



Fire/Emergency Services Explorers Use of Hydraulic Rescue Tools

Learning for Life programs in Fire Departments and other related organizations must follow the *Learning for Life* safety and injury prevention policies. The following policy has been developed to provide fire/emergency services Explorers with a basic level of instruction regarding the purpose and operation of hydraulic rescue tools used for vehicle emergency patient extrication and other applications.

More restrictive state and/or local laws supersede *Learning for Life's* hydraulic rescue tools usage policy. Any questions regarding this guidance should be directed to the local Learning for Life Office.

The following standard is the minimum guidelines: Explorers who are 18 years of age or older are permitted to operate hydraulic rescue tools in a training environment upon approval of the instructor. Explorers between the ages of 16 and 18 have the option to operate the hydraulic rescue tools with written parental consent and upon approval of the instructor. The LFL Parental Consent form can be downloaded by visiting exploring.learningforlife.org/safety-first and scroll to the Appendix section. Explorers below the age of 16 are not allowed to operate this equipment. Close supervision is required at all times.

For purposes of this policy, the specific hydraulic rescue tools referred to are as follows: *Extrication spreaders; cutters; rams, and all associated equipment.*

Safety Training Orientation

All Explorers will receive introductory safety training before being introduced to the purpose and operation of hydraulic rescue tools. All fire department Explorer Posts are required to maintain up-to-date training records. The safety training will consist of a minimum of:

- ✓ Proper use and donning of all appropriate fire/rescue safety gear. Typical safety gear consists of structural turnout jacket and pants, safety boots, safety gloves, helmet, and eye protection, all in accordance with the appropriate standards as set forth by the *National Fire Protection Association (NFPA)* and the *Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA)*.
- ✓ A review of the hazards associated with the use of fire department hydraulic rescue tools (as taken from the *International Fire Service Training Institute – IFSTA* – or equivalent).
- ✓ A review of the manufacturers operating procedures for the hydraulic tool being used.

Pre-Check & Operation

As stated above, Explorers must be under close supervision when learning the use of fire service hydraulic rescue tools. The appropriate safety gear, as mentioned above, will be worn at all times while operating the hydraulic rescue tools. The instructors will remain within close reach of the students while they are operating the equipment.

The instructors will provide the students with the following:

- ✓ Thorough familiarization training of operation and maintenance of the tools.
- ✓ Appropriate steps to take to render the tools safe should an accident occur during its operation (fluid leaks, slips, etc).
- ✓ Proper procedures for shutting down power to the equipment and returning it to storage.

Injury Reporting Requirements

All injuries must be treated by qualified medical personnel. Injuries must be reported as required by the fire department company and/or the local government in compliance with state and federal guidelines. All injuries beyond Explorer-rendered first aid and Near Misses should be reported to the local Learning for Life Office. The Incident Information Report and Near Miss Incident Information Report forms can also be found in the Appendix Section of the Safety First Guidelines.