

# SUBLIMITY FIRE DISTRICT

## Operational Guide

<b>SUBJECT:</b> Response to Calls	O.G. NUMBER:
<b>PURPOSE:</b> To describe response to calls	Original Date: 5/10/98
	Revision Date:

### Response to Calls

It is the responsibility of the driver of each Fire Department vehicle to drive safely and prudently at all times. Vehicles shall be operated in compliance with the Oregon State Motor Vehicle & Traffic Law. This law provides specific legal exceptions to regular traffic regulations which apply to the Fire Department vehicles only when responding to an emergency incident or when transporting a patient to a medical facility. Emergency response does not absolve the driver of any responsibility to drive with due caution. The driver of the emergency vehicle is responsible for its safe operation at all times.

When responding to an emergency, warning lights must be on and sirens must be sounded to warn drivers of other vehicles, as required by the Oregon State Vehicle & Traffic Law.

The use of sirens and warning lights does not automatically give the right-of-way to the emergency vehicle. These devices simply request the right-of-way from other drivers, based on their awareness of the emergency vehicle presence. Emergency vehicle drivers must make every possible effort to make their presence and intended actions known to other drivers, and must drive defensively to be prepared for the unexpected inappropriate actions of others.

Fire Department vehicles are authorized to exceed posted speed limits only when responding to an emergency with lights and siren operating under favorable conditions. This applies only with light traffic, good roads, good visibility and dry pavement, as long as life and property is not endangered

Under less than favorable conditions, the posted speed limit is the absolute maximum permissible.

Intersections present the greatest potential danger to emergency vehicles. When approaching and crossing an intersection with the right-of-way, drivers shall not exceed the posted speed limit.

When emergency vehicles must use center or oncoming traffic lanes to approach controlled intersections, (traffic light or stop sign) they must be prepared to come to a complete stop before proceeding through the intersection, including occasions when the emergency vehicle has green traffic lights.

When approaching a negative right-of-way intersection (red light, stop sign) the vehicle shall be prepared to come to a complete stop and may proceed only when the driver can account for all oncoming traffic in all lanes yielding the right-of-way.

Emergency response with lights and siren is authorized only in conjunction with emergency incidents. Unnecessary emergency response shall be avoided. In order to avoid any unnecessary emergency response, the following rules shall apply.

- When the first unit reports on the scene with "nothing showing" or an equivalent report, any additional units shall continue in emergency mode, but shall not exceed the posted speed limit.
- The first arriving unit will advise additional units to respond in a non-emergency mode (no lights and siren), whenever appropriate.

Drivers shall avoid backing whenever possible: Where backing is unavoidable, guides shall be used (See OG Backing Apparatus) If no guide is available, the driver shall dismount and walk completely around apparatus to determine if obstructions are present before backing.

All Sublimity Fire District members are required to use seat belts at all times when operating a vehicle equipped with seat belts. Anyone riding as a passenger in a District vehicle is also required to use seat belts. The driver should confirm that all personnel and riders are on-board, properly attired, with seat belts on, before the vehicle is permitted to move.

All personnel shall ride only in regular seats provided with seat belts. Riding on tailboards or other exposed positions is not permitted on any vehicle at any time (except older engines that do not have seating and Tailboards are equipped with Safety Straps).

During an emergency response, fire vehicles should avoid passing other emergency vehicles. If passing is necessary, permission must be obtained through radio communications.

The unique hazards of driving on or adjacent to the fireground requires the driver to use extreme caution and to be alert and prepared to react to the unexpected.

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

When stopped at the scene of an incident, vehicles should be placed to protect personnel who may be working in the street and warning lights shall be used to make approaching traffic aware of the incident. At night, vehicle mounted floodlights and any other lighting available shall be used to illuminate the scene. All personnel working in or near traffic lanes shall wear high visibility turnouts or vests.

If it is not necessary to park vehicles in or near traffic lanes, the vehicle should be pulled off the road to parking lots, curbs, etc., whenever possible.

The officer in charge of the vehicle is responsible for the safety of all vehicle operations and managing compliance of this procedure.

### **Emergency Response Policy**

Sublimity Fire District vehicles shall be operated in a manner that provides for the safety of all persons and property. Safe arrival shall always have priority over unnecessary speed and reckless driving enroute to an emergency incident.

**Prompt, Safe Response Shall Be Attained By:**

1. Leaving the station in a standard manner:

-quickly mounting apparatus

-all personnel on board, seated and belts on

-station doors fully open

2. Driving defensively and professionally at reasonable speeds.

3. Knowing where we are going.

4. Using warning devices to move around traffic and to request the right-of-way in a safe and predictable manner.

**Fast Response Shall Not Be Attained By:**

1. Leaving quarters before crew has mounted safely and before apparatus doors are fully open.

2. Driving too fast for conditions.

3. Driving recklessly or without regard for safety.

4. Taking unnecessary chances with negative right-of-way intersections.

5. Intimidating or scaring other drivers.

**Emergency Response Criteria**

1. Over posted speed limit only as long as life and property is not endangered.

2. Traveling but always prepared to come to a complete stop at all traffic lights/stop signs.

3. Posted speed limit when entering intersections with green light.

4. Prepared to come to a complete stop at all red lights, stop signs. .