

Line Spike

The Line Spike, or Coyote, is a progressive line construction technique in which self-sufficient crews build fireline until the end of an operational period, remain overnight (RON) at or near that point, and then begin again the next operational period. Crews should be properly equipped and prepared to spend two or three shifts on the line with minimal support from the incident base.

Safety Considerations

- Can line spike locations maintain LCES at all times?
- Can Emergency Medical Technicians (EMTs) be on the line?
- Can a timely medevac plan be implemented?
- Can daily communications (verbal and written) be maintained?
- Can food and water be provided daily?
- Is each crew leader comfortable with the assignment?

Operational Considerations

- Meals during line spike operational periods may consist of rations and/or sack lunches.
- The line spike generally will not last more than two or three operational periods for any one crew.
- Division Supervisors will be responsible for establishing on and off operational period times.
- Crews working line spike operational periods will be resupplied on the fireline as close as possible to the RON point.

Logistical Considerations

- Bring toothbrush/paste, extra socks/underwear, light coat, double lunch, space blanket, etc.
- Consider early in the operational period where the crew(s) will RON and ensure the location provides for safety and logistical needs of the crew (main fire poses no threat, helicopters can longline or land at site, personnel are provided semi-flat ground to sleep on, adequate firewood exists for warming fires, etc.).
- Anticipate resupply needs and place those orders early in the operational period. Crew leaders should make arrangements to have qualified individuals at RON locations to accept those orders by longline or internal helicopter operations.
- Take measures to prevent problems with food, trash, etc., in areas where bears are a concern. It's a common practice to leave one or more individuals with radio communications at the RON location to coordinate the backhaul of trash or the pre-positioning of reusable supplies to advanced RON locations.
- Determine how crew time will be managed. Normally this function can be provided using inbound/outbound helicopter flights at the RON location, or the time is turned in upon returning to the incident base.
- Determine how medical emergencies will be managed. An EMT may be needed at the RON location.