

# DAYVILLE FIRE COMPANY

## STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINES

Section: Apparatus

Date Issued: 5-25-92

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SOG: C-3

SUBJECT: DRIVERS/OPERATORS OF DEPARTMENT APPARATUS

PURPOSE: To describe the department policy on operating department apparatus.

DEFINITION:

The following requirements are to be followed on driving department apparatus.

- Department apparatus shall be operated only by members who are trained and certified in their proper operation. All members are required to recertify on all apparatus they are qualified to operate if so required by the Officers of the apparatus Company.
- Drivers of said apparatus shall be directly responsible for safe and prudent operation under all conditions. When the Driver is under supervision of an Officer, that Officer shall also assume responsibility for the apparatus.
- Prior to entering the cab and starting the vehicle, the emergency vehicle driver shall make a circle of safety around the vehicle to see that all equipment is secured, that all compartment doors are securely closed and any physical obstructions moved out of the way. During the circle of safety the emergency vehicle driver shall encircle the vehicles and visually inspect all 4 sides and the top of the vehicle before entering the cab. He/she should also verify right side and rear clearance with the person riding in the officer position. 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.
- Drivers shall not move apparatus until all persons on the apparatus are seated and secure with seat belts in approved riding positions. Riding on tail steps or in any other exposed positions or standing is prohibited.

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- All drivers will leave station at a slow rate of speed to insure exhaust system has properly disconnected from apparatus. Drivers will also make a complete stop after exiting the station to verify station door is closing.
- When responding to a true emergency, all audible and visual warning devices will be operated at all times regardless of time of day and/or traffic conditions. All emergency vehicle driver's must understand that warning devices are not always effective in making other vehicle operators aware of your presence. Warning devices only request the right-of-way, they do not insure the right-of-way.
- 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. Emergency vehicle drivers should be aware that the civilian vehicle operators may not react in the manner in which is expected or felt to be appropriate. An attempt should be made to have options available when passing or overtaking vehicles. If another vehicle operator fails to yield the right of way to an emergency vehicle, the emergency vehicle driver cannot force the right of way, nor can you assume the right of way, therefore you do not have the right of way until the other vehicle yields to you.

The emergency vehicle driver shall be aware of his/her rate of closure on other vehicles and pedestrians at all time to make sure that a safe following distance is established and maintained. All drivers shall follow the rule for safe following distance and allow 1 second of following distance for every 10 feet of vehicle length for speeds under 40 mph and add 1 additional second for each 10 mph for speeds over 40 mph.

- When responding to a true emergency only, drivers shall operate the vehicle they are driving at as close to the **posted speed limit** as possible, but not to exceed ten (10) miles per hour over the posted speed limit, conditions permitting. Examples of conditions requiring slower response speeds include but are not limited to;
  - slippery road conditions
  - inclement weather
  - poor visibility
  - heavy or congested traffic conditions
  - sharp curves

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- Apparatus responding on routine calls shall abide by all traffic laws while en route to the call. I.e. red lights, speed limit etc. No lights (including blue lights) and siren will be used.
- Extreme care should be taken when approaching any intersection as intersections are the locations responsible for a large percentage of major accidents involving emergency vehicles. Drivers are required to practice the organizations intersection operating guidelines during all emergency responses.

### **Uncontrolled intersections**

Any intersection that does not offer a control device (stop sign, yield or traffic signal) in the direction of travel of the emergency vehicle or where a traffic control signal is green upon the approach of the emergency vehicle all emergency vehicle drivers should do the following:

- Scan the intersection for possible hazards (right turns on red, pedestrians, vehicles traveling fast, etc.). Observe traffic in all 4 directions (left, right, front, rear)
- Slow down if any potential hazards are detected and cover the brake pedal with the drivers foot.
- Change the siren cadence not less than 200' from intersection
- Avoid using the opposing lane of traffic if at all possible.

Emergency vehicle drivers should always be prepared to stop. If another vehicle operator fails to yield the right of way to an emergency vehicle, the emergency vehicle driver cannot force the right of way, nor can you assume the right of way, therefore you do not have the right of way until the other vehicle yields to you.

### **Controlled intersections**

Any intersection controlled by a stop sign, yield sign, yellow traffic light or a red traffic light requires a complete stop by the emergency vehicle driver. In addition to bringing the vehicle to a complete stop these additional steps must be followed as well;

- Do not rely on warning devices to clear traffic
- Scan the intersection for possible hazards (right turns on red, pedestrians, vehicles traveling fast etc.) as well as driver options

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- Begin to slow down well before reaching the intersection and cover the brake pedal with the drivers foot, continue to scan in 4 directions (left, right, front, back)
- Change the siren cadence not less than 200; from intersection
- Scan intersection for possible passing options (pass on right, left, wait, etc.) avoid using the opposing lane of traffic if at all possible
- Come to a complete stop
- Establish eye contact with other vehicle drivers; have partner communicate all is clear; reconfirm all other vehicles are stopped
- Proceed one lane of traffic at a time treating each lane of traffic as a separate intersection

### **Railroad intersections**

At any time an emergency vehicle driver approaches an unguarded rail crossing he/she shall bring the apparatus or vehicle he/she is operating to a complete stop before entering the grade crossing. In addition the emergency vehicle driver shall perform the following prior to proceeding:

- turn off all sirens and air horns
  - operator the motor at idle speed
  - turn off any other sound producing equipment or accessories
  - open the windows and listen for a train's horn
- When apparatus is returning from an incident, all traffic laws will be abided by at all times.
  - Head lights will be used at all times.
  - If the apparatus is equipped with a Jake Brake, the Jake Brake will only be turned off when road conditions are slippery.
  - The following apparatus will be operated in the transmission gear/position indicated on non divided roads.
    - \* ET163 3
    - \* E163 4
    - \* ET263 3
    - \* L163 3
    - \* R163 3
    - \* R463 3
    - \* S163 3

This S.O.G. was last reviewed and/or updated on April 27, 2009.