

East Lake Tarpon Special Fire Control District

	SOP 803 Vehicle Safety	
	Implementation Date: 11/2000	Revision Date(s): 07/2004
		Reviewed Date(s):
	Forms or Attachments: None	

- A. All operators of Departmental Vehicles shall meet the following requirements in order to operate a motor vehicle in the performance of their duties:
1. Any Department vehicle driver/operator shall have a valid State of Florida driver's license. Note: Any restrictions must be reported to the department immediately.
 2. Have at least a valid State of Florida Class D license with an "E" endorsement (Note: Class A, B, and C meets this requirement on the driver's license).
 3. **Motor Vehicle Records (MVR) Evaluations**
Routine administrative reviews of all drivers MVR's is the most effective way to know the specific driving habits of individual drivers. All MVR's shall be reviewed annually, and a copy will be retained in each member's file.

Employees that renew or update their driver's license will present a copy of such license to Administration within 10 calendar days of the update.

Employees that have their driving privileges revoked or suspended will notify his/her district chief immediately upon reporting to work on their next duty day.

(MVR) Evaluation Requirements

Class A Violation

An individual who has a Class A violation within the past three (3) years normally receives a license suspension from the DMV which issued the license. In addition, department personnel will be on suspension of driving privileges for anyone convicted of a Class A violation for a period of eighteen (18) months. Any individual will also be required to attend an approved driver-improvement program, or equivalent training, and be recertified to operate emergency vehicles.

Class B Violation (Age 22-65)

Any individual who has a combination of two (2) Class B moving violation convictions and/or chargeable accidents in a three (3) year period will be issued a warning letter from the chief.

Any individual who has a combination of three (3) moving violation convictions and/or chargeable accidents in a three (3) year period will be issued a suspension from driving department vehicles for a period of ninety (90) days by the Chief.

Any individual who has more than two (2) moving violation convictions or three (3) chargeable accidents or any combination in a three (3) year period will be issued a suspension from driving department vehicles for a period of one (1) year. In addition, the same individual would be required to complete an approved driver improvement program and be recertified to operate emergency vehicles.

Note: Unusual circumstances with individual cases will be evaluated by the chief.

Class B Violation (age 18-21 and over 65)

Any individual who has a combination of two (2) Class B moving violations or chargeable accidents in a three (3) year period shall be issued a warning letter from the chief.

Any individual who has more than two (2) Class B moving violation convictions or chargeable accidents or a combination of more than two (2) of the above in a three (3) year period will be issued a suspension from driving department vehicles for a period of one (1) year. In addition, this individual would be required to complete an approved driver improvement program and be recertified to operate emergency vehicles.

Violations:

Designation of Type A and Type B violations are based on a survey of state point systems. Violations receiving higher numbers of points are classed as Type A.

Type A Violations

- 1.) Driving while intoxicated.
- 2.) Driving under the influence of drugs.
- 3.) Negligent homicide arising out of the use of a motor vehicle (gross negligence).
- 4.) Operating during a period of suspension or revocation.
- 5.) Using a motor vehicle for the commission of a felony.
- 6.) Aggravated assault with a motor vehicle.
- 7.) Operating a motor vehicle without owner's authority
- 8.) Permitting an unlicensed person to drive.
- 9.) Reckless driving
- 10.) Hit and run driving.

Type B Violations

All moving violations not listed as Type A violations. (Exceeding posted speed limit is a Type B. Violation.)

- B. All Personnel who respond in "Emergency Mode" shall meet the following requirements:
 - 1. Medically able to respond and operate a vehicle safely and effectively.
 - 2. Successfully complete the departmental E.V.O.C. training, including all written and practical requirements.

- C. All Personnel who drive and operate department engines shall meet the following requirements:
 - 1. Have completed an approved 40 hour pump class.
 - 2. Have completed 10 non-emergency return trips from Emergency calls within the first year of employment.
 - 3. Have 2 hours of non-emergency driving supervised by the company officer
 - 4. Receive written authorization from the Training Division Chief to function in acting position upon completion of requirements 1 – 3.

