

Shepherd Tri-Township Fire Department
DRIVING AUTHORIZED EMERGENCY VEHICLE

I. Purpose:

To establish the Fire Department Procedure regarding driving emergency vehicles.

I. Procedures:

A. Driver Qualifications for Dept. Vehicles

1. For an emergency response with lights and siren operating and a vehicle over 26,000 lbs the driver must have successfully completed Emergency Vehicle Drivers Training Class and have been checked out on the vehicle by a Station Officer.
2. For a non emergency response with a vehicle over 26,000 lbs the driver must have a CDL and have been checked out on the vehicle by a Station Officer.
3. For an emergency response with lights and siren operating and a vehicle less than 26,000 lbs the driver must have successfully completed Emergency Vehicle Drivers Training Class and have been checked out on the vehicle by a Station Officer.
4. For a non-emergency response with a vehicle under 26,000 lbs the must have a valid drivers license and have been checked out by a Station Officer.

B. General Operations

1. Personnel on routine duties, or responding other than an emergency vehicle must observe all traffic regulations and be ready to yield the right-of-way at intersections. Always be extra courteous while driving a Fire Department marked vehicle. Courtesy costs nothing, but can pay high dividends in creating good will toward the department.
2. Except when answering emergency calls, all departmental vehicles must be parked in accordance with Departmental Policy. Irregular parking on emergency calls creates hazardous situations and decreases our efficiency. Irregular parking with departmental marked vehicles on other than emergency calls decreases public respect.
3. When any apparatus is being backed up, it will be the responsibility of the driver to have a spotter at the rear of the vehicle assisting and directing the movement of the apparatus. In the event that the driver elects not to have and use a spotter, he/she will be solely responsible for any incident that may occur while backing.

C. Emergency Driving

1. On an emergency call, our personnel must carefully consider all of the following factors:
 - a. That the call has been dispatched as an emergency call.
 - b. Said personnel is/are in accordance with all Departmental rules and regulations in order to be allowed to respond as an emergency vehicle.
 - c. Weather conditions.
 - d. Geographical location (e.g. hills, flat, curves).
 - e. Roadway (type/condition).
 - f. Traffic conditions.

 - g. Lighting.
 - h. Population density in the area (e.g. existence of schools, shopping areas, residential units, businesses).
 - i. Familiarity with area. This factor becomes more important if we are called out on a mutual-aid call.
 - j. Type of vehicle being driven.
 - k. Driver ability. (Personnel must remember to never drive beyond their abilities).
 - l. Danger to innocent public and to property.
2. While operating with due regard for the safety of others, personnel responding to an emergency call may exceed the posted or Prima Facie speed limit.
3. While responding to an emergency call, Fire Department personnel must exercise "that care which a reasonably prudent person would exercise in the discharge of official duties of like nature under like circumstances".
Remember, in order to later justify your decision with respect to any type of driving conduct, you must be able to articulate facts supporting your decision.
4. Throughout the emergency call, personnel must continually be evaluating their decision and be prepared to terminate as an emergency vehicle at any time public safety so requires.
5. No Fire Department personnel shall at any time operate a motor vehicle at such a rate of speed or in such a manner so as to cause the person to lose control over the operation and /or direction of the vehicle of otherwise needlessly endanger the innocent public.

D. Seat Belts

All on-duty department members are required to use all safety devices and restraint systems provided by the vehicle manufacturer at all times. This includes personnel responding to any emergency calls. The driver has the sole responsibility to make sure all passengers are seated and belted prior to the vehicle being moved.

E. Riding on Tailboards and Running Boards

Regardless of restraining devices, the Department prohibits personnel from riding on tailboards and running boards.

F. Summary

1. Definition: An emergency call is a call that requires immediate action in order to preserve life or property. Some examples are personal injury motor vehicle accidents, personal injury accidents at home or in public, fires, or other medical emergencies.
2. When responding to emergency calls for service, all driving done by members of this department shall be consistent with the provisions set forth in MCL 257.2, MCL 257.603, MCL 257.632, MCL 257.706 (d), MCL 257.653 in accordance with P.A. 300.
3. In responding to emergency calls for service, all responding personnel shall get to the scene as quickly as possible with safety. Personnel should keep their vehicles under control at all times and drive at a speed which will enable them to avoid hazards they should reasonably anticipate by being alert and exercising due care and caution. Personnel shall use all emergency equipment necessary to give adequate warning of their approach to persons using the highway