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## Snapshot Size-Up #114



### Duties of the Incident Safety Officer

The Incident Safety Officer (ISO) is a member of the "Command Staff." The ISO is an additional set of eyes and ears for the Incident Commander. This individual's responsibility is to assess and/or anticipate hazardous and unsafe situations, and work with the IC to manage the risks that firefighters take at emergencies. Any firefighter on your department may be assigned as the ISO as long as he or she has knowledge of the current potential safety and health hazards involved in firefighting activities and is skilled in recognizing both imminent and non-imminent hazards. (note: Some States require specific certifications for individuals who are assigned to this position).

An **Imminent Hazard** is a condition that is judged to present an IMMEDIATE danger to Firefighters that is so urgent and severe that it requires immediate corrective or preventive action. When imminent hazards are identified, the ISO shall have the authority to immediately correct the situation by altering, suspending, or terminating these activities. The ISO shall also inform the IC of any actions taken to correct imminent hazards at an emergency scene.

A **Non-Imminent Hazard** is a condition that is judged to be a danger to Firefighters, but is not of an urgent or severe nature and does not require immediate corrective or preventive action. When non-imminent hazards are identified, the ISO shall correct the situation as soon as possible.



Deputy Chief Frank Viscuso is a twenty-year veteran of the fire service. He is a regular contributor to Fire Engineering Magazine & FireOpsOnline.com. He is also co-author of the book Fireground Operational Guides (PennWell 2011). The book features universal tactical worksheets and operational guides for more than 70 incidents that range from water, gas and electrical emergencies to multiple-alarm structure fires.