

Greater Hartford Coalition Newsletter

FROM THE EDITOR

Traffic Incident Management involves many partners that need to come together with a planned and coordinated response and work towards restoring traffic capacity as safely and quickly as possible.

Our July newsletter focuses on crash (accident) scene safety with a focus on our TIM partner, Emergency Medical Services.

Emergency Medical Services (EMS) https://ops.fhwa.dot.gov/eto_tim_pse/about/tim.htm#t2

The primary responsibilities of EMS are the triage, treatment, and transport of crash victims. In many areas, fire and rescue companies provide emergency medical services. In some areas, other agencies or private companies provide these services to local jurisdictions under contract. Typical roles and responsibilities assumed by EMS at traffic incidents include:

- Providing advanced emergency medical care
- Determining of destination and transportation requirements for the injured
- Coordinating evacuation with fire, police and ambulance or airlift
- Serving as incident commander for medical emergencies
- Determining approximate cause of injuries for the trauma center
- Removing medical waste from incident scene

Emergency medical services have evolved as primary care givers to individuals needing medical care in emergencies. As with police, emergency medical personnel have a defined set of priorities. They focus on providing patient care, crash victim rescue, and ensuring the safety of their personnel.

Every day we hear of responders being struck and killed or seriously hurt. Public outreach is needed to get the message out to motorists who come upon a crash scene, to slow down and move over. The PSA shows first responders doing their jobs at an emergency ... give us room to work and slow down ...

Slow Down: It's No Picnic – YouTube <https://youtu.be/zCGtstx5cWw>



Thank you

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Help Us Help Those Who Keep Us Safe: Move Over to Protect First Responders¹

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration posted this on the [CONNECTIONS Blog of the USDOT](#)

“Our first responders signed up to face danger, if necessary. They shouldn’t have to confront it in the form of a vehicle that isn’t giving them room to work safely. If you see the flashing lights on the roadside, you know what to do: Move Over to protect the men and women who do so much to protect all of us.”



Disturbing survey responses from Drivers!²

MIAMI, April 3, 2019 /PRNewswire/ -- According to a survey released today by the [National Safety Council](#) and the [Emergency Responder Safety Institute](#), 71 percent of U.S. drivers take photos or videos when they see an emergency vehicle on the side of the road responding to a fire or a crash, or simply making a routine traffic stop. Sixty percent post to social media, and 66 percent send an email about the situation – all while behind the wheel. Those distracting behaviors are markedly less frequent, but still alarming, during normal driving conditions – 24 percent of drivers surveyed said they take photos or video while driving, 29 percent admitted to using social media and 24 percent said they send email.....

Other important findings from the poll include:

- 19 percent of drivers admit their own inattentive driving has probably put first responders at unnecessary risk
- Despite being willing to engage in risky behaviors while driving around emergency vehicles, 62 percent say they are "above average" drivers when passing an emergency vehicle with its lights flashing on the side of the road
- 24 percent do not realize that there are legal requirements for what drivers must do when they see an emergency vehicle on the side of the road
- Even though 97 percent say they will see an emergency vehicle if it has its flashing lights on, 74 percent would still like responders to wear reflective clothing
- 80 percent of drivers say they slow down to get a better look when they see an emergency response vehicle tending to a fire, crash or traffic stop. Doing so backs up traffic and creates other safety hazards.
- Encouragingly, 67 percent have heard of "Move Over" laws and 73 percent say they move over when they see an emergency vehicle stopped on the side of the road with its lights on – the proper response on nearly all roadways

Thousands die each year in distracted driving crashes, though National Safety Council investigations show these crashes are significantly [underreported and undercounted](#).¹ Emergency responders are particularly vulnerable, because they exit their vehicles and tend to situations on active roadways. In 2013, 37 people died in crashes involving ambulances, fire trucks or police cars, and an additional 17,028 were injured. Since January [2019], 16 emergency responders have been struck and killed by vehicles. Sadly, 49 percent of survey respondents said possibly being struck by a vehicle is "just part of the risk" of being a first responder. The full survey and methodology are available at nsc.org/firstrespondersurvey

ⁱAccording to NHTSA FARS data

¹ <https://www.transportation.gov/Connections/help-us-help-those-who-keep-us-safe-move-over-protect-first-responders>

