

Western State College Mountain Rescue Team Team Ethics Handout

1. Safety is a primary consideration in everything that we do. Each member will be responsible for ensuring their own safety, the safety of other team members and the safety of the public we deal with. Members should not place themselves in unreasonably dangerous situations to carry out search and rescue (SAR) operations.
2. After safety, our primary responsibility on missions is to locate and evacuate a subject as quickly and efficiently as possible. All actions must be evaluated in light of how well they contribute to this goal. The team does not have individual heroes. By working together toward this goal the whole team accomplishes heroic acts.
3. Your knowledge, skills and abilities are the most important tools you use in SAR. Each member is responsible for developing and maintaining these tools. The more you know, the more capable you are of carrying out safe and effective SAR operations.
4. The willingness of other agencies to call our team for SAR missions depends heavily on the public image of our team, its competence, and professionalism. Each member is responsible for ensuring that this image is a positive one.
5. All team members will interact with search subjects (including the remains of deceased victims), family members, and emergency workers from other agencies with respect, sensitivity, and professionalism.
6. The use of drugs and alcohol is prohibited at all times during the SAR missions and trainings. Members should recognize that their use of drugs and alcohol away from team activities could still reflect on the team.
7. The services of the team are offered on a completely voluntary basis. No member shall solicit contributions of money, goods or services for SAR services. If asked about donations to the team, members should send that person to the team leader or other person in charge for information on how that donation can be made.
8. No person shall act on behalf of the team or represent the team without the authorization of the board (on business matters) or the mission leader (during missions).

9. Members shall not use their association with the team for political, financial or business purposes, which do not directly benefit the team or further its purposes. The board should be consulted before such an activity is initiated to ensure their knowledge and agreement with the activity.
10. Students involved with the team must manage their level of involvement to ensure that their schoolwork is not seriously compromised.
11. The fact that we are working with the Sheriff on emergency situations does not give us the right to trespass in private property. If SAR operations demand access on private land we should make a reasonable attempt to contact the landowner or request that the Sheriff's Office contact the landowner before we enter the property.
12. At all times the team will seek to minimize the impact of our operations on the land and its resources.