Foam Fire Training  
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Training Exercises Using Firefighting Foam  
Standard Operating Procedures

As firefighters, you know the immediate dangers a fire poses and the utmost urgency of distinguishing a fire to protect life, property, and the community. Unfortunately, some of the ingredients that make firefighting foam helpful in suppressing fires also makes it a health and environmental hazard. Salem’s efforts to protect the community and environment extend well beyond when the fires have been extinguished and are included in many daily activities. Preventing firefighting foam from entering the stormwater system and thoroughly cleaning up firefighting foam after training exercises are just a few examples of efforts the City makes in protecting the community.

While firefighting foams the City uses vary in levels of toxicity, they are all considered hazardous by the 2012 OSHA Hazard Communication Standard (29 CFR 1910.1200) and are considered harmful to aquatic life, including rainbow trout. Therefore, precautions should be taken whenever working with these chemicals to ensure your safety, public safety, and the safety of the environment.

City of Salem Fire, Airport, and Stormwater Services personnel are working together to help prevent the chance of firefighting foam from reaching the stormwater system or waterbody. Following the standard operating procedures any time a training or other activity that uses foam at the airport training facility is key to keeping the foam contained and out of waterways.

**Before and activity or training event:**

* Note the weather forecast.
  + Avoid activity if wind speeds of more than 10 miles per hour are predicted or are in effect
  + Avoid activity if rain will occur within 24 hours after the activity

When scheduling for the annual testing with AARF, coordinate with Public Works Dispatch at 503-588-6311 to have the following staff available on site:

* Street sweeper
* Vac truck

**Day-of-Training Best Management Practices**

* Switch all diversion/isolation valves from stormwater to sanitary before the beginning of the activity or training. Signs are posted that indicate which way the valve needs to be turned. **Note: Shut off directions differ between valves so please read the sign posted by the valve for directions.**
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**End of training clean up:**

* Ensure that no foam is left on site, including in the catch basin:
  + Rinse training area with a low-pressure hose to reduce the amount of foam build up and direct it into the sanitary sewer/catch basin
    - Any excess foam on the asphalt must be swept
* Rinse catch basin with low-pressure
  + Any excess foam in the drain must be removed by vac truck

Final step:

* Once all foam is off site and out of the catch basin, switch valves back to the stormwater setting.