

Standard Operating Procedures Manual

City of Poquoson Fire and Rescue



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830 Poquoson Ave.
Poquoson, VA 23662
757-868-3510
F757-868-3514

EMERGENCY OPERATIONS

SOP#: EO – 3.00

Title: Safe Apparatus Positioning

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Donald J. Neelway
Fire Chief's Signature

James P. Wheeler
City Manager's Signature

SAFE APPARATUS POSITIONING

I. PURPOSE

Identifies parking practices for Fire Department apparatus and vehicles that will provide maximum protection and safety for personnel operating in or near moving vehicle traffic.

Also indentifies several approaches for individual practices to keep firefighters safe while exposed to the hazardous environment created by moving traffic.

This SOP is not all-inclusive and cannot encompass all situations that may be encountered.

II. APPLICABILITY

All career and volunteer personnel

III. POLICY

It shall be the policy of the Poquoson Fire/Rescue Department to position apparatus and other emergency vehicles at an emergency incident in a manner

that best protects the incident scene and the work area. Such positioning shall afford protection to fire department personnel, law enforcement officers, tow service operators and the motoring public from the hazards of working in or near moving traffic.

IV. PROCEDURES

Fire Scene Positioning

- The first arriving engine company at a fire should normally proceed just past the front of the fire, laying a supply line if necessary. Driving past the structure this way will enable the crew to see three sides of the fire building.
- Position the engine to use its deck guns, floodlights, and etc. Take care to leave room for the truck company or other support apparatus. If the building has wide frontage, position the engine at the entrance that provides the best access to the fire.
- Unless otherwise directed, the first engine company at a working fire should provide a water supply.
- If nothing is showing, the second arriving engine company should stage at the nearest hydrant and await orders if the first in engine company did not lay a line.
 - Additional arriving companies should stage at least one block away and await orders from the incident commander in a uncommitted position that will not congest the incident site. Upon arrival, the company shall notify the incident commander of their location and the number of personnel (PAR count).
 - Do not park to close to another emergency vehicle. Allow sufficient room to deploy hoselines and to remove stretchers, ladders, and other equipment from the vehicle.

- When charged lines will be utilized, position the apparatus so that the pump panel is “down stream”, on the opposite side of on-coming traffic. This will protect the pump operator.
- Be aware of overhead power lines.
- Do not become trapped. Allow adequate room to reposition the vehicle if necessary.
- Do not park in such a manner as to make the emergency vehicle an exposure.

Medical Incidents/Auto accidents

- Positioning of large apparatus must create a safe parking area for EMS units and other fire vehicles. Operating personnel, equipment and patients should be kept within the “shadow” created by the blocking apparatus at all times.
- When blocking with apparatus to protect the emergency scene, establish a sufficient size work zone that includes all damaged vehicles, roadway debris, the patient triage and treatment area, the extrication work area, personnel and tool staging area and the ambulance loading zone.
- Use fire apparatus to block at least one additional traffic lane more than that already obstructed by the crashed vehicle(s).
- When practical, position apparatus in such a manner to protect the pump operator position from being exposed to approaching traffic.
- Ambulance should be positioned within the protected work area with their rear patient loading door area angled away from the nearest lanes of moving traffic.

- Command shall stage unneeded emergency vehicles off the roadway or return these units in service whenever possible.
- At all intersections, or where the incident may be near the middle lane of the roadway, two or more sides of the incident will need to be protected.
 - Police vehicles must be strategically positioned to expand the initial safe work zone for traffic approaching from opposing directions. The goal is to effectively block all exposed sides of the work zone. The blocking of the work zone must be prioritized, from the most critical or highest traffic volume flow to the least critical traffic direction.
 - Provide specific directions to the police officers as to exactly what your traffic control needs are. Ensure that police vehicles are parked in a position and location that provides additional protection of the scene.
- Traffic cones or flares shall be deployed from the rear of the blocking apparatus toward approaching traffic to increase the advance warning provided for approaching motorists. Cones identify and only suggest the transition and tapering actions that are required of the approaching motorist.

General safety guidelines while operating in or near moving traffic

- Never trust approaching traffic
- Avoid turning your back to approaching traffic
- Personnel shall place cones and flares and retrieve cones while facing oncoming traffic.
- Traffic cones shall be deployed at 15 foot intervals upstream

of the blocking apparatus with the furthest traffic cone approximately 75 feet upstream to allow adequate advance warning to drivers

- Turn off all sources of vision impairment to approaching motorists at nighttime incidents including vehicle headlights and spotlights.
- Protective clothing, Class III safety vest, and helmet must be donned prior to exiting the emergency vehicle.
 - During normal daylight lighting conditions, don helmet and class III safety vest or structural PPE and Class III vest when operating in or near moving traffic.
 - During dusk to dawn operations or when ambient lighting is reduced due to inclement weather conditions, don helmet, full protective clothing and Class III vest.
- Always look before opening doors and stepping out of apparatus or emergency vehicle into any moving traffic areas. When walking around fire apparatus or emergency vehicle, be alert to your proximity to moving traffic.
 - Stop at the corner of the unit, check for traffic, and than proceed along the unit remaining as close to the emergency vehicle as possible.
- Personnel arriving in crew cabs of fire apparatus should exit and enter the apparatus from the protected side, away from moving traffic.
- Placing flares, where safe to do so, adjacent to and in combination with traffic cones for nighttime operations greatly enhances scene safety. Where safe and appropriate to

do so, place warning flares to slow and direct approaching traffic.

V. STAGING

- Level I Staging.
 - First two engines and truck on scene.
 - Additional apparatus one block away.
 - Privately owned vehicles (POVs) shall park at least one block away, not blocking the street, driveways, or hydrants.
- Level II Staging: Large scale incidents.
 - The incident commander designates the staging area and assigns a member the position of staging officer.
 - All subsequent responding apparatus and personnel report to the designated staging area and await assignment.
 - The staging officer is to maintain a log of personnel and apparatus available in the staging area.