



FIRE RESCUE

ALBEMARLE COUNTY

STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINE

Subject:	Vehicle & Traffic Safety
Reference Number:	SOG-OPS-017
Effective Date:	April 2006
Last Revision Date:	N/A
Signature of Approval:	 J. Dan Eggleston, Chief

Purpose: To provide appropriate safety guidelines for fire and rescue personnel when operating emergency vehicles or deployed at the scene of roadway incidents.

Background: This standard operating guidelines was adopted by the Albemarle County Fire Rescue Advisory Board at the 22 March 2006 meeting.

Guideline:

1. Emergency vehicles shall always be operated with due regard for life and property.
2. Seatbelts should be utilized by all occupants whenever the vehicle is in operation. An exception to this policy is situations where patient care in an ambulance limits the effective use of seatbelts.
3. During emergency responses, vehicles should come to a complete stop prior to proceeding through any controlled intersection against the signal, or, at a minimum, should reduce speed to that required to make a complete stop in order to avoid an accident should conditions require it.
4. Whenever possible, apparatus should be positioned at the scene of a roadway incident in such a manner as to create an effective safety barrier between the scene and moving traffic.
5. When parking an emergency vehicle at a scene, the front wheels should be turned away from where personnel or patients will be located. In the event the vehicle is struck from behind, this reduces the risk of having the unit pushed into the working area.
6. The driver/operator of any emergency vehicle shall ensure that their vehicle's parking brake is applied before exiting the cab at the scene of any incident.
7. Personnel operating in or near a roadway should wear turnout gear or a reflective vest for increased visibility. Helmet use is also highly recommended.
8. Orange traffic cones should be utilized whenever possible to provide a visible safety perimeter around apparatus parked in the roadway. This procedure should include emergency incidents, training activities, and public service events.
 - a. Depending upon traffic speed, cones should be placed at a sufficient distance and intervals from the vehicle(s) to provide approaching drivers with adequate warning and reaction time. On high-speed roads (45 mph or greater) cones ideally should be placed at least 250 feet from the first apparatus.
 - b. Traffic cones should be placed an appropriate distance beside parked apparatus to provide a safety zone for personnel to pass through.
 - c. Traffic cones shall be utilized to protect other vehicles or locations where personnel are working or safety hazard exists.
 - d. The vehicle operator is responsible for timely and appropriate deployment of traffic cones.
9. The use of high-beam headlights at night and/or the placement of scene lighting should be considered with regard to any potential to cause temporary blindness of passing motorists.