extension through an un-protected opening into another room or building.

**False Alarm** – An alarm for which no fire existed or for which the Fire Department response was unnecessary or due to accidental operation of fire alarm devices or a malicious act.

**Fire Alarm** – A device or the information received over such a device as "to sound a fire alarm." A "fire alarm system" should not be confused with a "fire detection system."

**Fire Escape** – An emergency means of egress from a building in event of fire, with special reference to an exterior stairway—usually of iron construction.

**Fire Prevention** – Work achieved by fire department members and members of the community creating situations where unfriendly fires are prevented from occurring.

**Fire Suppression Rating Schedule** – Commonly referred to as the ISO rating a schedule by which insurance underwriters grade the fire defense of a community. A grading schedule takes into account water supply, the fire department, fire alarms, communications and other factors. Community classifications run from Class 1, receiving the highest rate recognition to Class 10, receiving no recognition. A community's classification determines fire insurance rates. Columbia is currently a class 2.

**Flame Resistant** – Resisting the spread of flame along the surface and having material or surface of a nature that does not propagate flame once an outside source of flame has been removed; flame retardant.

**Flammable** – Capable of burning or producing flame at ordinary temperatures, of being easily ignited; incorrect terms: "inflammable"; antonym: "non-flammable".

**Flammable Liquids** – Any of numerous liquids which readily ignite and burn at temperatures below 200 degrees F. Sometimes classed by whether they will "flash" (give off flammable vapors), above or below 100 degrees F into combustible and flammable liquids. Any flammable liquid may be dangerous in the presence of flaming or glowing materials and may be explosive when its vapor is mixed with certain percentages of air or oxygen.

**Flash Point** – The temperature at which a liquid gives off vapors sufficient to form an ignitable mixture with air near the surface or in the vessel used.

**G.P.M.** – Gallons per minute, the most common measure of water flow in fire-fighting; used to measure output of fire department engines, hose streams, nozzles, hydrants, water mains, etc.

**Ignition** – The beginning of flame propagation or burning. The start of a fire. Ignition Temperature – The temperature at which any fuel ignites and continues to burn. Incendiary – An unfriendly fire believed to have been deliberately set.

**Incident Command System (ICS)** – The system by which incidents are managed. This system is scalable to allow the management of all incidents large or small. The system provides a chain of command and provides individuals within the system the capability to develop more resources and lower the span of control.

**Involved** – The building area, room, or structure either actually enveloped in the flame and smoke of a fire, or in danger of such involvement.

**Laying a Line** – The evolution where a fire hose (line) is advanced from a fire hydrant to the scene of a fire. An officer may say "bring us in a line," which means he wants another company to perform the above evolution.

**Lieutenant**— Officer in charge of a single company station. Lieutenants wear white helmets.

**Life Safety** – The first responsibility of the fire service is the safety of lives and then the protection of property.

**Mutual Aid** – Two-way assistance by fire departments of two or more communities freely given under pre-arranged plans or contracts on the basis that each will aid the other in time of emergency; also providing for joint or cooperative response to alarms near municipal boundaries.

**Overhauling** – A late stage of the fire extinguishment process during which area involved in the fire and the contents involved are carefully scrutinized for any remaining trace or embers and effort is made to protect property against further damage due to the elements, etc.

**Oxygen Deficiency** – Condition where insufficient oxygen exists to support life or to support flame. When oxygen content of the air falls below 16 percent, flame production is reduced and firefighters are in danger of asphyxiation from oxygen deficiency; below six percent, breathing ceases. In addition to oxygen deficiency, there is danger from smoke, heat, and gases unless firefighters are protected by SCBA; and these conditions may become serious before oxygen deficiency is acute.

**Pike Pole** – A type of long handled hook with metal head, shaped in the fashion of an old-style battle pike, which is used to pull plaster or drywall from wall or ceiling. Helps locate hidden fires in walls.

**Rekindle** – Re-ignition of a fire thought to have been extinguished.

**Rescue** – The saving of life endangered by fire, trapped in a vehicle or in a location where they are unable to remove themselves.

**Responding to an Alarm** – Fire company or ambulance traveling to a fire in response to an official alarm or emergency call.

**Run** – Response to a fire or alarm. This is a term arising from the fact that in the days of handdrawn apparatus, firefighters ran to the fire with their engines. Even when horse-drawn apparatus were introduced the number of riders was limited and officers were required to run ahead of their apparatus to clear the way. The number of runs per unit remains an important measure of activity because it is an indication of workload and the frequency which a unit is out of quarters and must be covered by other companies.

**Salvage** – Work or procedures to reduce incidental losses from smoke, water, and weather during and following fires. The use of waterproof salvage covers is one of the most common means that fire departments use to prevent water damage. Smoke ejectors are also used.

**Seat of Fire** – Area center where the main body of fire is located. Frequently, when the seat of the fire is extinguished, much of the heat is eliminated; and the mop-up stage follows.

**Size Up** – The mental evaluation made by the Incident Commander which enables him/her to determine a course of action –includes such factors as time, location, nature and extent of fire, weather, and firefighting facilities

**Smoke** – A combination of gases, carbon particles, and other products of incomplete combustion hindering respiration and obscuring visibility and access to the seat of a fire. Coping with smoke is one of the tasks for which firefighters require special training and experience.

**Smoke Explosion** – An explosion of heated smoke and gases, which have been pent-up in a burning building, when air is admitted, completing the fire triangle of fuel-heat-oxygen. As the self-ignition temperature of many solids is in the 450 degrees F to 800 degrees F range and such temperatures may be present in buildings in which a fire has gained headway, all that is needed is introduction of air containing more oxygen to produce combustion so rapidly as to have the appearance of an explosion. This is also called a backdraft.

**Telecommunicator (Dispatcher)** – One who answers 9-1-1 phones and dispatches emergency equipment to the call.

**Turnouts** – Protective clothing worn when turning out (responding) to an alarm or fire. Usually consists of boots and pants, coat and helmet. Also called bunker gear.

**Ventilation** – A technique for opening a burning building to remove heated smoke and gases to prevent explosive concentrations and to permit advancement of hose lines into effective positions for fire extinguishment.

**Working Fire** – A working fire is a fire of sufficient magnitude to require the services of all firefighters responding to the fire.



# Columbia Fire Department Fire Stations

## **Fire Administration Building**

**Address:** 201 Orr Street, Columbia, MO

Erected 1997



## **Fire Station #1**

**Address:** 201 Orr, Columbia, Mo

Erected 1997



## **Fire Station #2**

**Address:** 1212 West Worley Columbia, MO

Erected 1957



## **Fire Station #3**

**Address:** 1000 Ashland Road, Columbia, MO

Erected 1966



## **Fire Station #4**

**Address:** 2300 Oakland Gravel Road, Columbia, MO

Erected 1970



**Fire Station #5**

**Address:** 1400 Ballenger Lane, Columbia, MO

Erected 1971



**Fire Station #6**

**Address:** 3112 Chapel Hill Road, Columbia, MO

Erected 1973



**Fire Station #7**

**Address:** 400 Green Meadows Circle, Columbia, MO

Erected 2008



**Fire Station #8**

**Address:** 2301 East Nifong Boulevard, Columbia, MO

Erected 2001



**Fire Station #9**

**Address:** 201 Blueridge Road, Columbia, MO

Erected 2010

