



Fire Management Handbook  
Policy 838

## Structure Fire Suppression and Protection

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This guidance document is not a new law. This document is an agency interpretation of existing law, except as authorized by Idaho Code or incorporated into a contract.

### Agency Contact

Deputy Chief, Operations

### Purpose

To set forth the policy of Idaho Department of Lands (IDL) concerning requests for aid in structure fire suppression from individuals and other agencies and the policy for protecting structures and communities from wildland fire.

### Applicability

All IDL employees participating in fire suppression activities.

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## 1. Associated Policies

- A. Community and Structure Fire Protection Guidelines for the Northern Rockies Coordinating Group
- B. Community and Structure Fire Protection Guidelines for the Great Basin Coordinating Group
- C. Fire Management Handbook, 800 Series

## 2. Definitions

**Structure Fire Suppression:** Interior or exterior actions taken to suppress and extinguish a burning structure.

**Structure Protection:** Protecting a structure from the threat of damage from an advancing wildland fire. This involves the use of standard wildland protection tactics.

### 3. Policy

- A. Structure suppression aid will be given only when the Department receives a request from a recognized fire service organization (city, county, local, or structural protection association). Assistance will also be given, as directed by the Governor, during a declared state of emergency. Department personnel will work under the direction of the fire service organization (FSO) requesting the assistance.
- B. Aid will be given only when the requested equipment or personnel is in a ready state and when the request will not weaken the Department's wildland fire organization. IDL personnel are neither trained nor qualified to suppress structure fires.
- C. Idaho Department of Lands personnel will perform only those actions that are deemed safe and within the scope of training and equipment limitations. Every effort will be made to prevent the spread of fire from the structure to the wildlands.
- D. When wildland fires threaten structures, every effort will be made to control the wildfire to keep it away from the structure. See **Idaho Department of Lands Community and Structure Fire Protection for Wildland Fires in Idaho, Attachment 1**, for clarification of roles between the wildland fire agency and the local FSO.

### 4. Procedures

- A. Department of Lands firefighting equipment and personnel are financed and maintained for the purpose of suppressing wildland fire on Idaho's forest and rangelands. IDL wildland fire training and IDL equipment are designed for wildland fires such as those in grass, brush, and timber. They are inadequate for and are not intended for structure fire suppression.
- B. Standard wildland fire tactics will be employed by IDL fire personnel to protect structures and communities from wildland fire, when they can be accomplished safely and will likely be successful. When in unified command with an FSO, IDL will bear the cost of providing the wildland tactics employed to protect structures and expects the FSO to bear the cost of the resources they provide for protection or suppression of the fire on or around structures.

### 5. Exception Authorization

Exceptions to this policy may be granted by the Chief, Bureau of Fire Management.