



Manhattan Fire Protection District

SOP #: 451-1	Effective Date: 10/28/96	Revised Date: 07/08/16
Section: Emergency Response Apparatus		
Subject: General Driving Practices of District Vehicles		

PURPOSE:

This procedure is to promote the safe and efficient response of apparatus to emergency scenes, and the safe operation of department vehicles in emergency, non-emergency situations and every day usage. This procedure is to prevent accidents and damage to department, public or private property. This procedure is to prevent injuries to department personnel and/or to the general public and to ensure the ability of those personnel driving department vehicles to perform to a minimum standard.

SCOPE:

This procedure shall apply to all employees of the department. The driver of each vehicle bears full responsibility for compliance with this procedure, and all applicable State and local laws and regulations concerning the operation of motor vehicles and emergency vehicles and compliance with the department's insurance carriers' regulations.

DEFINITIONS:

Apparatus: shall be defined as any motorized vehicle or motor vehicle and trailer combination operated by this department.

Driver: shall be defined as personnel whom have been trained, properly licensed, and given approval to operate specified apparatus of this department.

Officer: shall be defined as person seated in the front passenger right hand seat whether of officer rank or acting officer of vehicle.

True Emergency: is a situation in which there is high probability of death or serious injury to an individual or significant property loss, and actions by an emergency vehicle driver may reduce the seriousness of the situation.

GUIDELINE:

Whether specified in these guide lines or not the minimum standard acceptable shall be full compliance with applicable areas of Chapter 95 1/2 of the Illinois Vehicle Code as applying to Emergency Vehicles and their operation, and to the regulations and restrictions set forth by the insurance carrier of the department (Volunteer Firemen's Insurance Services/Midwest). All persons driving department operated vehicles shall familiarize themselves with the above named regulations. All persons driving department operated vehicles must have a current valid Illinois Drivers License with Fire Apparatus exemption or a valid Illinois Commercial Drivers License (CDL), either of which must be of the proper weight class for the vehicle being operated. Class "B" (Single Vehicles 26,001 pounds or more GVW) with air brake exemption is the minimum required for clearance to drive all department vehicles with the exception of the pick-up/ SUV style vehicles. In this instance a class A license is required.



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A copy of each person's current license must be on file with the Manhattan Fire Protection District and each person is responsible for submitting revised copies when necessary (change of address, renewal, etc.). NO one shall drive department vehicles at any time with a suspended, revoked, hardship, or any other limited type license. All drivers must have completed the department's driver training requirements and participate in continuing education in vehicle operations as set forth in the training program.

All persons driving department vehicles shall have a basic knowledge of operating that vehicles pump and (or) generator and the equipment it carries, and where it is stored on the vehicle. This is to ensure that the vehicle may be placed in operation upon arrival and that the driver can function to a reasonable level. The driver shall ensure accountability for the equipment removed from their vehicle during an incident or training.

Prior to entering the cab and starting the vehicle, the driver shall make a circle of safety around the vehicle to ensure that all equipment is secured, that all compartment doors are securely closed and any physical obstructions are moved out of the way. This shall be conducted prior to moving the vehicle regardless of whether or not the vehicle is about to leave on an emergency or non-emergency.

Seatbelt and Safety Restraints SOP # 200-2 shall be followed at all times.

Personnel who are taking medications that affect their ability to drive or operate vehicles shall not drive department vehicles for any purpose. Personnel who have any traces of alcohol in their system will not be permitted to drive any department vehicle.

Backing-up apparatus SOP #451-6 shall be followed at all times.

Wheel chocks, when provided, shall be used in addition to parking brakes when apparatus are parked and operating or unattended.

All drivers shall attempt to maintain control of the vehicle that they are operating in such a manner as to provide the maximum level of safety for both their passengers and the general public. The driver shall be aware of his rate of closure on other vehicles, and on pedestrians at all times to make sure that a safe following distance is established and maintained.

All drivers shall obey all traffic laws and traffic control devices when driving any fire department vehicle under ordinary travel conditions. Any driver observed breaking any traffic laws or driving any vehicle in an aggressive manner will be subject to disciplinary action including suspension of driving privileges.