- D. All State of Florida Traffic Laws shall be followed at all times and "**DUE REGARD**" shall be utilized at all times while the vehicle is in operation.

- E. Inspect the vehicle's lights, windshield wipers, brakes, mirrors, tires and seat belts daily.

- F. Observe all local traffic laws when operating vehicles under routine or non-emergency conditions. (See Vehicle Emergency Operation Procedures).

- G. Do not ride on any department vehicle outside the cab.

EXCEPTION: When fighting fire using brush unit, personnel must be secured with belt and safety bar must be in place.

- H. Do not open doors or exit a vehicle while it is in motion.

I BACKING POLICY

1. General Rules

- a. If you can avoid backing, don't back!
- b. Never be in a hurry when backing.
- c. Do not start to back when unsure of the area.
- d. Do not put the unit into reverse gear before coming to a complete stop.
- e. Roll the window down completely.
- f. Make visual and verbal contact with spotter
- g. No spotter available:
 - 1) Reconsider backing up. Is it really necessary?
 - 2) Make a reasonable attempt to get someone to act as a spotter.
 - 3) If a spotter cannot be obtained, get out of the unit and walk around the unit completely and survey the backing area. Before proceeding to back unit, be sure to check overhead clearance.
 - 4) If both employees are present, but the patient requires constant care, the operator can proceed with backing the unit only if the above procedures are taken.

2. Operator Responsibilities

- a. Bring the unit to a complete stop.
- b. Roll window down completely.
- c. Make verbal communication with spotter. "If you cannot hear the spotter, do not back up!"
- d. A spotter is in place eight to ten feet at the left rear of the unit.
- e. Be able to see spotter in left rear-view mirror. "If you cannot see, do not back up!"
- f. Driver and spotter must establish and continued eye to eye contact in the left rear-view mirror at all times.
- g. Operators must have a thorough knowledge of hand signals.
- h. The spotter hand signals the driver to back up.

3. Spotter Responsibilities:

- a. Get out of the unit and survey the right side and rear area for obstacles that would damage the unit. "Remember overhead clearance."
- b. Place yourself eight to ten feet to the left rear of the unit.
- c. Make sure the operator can see and hear you.
- d. Be familiar with hand signals before allowing backing maneuvers to begin.

- J. Prior to moving apparatus, the driver should walk around the unit to insure all doors are closed and the apparatus is clear for movement.
- K. Make certain all equipment is properly secured on/in vehicle before moving.
- L. Never move Master Electrical Switch to **OFF** position while engine is running.
- M. When refueling vehicles, shut off ignition and also place Master Electrical Switch in **OFF** position.
- N. Personnel assigned to jump seats will be seated and secured whenever the unit is moving.
- O. Personnel responding and seated shall wear the protective devices (i.e., seat belts, headsets) as furnished in the apparatus.
- P. Vehicles, when pumping, will be in drive with the parking brake applied and the wheels chocked.
- Q. All department vehicles, when parked with the engine off, will be in neutral or park position and the parking brake applied.
- R. There will be no riding the tailboard of an emergency vehicle.
- S. When backing emergency vehicles on a public roadway, all vehicles emergency lighting will be ON so as to warn oncoming traffic and a back-up person is required.
- T. Lieutenant will be responsible for personnel compliance with this SOP.

HOSE LOADING PROCEDURE

- A. Hose loading operations may be performed on moving fire apparatus only when there is compliance with all of the following conditions:
 - 1. There shall be a member, other than those employees loading hose, assigned as a safety observer. The safety observer shall have an unobstructed view of the hose loading operation and be in visual and voice contact with the apparatus operator.
 - 2. The fire apparatus shall be driven only in a forward direction at a speed of 5 mph or less.
 - 3. No employees shall be allowed to stand on the tailstep, sidesteps, running boards, or any other location on the apparatus while the apparatus is in motion.
 - 4. Employees shall be permitted to be in the hose bed but shall not stand while the apparatus is in motion.

