

SAFETY GRAM

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Safety Officer

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REMINDER OF BACKING POLICY

The department recognizes that backing emergency apparatus is made hazardous by the driver's inability to see much of where he/she intends to go. Whenever possible, drivers should avoid backing, as the safest course or action is not to back up at all. When it is necessary to back-up any apparatus, all drivers shall follow one of the two following measures.

1. Before any vehicle is put into reverse and backed a spotter should be in place near the rear of the vehicle. The spotter should be safely positioned so that the apparatus driver can see them at all times. If at anytime the apparatus driver loses sight of the spotter, he/she shall stop immediately until the spotter makes himself/herself visible again.
2. If conditions exist that make use of a spotter impossible, all drivers, before attempting to back up any fire apparatus, shall make a "circle of safety" to see that; no person or persons are directly behind the vehicle or in its intended path of travel; all equipment is secured and that all compartment doors are securely closed and any physical obstructions are moved out of the way. The apparatus driver shall note all potential stationary obstructions in the intended path of travel.
 - A. Any individual backing of apparatus without utilizing an assistant (when one is available) or when backing apparatus alone without first checking the area completely around the vehicle before moving it, may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination on the first offense. This will apply to career and volunteer personnel alike. Disciplinary action is mandatory in these cases. All action will be taken following due process as spelled out in this procedure, Merit Rules and Regulations, etc. No exceptions will be permitted and excuses will not be accepted.
 - B. Any person who backs an apparatus while utilizing an assistant and strikes something animate or inanimate, whether injury or damage is sustained or not, will be subjected to the following disciplinary action, as a minimum:
 1. Career Personnel-suspension without pay for no less than 24-hours/or equivalent fine, as appropriate.
 2. Volunteer Personnel-suspension from all V. C. F. S. activities for a period of not less than thirty (30) days.

The above disciplinary action will be pursued against the driver. Officers and/or other personnel may also receive appropriate disciplinary action as warranted. Unless a driver can prove that someone intentionally directed them into an object, the driver will be the responsible party for the safe operation of the vehicle.

Mandatory disciplinary action will be taken against other personnel who are aware a vehicle is being backed improperly, but take no action to correct the problem.

This Department will strive to achieve and maintain the goal of **zero backing accidents**.

Dispersion level Chart

- Dispersion Range 0-40 is stable air, low fire intensity, less long range spotting.
- Dispersion Range 41-70 is moderate unstable air, increased fire intensity and long range spotting.
- Dispersion Range 70+ is unstable air, high amount of upper lifting, Intense fire activity, potential for long range spotting and plume dominated wildfires.

Fireline Handbook Jan.'98

Fight fire aggressively, but provide for safety first. **I**nitiate all action based on current and expected fire behavior.

Recognize current weather conditions and obtain forecasts.

Ensure instructions are given and understood.

Obtain current information on status.

Remain in communication with crewmembers, your supervisor, and adjoining forces.

Determine safety zones and escape routes.

Establish lookouts in potentially hazardous situations.

Remain in control at all times.

Stay alert, keep calm, act decisively.

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