² https://learning.respondersafety.com/News/Disturbing_survey_responses_from_Drivers.aspx



TRAFFIC INCIDENT MANAGEMENT

GOALS

- Reduce roadway clearance time
- Reduce incident clearance time
- Reduce the number of secondary crashes
- Reduce the number of first responder injuries and fatalities

BENEFITS

- Increase safety (motorist and responder)
- Congestion relief
- Save money
- Energy conservation and environmental stewardship



Tuesday, 07 May 2019 14:02

First Responders Learn New Rescue Skills Through National Auto Body Council Program³

“More than 100 first responders from across the Mid-Atlantic region gathered on April 26, 27 and 28, 2019 for information on accident scene first responder safety awareness.

First responders saw demonstrations of the latest techniques in emergency vehicle extrication, preparing them to provide the best response for car accident victims in the region, all thanks to the National Auto Body Council F.R.E.E.™ program, Interstate Rescue, Forest Volunteer Fire Department and HURST Jaws of Life.

In crashes where minutes can spell the difference between life and death, first responders to the accident scene need up-to-date information so they can act quickly and safely. Knowing specifically where and how to efficiently cut, pry and extricate can make the difference in saving precious minutes and lives as well as the safety of the first responders.

Keeping first responders up to date on the latest new technology in vehicles is a challenge for every local fire department. The NABC First Responder Emergency Extrication program (F.R.E.E.™) helps first responders stay abreast of the rapid changes in vehicle design. High-strength steel, airbags, advanced restraint systems, onboard technology and safety around alternative fuel vehicles are all covered in the program. The growing popularity of high-voltage hybrid and electric vehicles and the many safety concerns surrounding these vehicles makes this program a necessity. Alternative fuel systems present different challenges when first responders arrive at the scene of an accident. Electric cars, hybrid cars and natural gas vehicles have fuel systems that pose dangers for first responders if need arises to cut or pry the vehicle for rescue.

Forest Volunteer Fire Department and HURST Jaws of Life at 24551 Thomas Jefferson Road Forest, Virginia hosted first responders from multiple states at a special NABC F.R.E.E.™ instruction program on April 26, 27 and 28 to help ensure Virginia drivers have the best prepared response in case of an accident.

Classroom information to improve first responder safety at the accident scene was provided by **Jack Sullivan** CSP, CFPS from the Emergency Responder Safety Institute. Allstate, Esurance, GEICO, and Nationwide Insurance companies provided later model vehicles and classroom information and Interstate Rescue/HURST Jaws of Life supplied the extrication demonstrations.”

Excerpts from article by Arrive Alive organization in South Africa. There are many organizations across the world that are committed to keeping responders safe. Not all measures noted in article below are applicable to U.S. but there is some good information to share with members of your organization. More information on this initiative can be found at <https://www.arrivealive.co.za/>



Accident Scene Safety

ACCIDENT SCENE SAFETY⁴

“INTRODUCTION TO ACCIDENT SCENE SAFETY

An accident scene can be a hectic place with a lot of things going on at once. Accident scenes are often chaotic and difficult to secure with so many people coming and going. No two accident scenes are alike, but they share the same goal – everybody should get home safe and sound.

³<https://www.autobodynews.com/index.php/se/item/17613-first-responders-learn-new-rescue-skills-through-national-auto-body-council-program.html?showall=1>

⁴ <https://www.arrivealive.mobi/accident-scene-safety>

Incident Management is a term used to describe the process whereby a set of coordinated activities are initiated when an incident occurs on a road network, in order to minimise [sic] (the direct and secondary effects of the incident, as well as to restore traffic to normal operating conditions.

Awareness is the key to safety at accident scenes. Knowing the hazards and how to work around them will ensure the safety of everyone. As first responders, it might seem obvious that police and traffic officers are in a unique position to help accident victims deal with the impact of their ordeal, to help restore a sense of safety and control to an otherwise fearful and overwhelming situation. These officers can also make a big difference in how a subsequent criminal or other investigation is handled.



Many officers, however, feel uncomfortable dealing with accident scenes. In this section, we would like to provide information and some guidelines to effective accident scene safety/ incident scene management.”

