

**Release: 1.0**  
**Effective: 3/05/2008**

**Derby Fire Department**  
**Standard Operating Procedure Number 10**  
**Lockout Responses**

**1. Purpose**

A key value of the Derby Fire Department and its members is our willingness to assist our citizens in any way possible. This assistance has traditionally included assisting entry into locked residences and/or vehicles where such actions can be taken safely, efficiently, and without risk of damage to the residence and/or vehicle or occupants.

Unfortunately, the continued development of locks, anti-theft devices, side airbags, and other technological developments have created a situation where risk to the safety of Fire Department personnel, the residence and/or vehicle occupant, and even the residence and/or vehicle itself exceeds our ability to provide an effective, safe service. These risks include, but are not limited to:

Possibly assuming liability for immediate or future damage to the vehicle or occupant.

Damaging insulation or wiring that may short and cause an immediate or future fire.

Disabling or damaging wiring for side airbags.

Disabling or damaging wiring for power door locks and windows.

Other damage to the vehicle or its finish.

Damaging of windows and doors in the residence.

The purpose of this procedure is to establish the criteria in which emergency entry into a residence and/or vehicle will be performed.

**2. Goal**

Under this procedure, the Derby Fire Department's goal is to respond to lockout assistance in a timely manner, protect life and property, and complete the missions assigned in a safe and effective manner.

**3. Resource Response**

Derby Fire Department units will be dispatched to reported lockouts in the following situations, which may be "emergencies":

**Residences**

Person(s) locked in or out of a residence that is incapable of unlocking the residence and is in immediate danger due to medical conditions or fire hazard inside residence i.e. food on stove.

Other situation where the locked condition of the residence is an obvious threat to the safety of persons or property i.e. small children locked inside residence.

## **Vehicles**

Person(s) locked in vehicle that is incapable of unlocking the vehicle and is in immediate danger due to heat or other medical condition or pet(s) locked in closed vehicle without air conditioning.

Vehicle locked and running **INSIDE** of a structure producing a hazardous atmosphere.

Other situation where the locked condition of the vehicle is an obvious threat to the safety of persons or property.

## **4. Mode of Operation**

Upon receipt of a reported lockout, the CMED New Haven operator shall determine if the situation meets the criteria for an “emergency” as listed in Section 3. An “inconvenience” is not an emergency.

If a true “emergency” exists, the call will be dispatched following this standard operating procedure:

### **Life Safety Issue:**

The nearest Engine, Rescue 18 will respond with an ambulance Priority 1.

### **Fire Emergency Issue:**

Car Fire or Box Alarm response based upon information gathered Priority 1.

### **Non-Life Safety or Fire Emergency Issue:**

The nearest Engine and Rescue 18 will respond Priority 2.

**In all incidents**, the Derby Police Department will be advised that they must be on scene to verify owner/occupant information prior to any actions being taken by Derby Fire Department personnel.

If the call is **NOT** an emergency, the reporting person will be:

Advised that the Derby Fire Department lockout policy precludes entry assistance in non-emergency situations for the protection of the residence and/or vehicle and its future occupants.

Advised reporting person to contact a locksmith.

If it cannot be determined whether or not an emergency exists, Derby Fire Department personnel will be dispatched as per **Non-Life Safety or Fire Emergency Issue** and will respond to make an “on-scene” determination of the appropriateness of forcible entry.

## **5. Fire Department Response and Entry**

The Derby Fire Department will respond to all lockout emergencies as defined in Section 4, above. Upon arrival at the scene, the Incident Commander shall observe the situation and make the determination of whether or not an emergency exists.

If a situation exists which poses a threat to life and/or property, Derby Fire Department personnel will make entry by taking the following actions:

1. Have the Derby Police verify the identity of the reporting person and their relation to the residence and/or vehicle to be opened.
2. Advise the person responsible the City of Derby cannot be held responsible for any damage to the residence and/or vehicle under the emergency conditions present.
3. Advise the person responsible for the residence and/or vehicle that an “emergency entry” is being made.
4. Advise the person responsible for the residence and/or vehicle that we will attempt the safest and most economical way of gaining entry.
5. Explain that although we will attempt to minimize damages created from entering the residence and/or vehicle that damage may occur.
6. Select an appropriate way to gain entry into the residence and/or vehicle.
7. After entry is gained and the emergency is stabilized, assist the person in control of the residence and/or vehicle to attempt correcting any damages to the extent possible.

**NOTE:** As we are only making entry in “EMERGENCY” situations, the property, nature of the emergency, the reason for utilizing forcible entry, reporting person’s identification and relation to the property, the method of entry and any subsequent damage must be clearly explained in the Incident Report narrative.

If an emergency as defined herein DOES NOT exist when Derby Fire Department personnel arrive at the scene, personnel will not assist in making entry, but will attempt to assist the customer as follows:

Explain our policy to the customer, with emphasis on the potential of causing dangerous “hidden” damage to the residence and/or vehicle locking mechanism, side impact airbags, wiring or window mechanisms.

Advise the reporting person to call a locksmith or other local person of his/her choosing such as a landlord, friend or spouse with a spare key, etc.

## **6. Termination**

Termination of a lockout assignment will come from the Incident Commander. Upon termination, unit(s) will advise Derby Fire Comm when they are back in service. The apparatus driver is responsible to make sure that the apparatus is back in service with all equipment accounted for.