

# **Poudre Canyon Fire Protection District**

## **Standard Operating Procedure**

### **Roadway Safety**

ISSUED: July 9, 2014

SUPERSEDES: undated issue

#### **OBJECTIVE:**

This policy establishes Department requirements when operating in areas of Vehicular Traffic.

#### **REFERENCES:**

Personal Protective Equipment SOP - Poudre Canyon Fire Protection District  
NFPA 1500 STANDARD ON FIRE DEPARTMENT OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH PROGRAM  
23 CFR Part 634 the Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices.

#### **POLICY:**

This procedure establishes requirements for District personnel conducting emergency operations in areas of vehicular traffic.

#### **DEFINITIONS:**

Areas of Vehicular Traffic; Areas of vehicular traffic are defined as all public roadways including, but not limited to, Hwy 14, all county roads, forest roads, and any road that accesses more than one residence (all of our newly named roads).

#### **PROCEDURE:**

##### **1. PROTECTING SELF AND CREW MEMBERS**

- We should never trust other motorists and should always maintain an acute awareness of the high risk of working in or around traffic. Responders should remember that even if they do everything correctly, there are drivers who will not react correctly to the altered traffic pattern, resulting in motorists driving into the emergency scene. Responders should:
  - a. Always look and use caution before opening the door and stepping out of the apparatus into traffic areas.
  - b. Exit apparatus on the side away from traffic whenever possible.
  - c. Not walk around apparatus without taking caution, ensuring that they will be safe in doing so.
  - d. Keep an eye on the traffic whenever possible.

## 2. EXCEPTIONS TO TRAFFIC ACCIDENT/EXTRICATION PPE

Responders not wearing structural fire fighting PPE shall be utilized for traffic control or other support roles unless approved by the IC for other direct involvement.

## 3. NON-MVA INCIDENTS IN AREAS OF VEHICULAR TRAFFIC

Some of the same dangers exist when operating a non-MVA in Areas of Vehicular Traffic. Therefore:

- All personnel operating in Areas of Vehicular Traffic (as defined above) shall wear their department issued high visibility jacket or vest or a high visibility vest that will be found on each department apparatus.

## 4. TEMPORARY TRAFFIC CONTROL ZONES (TTCZ)

Each Station has been issued TTCZ devices, including, but not limited to

- Accident ahead signs
- Traffic Cones
- Traffic Flares
- Reflective Stop/Slow Paddles (with extension handles)
- Flashlights (some with traffic wands)
- Personnel should utilize TTCZ Devices as often as practical.

## 5. ROAD CLOSURE

One of the most effective ways to reduce risk is to close the roadway. If sufficient personnel are not available to control traffic (2 responders with stop/yield signs and radios), road closure should be considered. Other circumstances may require the closure of the road (such as use of a wrecker to pull a vehicle back up to the road. Law enforcement and/or CDOT should be utilized for road closures whenever possible. The IC should announce when resuming traffic flow.

## 6. APPARATUS PLACEMENT IN AREAS OF VEHICULAR TRAFFIC

- Optimal placement of all apparatus should protect the work area and personnel from vehicle traffic and other hazards. Even with proper apparatus placement, responders must understand and respect the danger of working around other moving vehicles. Responders need to always maintain an acute awareness of their surroundings.
- Apparatus on scene should keep their engines running, emergency lights flashing, and wheels chocked.
- Apparatus placed in a blocking position can enhance responder safety. A blocking apparatus provides a physical barrier and enhances the safety in the work area. The IC should evaluate a scene and assess the traffic flow to

determine the need for additional blocking apparatus. One or more apparatus can be used to block a scene. Apparatus should be placed in accordance with safety priorities and needs for scene protection.

#### 7. BLOCKING POSITION

The following guidelines should be used when placing apparatus in a blocking position:

- Position apparatus between the scene and oncoming traffic. Create adequate space for a work area. Longer spacing is required if blind corners exist in the work area.
- Utilize the apparatus warning lights and traffic cones to control traffic.
- Be aware apparatus headlights (esp. high beams) may be blinding to oncoming traffic and/or rescue personnel. Apparatus operators shall take necessary measures to avoid this.

#### 8. EXTRICATIONS

The IC should consider fire-protection needs when deciding engine placement at extrication incidents and should allow extrication apparatus to have close access to the scene. More than one extrication apparatus may need close access.

#### 9. WARNING VEHICLES

Depending on location and conditions, it may be prudent to use the second-arriving apparatus, other apparatus and/or personal vehicles with emergency warning devices as a warning vehicle. Local traffic speed, weather, surface conditions, topography, view obstructions and roadway design should be considered when making this decision. Warning vehicles should be parked on the shoulder of the roadway (or as far over as possible) and placed anywhere from mile to 100 yards “upstream” of the incident scene, depending on those considerations listed above.

#### 10. ADDITIONAL APPARATUS PLACEMENT AND STAGING

All personnel responding to an incident need to be aware of their vehicle’s placement/staging location and how this affects surrounding traffic. Staged units need to be on the shoulder or off the road if they are “upstream” of the incident, so as not to block line of sight for the oncoming vehicles. If possible, drivers of staged units should position downstream just past the work area. If they exit their apparatus, they should use traffic cones to extend the work area. Personnel responding in personal vehicles should park their vehicles away from the incident and walk to the scene wearing a highly visible jacket or vest.

#### 11. TERMINATION OR MODIFICATION OF THE TEMPORARY TRAFFIC CONTROL ZONE (TTCZ)

Before breaking down a TTCZ, responders should make sure they are not creating a new hazard for other personnel remaining on scene. In situations with

multiple apparatus, the most upstream blocking apparatus should be the last to leave. Emergency flashing lights should remain on until the apparatus is back in traffic. The IC should radio termination or modification of the TTCZ

## 12. MEDICAL EMERGENCIES

The IC at the scene of a medical emergency should position apparatus to protect the loading area of the ambulance(s) if the loading area is in traffic. If the ambulance is second due, the IC should direct medical personnel to park in a designated safe area.

## 13. VEHICLE FLAGGING

Vehicles left unattended at traffic accidents can cause secondary calls to the same location. In cases where no responsible party or law-enforcement officer is on scene, vehicles should be flagged using fire-line and/or caution tape. In situations where responders find a vehicle accident off the road and it has not been tagged by law enforcement, personnel should make sure no one is in or around the vehicle, report the vehicle to Dispatch and ask Dispatch to report the vehicle to the proper law-enforcement agency and flag the vehicle.