



Safety Bulletin

Occupational Health and Safety Committee

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Approved By: Darren L. Stevens, Fire Rescue Chief

During the December Safety committee, reported incidents and various other safety concerns were reviewed and discussed. This document is a summary of the meeting that should be utilized to aid in the prevention of injuries, illnesses, and vehicle accidents. The topics discussed include: a close call and reporting, maintaining 3 points of contact, scene survey/situational awareness.

Close Call:

The following is a statement by Lieutenant Miller on a close call in Upperville-

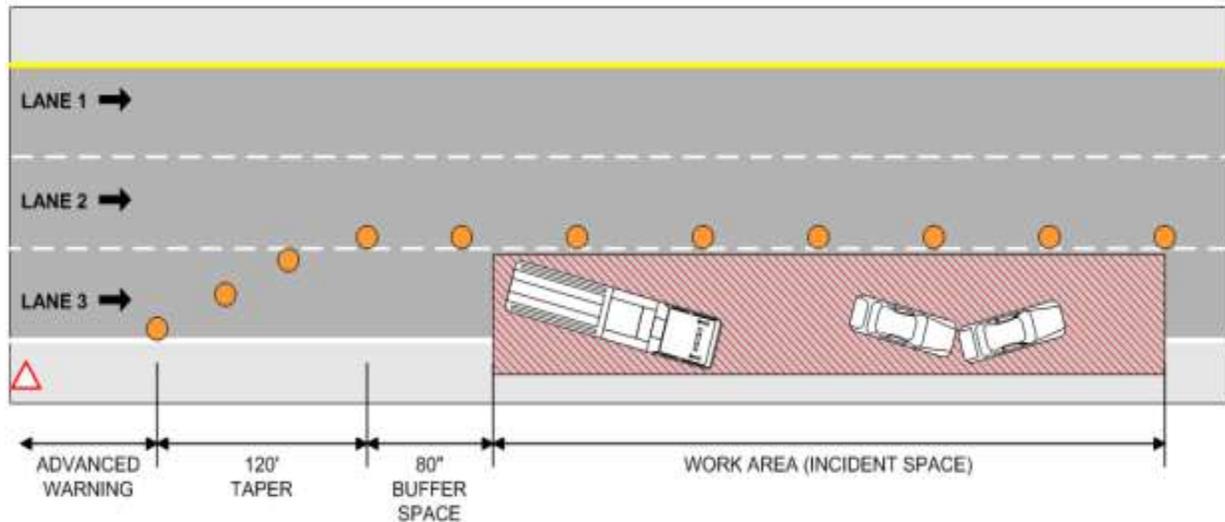
“On November 11, at 0914, E5 and M3 were dispatch to I66 for a MVA (Incident #1894312). There were several wrecks that morning, and the road conditions were wet. Once we arrived on scene, Technician Peterson positioned the apparatus approximately 150 feet behind the VSP cruiser already on scene, blocking lane 1, with the front bumper pointed towards lane 2. M3 placed their apparatus in front of the engine.

Technicians Weeks and Peterson exited E5 on the driver’s side, placed a wheel chock, and proceeded to retrieve the traffic cones to establish a tapered buffer zone to protect the scene. Myself and Technician Glaze approached the scene and determined it was a PDO accident. Once we turned around to walk back to the unit, I noted that the cones were placed appropriately and Technician Weeks and Peterson were walking back towards the apparatus.

Before they reached the apparatus, a full sized pickup truck, left the roadway at full speed and proceeded to slide up the median in an uncontrolled manner. The truck struck the embankment, bounced off, and headed in the direction of Technician Weeks and Peterson. The truck came to a stop approximately 15 yards from them. I immediately inquired if the crew was ok, which they confirmed. I instructed technician Peterson to go back to the apparatus and Technician Weeks checked on the driver. The driver was not injured, so I instructed him to return to the engine, and for Medic 3 to clear the scene. The trooper on scene requested we remain on scene until it was clear for traffic control. We remained on scene, belted in the apparatus until we were released by the trooper.”

- It should be noted in this incident that all procedures were followed and that the crew and officer were given the option of anonymity.
- The use of blocking apparatus and proper cone placement more than likely ensured the safety of the crew although other factors can still lead to an incident such as this.
- Crews should remain alert at all times and ensure proper apparatus positioning and cone placement in accordance with the NOVA Roadway Incidents Manual.
- Please review the NOVA manual and figure below:

- Inside Travel Lane – Lane 1
- Middle Travel Lanes – Lane 2
- Outside Travel Lane – Lane 3



Close Call Reporting:

- Close calls should be reported through email to Battalion Johnson or Lieutenant Frinks. All reports may exclude names and station if necessary or requested. These incidents will be included in Safety Bulletins to assist in safety initiatives and training within the department.
- Please include all pertinent information to assist the department in assuring the proper action is taken to limit future safety issues

3 Points of contact:

- Various injuries have been associated with mounting and dismounting apparatus. It is imperative that crew members utilize 3 points of contact to avoid falls and slips especially with the recent wet weather and impending winter weather
- When exiting fire apparatus, you should exit facing the cab maintaining three points of contact and utilizing provided grab bars/rails
- Survey the ground when exiting apparatus for slick surfaces, uneven terrain or drop offs
- 3 Points of contact should be used on the fireground as well when on ladders. Costs associated with these preventable injuries can be great in terms of medical bills, time off work and possibly disabling injuries.
- Please see the video below regarding 3 points of contact and review with all crews:

<https://youtu.be/vBa660igXF8>

Situational Awareness and Scene Survey:

The department continues to have preventable accidents which could be avoided by having situational awareness and using a proper scene survey. Below is a review from the last safety bulletin

- With the adverse weather conditions there have been many opportunities for apparatus to become stuck or strike objects due to a poor scene survey. Prior to committing an apparatus to a position off of a solid road surface, the driver should survey the immediate area. Walk the area and note any objects in the way and note the stability of the roadway (wet/dry or sink holes/ditches).
- When exiting the scene, use spotters when available and ensure a quick 360 walk around the apparatus is completed. An item may have been placed near the unit which was not previously there.
- When positioning on a scene, plan to avoid a backing situation whenever possible
- Utilize both mirrors and be cognizant of what is going on around you and the size of the vehicle. Scan the vehicles path and if unable to see your backer or surrounding area, STOP and exit the vehicle to survey the scene.

Questions regarding this bulletin should be directed to Battalion Chief Kenneth Johnson or Lieutenant Jonathan Frinks.