The Driver of the vehicle is responsible for ensuring the vehicle is placed back in service. This includes ensuring ALL vehicles have in excess of 3/4 tank of fuel. Ensuring the vehicle is clean with water tank refilled, hose repacked, and equipment cleaned and inspected for damage. It



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shall be the responsibility of the officer on the vehicle to assist the driver in completing these procedures and documenting and discrepancies.

Non-Emergency Driving

Change of quarters, move ups etc. whether within or outside of the district shall be considered a non-emergency response, and warning devices shall not be used and all traffic laws obeyed. If while changing quarters you are diverted to the scene or a second emergency then warning devices are to be activated and emergency procedures followed.

Apparatus responding to training drills shall do so in a non-emergency manner, obeying all normal traffic regulations.

Emergency Driving

Any member responding to the station or to the scene of an emergency in their private vehicle must strictly adhere to all applicable motor vehicle laws. No member of the organization will be permitted to violate any motor vehicle laws, including but not limited to; speed limits, going thru traffic devices, or passing in an unsafe manner. While it is recognized that timeliness in response to an emergency is important, all drivers must understand that any driver observed breaking any traffic laws or operating any vehicle in an aggressive or unsafe manner will be subject to disciplinary action including but not limited to suspension and loss of driving privileges.

Driver and officer shall be aware of the address, location of call and the route to the location prior to departing station.

Drivers shall be aware that the privileges granted to them as operators of Emergency vehicles regarding speed, direction of travel, right-of-way etc. are privileges and not absolute rights, and must operate the vehicle in emergency responses with "Due Regard" for the safety of the general public and crew members of their vehicle. Employees shall not drive in a reckless or negligent manner.

Even though emergency vehicles are allowed to exceed posted speed limits when responding to emergencies, drivers must be aware that any time they exceed the posted speed limit they must exercise extreme caution and "Due Regard" for others, and do so at their own risk. Drivers must understand that at times the posted speed limit may be excessive for hazardous conditions of weather, heavy traffic and dangerous road hazards. (a) the recommended maximum response speed should not exceed 10 miles per hour over the posted speed limit, even if permitted by the State vehicle code, (b) maximum response speed will be reduced whenever road traffic or weather conditions do not permit the safe operation of the emergency vehicle regardless of the posted speed limit, (c) during periods of inclement weather (wet, snow, or icy conditions) the maximum response speed shall not exceed the posted speed limit.



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All Audible and Visual Warning Devices must be in operation regardless of time of day and or traffic conditions when responding to true emergencies. Warning devices are not always effective in making other drivers aware of your presence. Warning devices only REQUEST the right of way, they do not insure the right of way.

Passing of other emergency vehicles is extremely dangerous and should only occur when absolutely necessary and must be coordinated by radio communication between the two affected vehicles.

ALL Intersections are to be approached with caution. Driver/operators shall change siren cadence not less than 200 feet from the intersection. Driver/operators shall scan intersections for possible hazards and reduce speed before entering the intersection. When entering intersections controlled by traffic lights showing Red or Yellow to the apparatus, or stop sign controlled intersections the driver/operator shall come to a complete stop until it is deemed safe to proceed. If no other traffic is present driver may proceed through at no more than 10 M.P.H.

Unguarded Railroad intersections shall be approached with audible warning devices turned off. Vehicle must come to a complete stop before entering the grade crossing. All other sound producing equipment shall be turned off, and windows shall be opened in order for the crew to listen for train horns before proceeding.

When approaching the scene of an emergency, drivers shall reduce speed and be alert for other vehicles and personnel operating in the area. When apparatus are moving at the scene of an incident it shall be at minimal speed.

Apparatus should be parked at emergency scenes positioned to provide protection to personnel operating near or on the roadway from traffic. If any amount of through traffic is hazardous to the safety of personnel then the roadway should be closed by fire units until police assistance is obtained.

SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS:

When responding to and returning from emergencies and/or when driving in general, all members shall use First Street. No department vehicles shall use Wabash (road behind Fritz's) to respond to a call, when driving in general or when returning to the station. First St. and State St. provide a 90 degree intersection which improves visibility.

SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS:

None

Approved By:

Signature: Daniel Forsythe

Date: 07/08/16