5. Prior to the beginning of each hose loading operation, the situation shall be evaluated to ensure compliance with all the provisions of the standard operating procedure. If the standard operating procedure cannot be complied with, or if there is any question as to the safety of the operation for the specific situation, then the hose shall not be loaded on moving fire apparatus.

EMERGENCY RESPONSE MODE

(All Personnel)

Responding quickly to certain calls for service is a necessary although dangerous part of fire department work. Endangering the life or property of others by reckless disregard of safety, even if responding to an emergency, cannot be condoned. The purpose of this procedure is to provide for safe vehicular operations in an emergency response situation.

All drivers shall observe the following procedure for emergency response:

1. When responding in the emergency mode, it is optional to wear a helmet.
2. Warn other vehicular traffic by using siren and warning lights when en-route to an existing emergency.
3. Do not exceed 10 MPH, when leaving the station, until the vehicle reaches the street.
4. "Cover" the brake when possible danger is observed.
5. Intersection Crossing Policy
 - A. General Concerns

Intersections provide a location for a high frequency and severity of ~~accidents~~ crashes due to:

 - 1.) Restricted visibility
 - 2.) Assumption of other driver's actions
 - 3.) Confused drivers
 - 4.) Vehicle density
 - B. Intersection Crossing Procedure
 - 1.) Crossing on green
 - a. Slow down
 - b. Take foot off accelerator
 - c. Look in all three directions
 - (1) Be aware of oncoming vehicles turning in front of your vehicle.
 - d. Proceed with caution-one lane at a time.

- 2.) Crossing on red
 - a. Come to complete stop
 - b. Establish eye contact with drivers of other vehicles
 - c. Wait for partner to communicate it is all clear
 - d. Wait two seconds
 - e. Proceed with caution - one lane at a time

- 3.) Crossing Multi-Lane Intersections*
 - a. Come to complete stop
 - b. Establish eye contact with driver of other vehicle
 - c. Wait for partner to communicate it is all clear
 - d. Proceed crossing one lane
 - e. Come to a complete stop for next lane
 - f. Establish eye contact and wait for partner to communicate it is all clear for this lane.
 - g. Proceed crossing this lane.

*Use the above-procedure for each lane that needs to be crossed.

- 4.) Making right or left turns across stopped vehicles
 - a. Come to complete stop next to vehicle
 - b. Establish eye contact with side vehicle's driver via your partner or yourself.
 - c. Wait for your partner to tell you it is clear.
 - d. Be aware of vehicles approaching from behind.
 - e. Proceed with caution.

C. Special Precautions

- 1.) Slow down prior to reaching intersection in order to:
 - a. Get a good view of the situation
 - b. Avoid startling unaware motorists

- 2.) Use Siren
 - a. Use yelp siren mode
 - b. Use headlights hi-lo beam
 - c. Be patient, keep signaling

- 3.) Avoid passing on right unless it is last resort

- 4.) Avoid traveling in opposing traffic unless you are certain traffic is clear.
 - a. If you must proceed, do so with extreme caution and stay to your far right.

**This policy does not cover every situation in an intersection crossing and is not intended to be applicable in all situations.

6. Low beam headlights shall be in operation during emergency response.
7. Cross center line or median when necessary to pass stopped vehicles. Use all precautions. (Do not travel against the flow of traffic for more than one block.)
8. Slow down when followed by a tailgater.
9. Do not pass other emergency vehicles during emergency response. When passing is necessary, the passing arrangement shall be made through radio communications.
10. When applicable all vehicles shall proceed at 15 miles per hour or less through school zones regardless of non-emergency or emergency mode.
11. When a school bus has lights flashing, markers extended, and is loading school children all vehicles will come to a complete stop. If in emergency mode that unit will also stop unless waved on by the school bus driver. Then, and only then, may the unit pass the bus at 15 miles per hour.
12. During emergency response or non-emergency travel, drivers of fire department vehicles shall come to a complete stop at all unguarded railroad grade crossings. Drivers shall assure that it is safe to proceed before crossing the railroad track(s). Drivers shall also use caution when approaching and crossing any guarded grade railroad crossing.