

DRIVER SAFETY

Purpose:

It is the purpose of the guideline to provide safety while operating emergency vehicle to, at, and from emergency scenes. This guideline is to be used as policy and shall not be altered as seen fit.

Policy:

When responding to emergency calls under CODE 3 conditions, Fire Department vehicles may exceed the posted speed limit, but shall be regulated AT ALL TIMES by existing road and traffic conditions. , At no time will any Fire Department vehicle exceed 10 MPH above the posted speed limit or 60 MPH under any conditions.

Minimum qualification for driver are:

1. 21 years of age
2. Class "B" Drivers license

All drivers must go through the driver qualification program and be signed off by an officer and the Fire Chief.

Under wet or foggy or any other Hazardous weather or road conditions, Fire Department vehicles should react accordingly to the conditions encountered, and in no case exceed the posted speed limit. School zone speed limits will be observed.

Unless all lanes can be accounted for by the driver during an emergency response, Fire Department vehicles shall come to a complete stop at all red light intersections and negative right-of-way situations.

Rule Of thumb: "IF YOU CAN NOT SEE, STOP".

Avoid backing where possible; where backing is unavoidable, use guides; where guides are unavailable, dismount and walk completely around the vehicle before backing.

All Kemah Fire Department personnel are required to use seatbelts when operating a department vehicle equipped with seatbelts. Anyone riding as a passenger in a department vehicle is required to wear seatbelts, where provided. Members responding to an alarm must ride in seats provided and use seatbelts provided.

Members **MAY NOT** ride in exposed positions such as tailboard of apparatus while responding to an alarm or while the apparatus is in motion. The only exception to this rule applies to a brush truck; and then only while the unit, is operating on a grass fire.

During an emergency response, Fire Department Vehicles should avoid passing other emergency vehicles. If unavoidable, the passing arrangement should be conducted through radio communications.

We must respond and react according to the conditions encountered; neither poor road conditions, or inclement weather, or the actions of others relieves the driver in the slightest degree of their responsibility to drive safety. These are situations likely to be encountered at any time and we must drive accordingly.

The unique hazards of driving on or adjacent to the fireground, require the driver to use extreme caution and alertness, and also require that the driver utilize prudent speed for the conditions encountered. Caution and alertness will allow the driver to react to the unexpected.

When driving suppression apparatus on the fireground, drivers must resist the tendency to drive hastily or imprudently. This tendency is mostly due to the urgent nature of fireground operations.

Drivers must consider the dangers their moving apparatus poses to fireground personnel and spectators who may be preoccupied with the emergency, and inadvertently step in front of or behind a moving apparatus.

Drivers must also be aware of the potential that exist for vehicle accidents on or near the fireground due to the distractions caused by the emergency.

Members of the Kemah Fire Department will not respond to the station or to a scene using emergency lights and/or sirens on their personal vehicle. Members of the Kemah Volunteer Fire Dept. may stop and render aid at any scene he/she may pass in direct route to the station. A member that stops to render aid will call on location and give a scene size up. (409 is on location two vehicle accident – give brief details) Members of the Kemah Volunteer Fire Dept. will observe all traffic laws while operating their personal vehicles for department business.

STANDARD SIGNALS FOR BACKING OF APPARATUS

Anytime an apparatus must be backed, a signalman is required to direct the driver. Only one crewmember should be utilized a signalman. Another firefighter/crew member should monitor traffic.

The signalman should try always to be in view of the driver's side mirror. *(There will be rare exceptions where a signalman will have to use passenger side.)*

SIGNALS

STRAIGHT BACK:

One hand above the head with palm toward face, waving back. Other hand at your side. *(Left or right-hand optional)*

TURN :

Both arms pointing the same direction with index fingers extended. *(Driver has option as to which way he turns apparatus and signalman then assists the driver in backing apparatus.)*

STOP :

Both arms thrust above head with open hands.

NIGHT BACKING

Signals will be the same. The signalman will assure that the spotlights on rear of apparatus are turned on before he allows apparatus to be backed. A flashlight may be carried, but at no time will it be directed toward mirror.

SAFETY

All signalmen in traffic will wear helmet, bunker jacket or vest, and bunker pants. Remember, once the driver has determined the direction of the turn, the signalman has complete control of the movement of the apparatus. If there is ever any doubt as to the safety of either signalman or apparatus, stop the maneuver until proper adjustments are made.