

Orchard Farm Fire Protection District Standard Operating Procedure

Division: 200 Emergency Operations
Section: 202 Fire & Rescue
Subject: 202.10 Fire - Vehicle



Supersedes: N/A

Approved By: 

Date: 05/22/2013

Date Last Reviewed: N/A

Page: 1 of 2

PURPOSE:

To define the District's response to vehicle fires

RESPONSIBILITY:

All District Personnel

PROCEDURES:

This procedure applies to fires involving automobiles, light duty trucks, medium trucks, tractor-trailers, campers, buses, trains, construction equipment, motorcycles and other on and off road vehicles. This policy does not apply to vehicles involved in hazardous materials accidents or to vehicle fires inside of structures.

The Captain and firefighter shall don full PPE/SCBA. The arriving apparatus shall radio an initial size-up to other incoming units. The apparatus shall be placed at a prudent and safe distance (approximately 75' from the vehicle), preferably uphill and upwind. Try to make contact with the owner/occupant of the vehicle to find out the contents inside the vehicle, as well as if it operates on alternative fuels or electricity. If there is any visible sign of smoke or fire the officer in charge should pull an attack line of at least 1 3/4" in diameter to extinguish the fire. As soon as possible, the battery should be disconnected if it is still intact. NOTE: A booster line is permissible if the fire is very minor in nature.

The Company Officer shall be responsible for the on-scene operations when not superseded by a Command Officer. With safety being paramount, listed below are a few basic tenets.

1. Firefighters shall avoid the front and rear bumpers of vehicles, as they have been known to explode and travel great distances.
2. Firefighters should stay clear of wheel wells. (hydraulic shock failure)
3. Firefighters should be aware of possible drive shaft explosions.
4. Hydraulic lines and reservoirs often explode when heated. Flaming hot oil may cause severe burns. Hydraulic cylinders are now commonly used in vehicles. They are used for assisting and holding up tailgate

Subject 202.10 Fire - Vehicle

Date: 05/22/2013

Page: 2 of 2

and hood assemblies. These cylinders when heated can violently explode sending shrapnel great distances. Extreme caution should be used when the vehicle involved could potential have these cylinders installed.

5. Vehicle batteries are also cause for concern, as when heated, the caps may blow off. In some cases, the batteries may split open.
6. Vehicles equipped with airbags, air curtains, seat belt tensioners and other safety restraint system devices should be approached with caution.
7. Many new vehicle fuel tanks are constructed of plastic. They are susceptible to melting from the vehicle fire causing a further larger flash fire from the escaping fuel.
8. The hybrid and alternative fuel vehicles present a new challenge for firefighters. Identification of this type of vehicle is critical to safe fire ground operations. The high voltage batteries should be disconnected as soon as possible if they are accessible. Vehicles powered by natural gas or propane create problems from the compressed gases and their containers. Isolate these fuels when safe to do so. Evacuation of the area may be necessary if the fire cannot be controlled in a reasonable amount of time.
9. Adequate law enforcement personnel must be present to control traffic hazards. Firefighters present that are not critical to the operation shall stay out of the roadway in a safe location.
10. Firefighter not in SCBA shall don reflective safety vests when operating or assisting near the roadways.