Also view “[Safeguarding Accident Scenes](#)”]

Accident Scene Safety and Paramedics⁵



“Paramedics and emergency personnel are often the first people on an accident scene. The first hour after an accident is called the Golden Hour – physicians say seriously injured car crash victims need to reach comprehensive medical care within 60 minutes to ensure a good chance of survival. At the accident scene, this scenario leaves about 12 minutes for rescuers to extricate the wounded and speed them toward the hospital. How can we assist them in providing a secure environment to perform life-saving activities?

ER24's Accident Unit provides the following suggestions:

The Basics Of Scene Safety For Emergency Personnel

- Always be prepared, know where you are going and approach the scene carefully. Bear in mind that you may know about the incident in the road ahead but none of the vehicles around you do. Draw attention to the fact that you are slowing down and if necessary block the traffic from passing you as you approach the scene.
- Ensure that you are properly dressed wearing approved uniform, safety boots and a highly visible safety bib for day and night use.
- The type of emergency warning lights fitted on your vehicle may determine how you park or "stage" at a scene. New stream light LED light bars are mostly only visible if you are directly behind them where the older rotating lights were visible from all angles.
- The first arriving vehicle should stop before reaching the collision scene and stage 10-20 meters [30-60 feet] back from the incident. Remember to pull up your vehicles hand brake tightly in case of a rear impact to prevent the emergency vehicle from being pushed into the scene. Emergency workers have been run over by their [sic] own vehicles because they parked too close to the scene and their vehicle was hit from behind by another motorist.
- Ensure that you close all doors and the boot of your vehicle as an open boot can obstruct the emergency lighting which is there to alert other motorists of a hazard in the road.
- Remember safety first, use your equipment to protect your vehicle and use your vehicle as a last resort impact buffer to protect you.
- Traffic cones and warning signs must be placed in the road to warn oncoming traffic and to direct them out of the lanes that are obstructed.
- Traditionally specialised [sic] scene safety vehicles and/or fire trucks may arrive at the scene after the response vehicles and should stage further back. These vehicles park at a diagonal angle of 45% across the lane not only to totally block it but being parked at the angle (especially in the day) makes it far more obvious that there is a hazard

⁵ <https://www.arrivealive.mobi/Accident-Scene-Safety-and-Paramedics>

ahead and motorists will simply change lanes. This is known as the "fend-off position" and is used as a last resort impact buffer to prevent a motorist from smashing into an existing scene and injuring patients and emergency workers. The vehicle parked in the "fend-off" position must be well protected by portable warning devices such as traffic beacons, flares and collision warning signs etc. If a motorist collides into a vehicle parked at the fend-off position, the forces involved in the collision should see that car be deflected into the opposite direction of the scene thereby protecting the emergency workers.

- On the highway, there should be approximately 150-200m of warning devices placed in the road to protect the scene safety vehicle, the distance can be less on a road with slower moving traffic. Remember that an average car travelling at 100km/h takes 70m to come to a stop on a road and that same car takes 90m to stop on a wet road. Wet roads and gravel roads mean the warning devices need to be placed over a longer distance to give the approaching traffic time to react. It is no good placing 5 traffic cones behind the bumper of a stationary emergency vehicle.
- Drunk or sleeping drivers may not react to emergency lighting that is why we use smaller cheaper replaceable devices in the road.
- If you are using a torch to warn motorists of a hazard in the road, do not blind the approaching driver by shining the light directly into their eyes, rather use a sweeping motion to catch their attention. If you blind them they may crash into you.
- Ambulances should stage on the "safe" side of the scene, i.e.: drive past the scene and then stop there.
- All other vehicles should stage between the scene and the scene safety vehicle. If you stage on the safe side, do not park the ambulances in.
- If necessary, do not be afraid to block a lane, this not only protects you but forces the motorists to change lanes before getting stuck at the scene."

GOLDEN RULES:

1. Never turn your back on traffic.
2. Always use your vehicle to protect you and use your equipment to protect your vehicle. A dead rescuer saves no lives.



Photo courtesy of timnetwork.org



Photo: Chuck Snyder, Cumberland Valley Volunteer Firemen's Association

