



Today's discussion is from the Aviation Category.

RETARDANT, PARACARGO & WATER DROP SAFETY

Having retardant (jell, foam), paracargo, and water dropped on a fire should be a routine event. However, there are risks associated with drops that can pose serious threats to personnel and equipment. Consider the following for all drops:

- Be aware of the location and flight patterns (final approach, drop zone, exit) of aircraft during drop operations.
- Be sure you have positive contact with the pilot before the drop.

All persons, vehicles, and animals should be cleared from the danger zone prior to the arrival of the aircraft.

Beware of “streamers” or parachutes that don’t open.

- Personnel can be injured by the impact of material dropped by aircraft. Clear personnel out of the target area when the drop is conducted. If an individual is caught unaware in a drop zone:
 - Hold your hand tool away from your body.
 - Lie face down with hardhat in place and head toward the oncoming aircraft.
 - Grasp something firm to prevent being carried or rolled about by dropped liquid.
 - Do not run unless escape is ensured.
 - Get clear of dead snags and tops.
 - Be aware of rolling debris below the drop site in steep terrain.
- Working in an area covered by retardant should be done with caution due to slippery surfaces.
- If possible, wash the retardant off your skin to prevent irritation.

References:

[Incident Response Pocket Guide](#) (pg58)

Have an idea? Have feedback? Share it.

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