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Snapshot Size-Up #132

Carnival Considerations

Below are items to consider when responding to an incident at a carnival or fun fair.

Life Hazard (Carnies)

Most Carnivals are like a mini self-contained village with their own utilities & housing. They will travel from location to location during the carnival season that usually last from April to September. It is common for the Carnival Company to import workers from a foreign country to work the rides for the carnival season.

The workers will most likely be housed on location bunkhouse trailers. These trailers will usually be located behind the rides or in a nearby area. This will create a life hazard day and night that will be compounded due to a possible language barrier. The conditions in the bunkhouses can be dangerous due to overcrowding and the presence of makeshift kitchens.

Power Supply (Self-Contained)

Power will need to be supplied to all the rides, stands and bunkhouses. The carnival most likely will have its generator trailer that will be powered by diesel fuel. A typical carnival fuel tank may hold in upwards to 600 gallons of fuel and put out 220 3-phases and up to 1200 amps. Power cords may also protrude out of the generator trailer and create a power grid throughout the carnival. The cords may be covered with protective rubber matting or may be buried a few inches below the ground. Usually the only time the power cords are buried it when the protective matting creates a tripping hazard, or the municipality requires it to be buried. Distribution Boxes will be located throughout the carnival breaking down the power grid further. **NEVER** disconnect any power cord for any reason, this will create an arc that could injure or kill a firefighter. If power has to be isolated or disconnected to a ride or stand you must have a representative of the carnival do it to prevent injury. Power can be shut at the generator by hitting the emergency stop button however this will shut down the entire carnival and may create a bigger problem by shutting occupied rides and stands that are isolated from the incident. Also take into consideration that at some point the fuel will have to be replaced on-scene.

There are many more size-up considerations to consider at carnivals and fairs, such as the use of propane for cooking and heat, and food stands using charcoal or wood for cooking. Not every size-up factor will come into play, but look at the list and think about the ones that will have an impact on your operations.

Construction; Occupancy; Apparatus & staffing; Life Hazard; Terrain; Water Supply; Auxiliary Supply in trailers; Street Conditions; Weather; Exposures; Area; Location & Extent; Time; Height; Hazardous Materials and Special Considerations.



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