

TOWNSHIP FIRE DEPARTMENT

CHAPTER 2: STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINES

Part 1: Response Guidelines

Subject: Safe Movement of Apparatus

Page 1 of 6

Section: 2-1-39

Effective Date: 05-23-11

Review/Revised Date: 05-23-11

- 2.01 Purpose. The purpose of this SOG is to ensure that the moving of apparatus is done in a safe manner and to eliminate injuries and/or damage to property.
- 2.02 Goal. These procedures will be in effect for all members of Township Fire Department.
- 2.03 Responsibilities. It is the responsibility of all department members to eliminate unsafe acts, conditions or behaviors. The driver of the apparatus is responsible for assuring that a vehicle can be moved without causing damage/injury. All department personnel riding in or working around apparatus share in this responsibility and shall take all measures to eliminate apparatus, property and personal injury.

All members of Township Fire Department have the responsibility to learn and follow this guideline.

- 2.04 Guideline. This guideline applies to all vehicle movement, and is not limited to backing. It is the intent of this guideline to prevent apparatus from being moved with hoses attached, compartment doors open, loose equipment, etc. causing personal injury or property damage.

Backing of fire department vehicles should be avoided whenever possible. Where backing is unavoidable, a spotter shall be used. In addition, a spotter shall be used when vehicles must negotiate in restricted areas including pulling forward, restricted height areas, and any restricted side clearances. The apparatus operator and the spotter are equally responsible for the safe movement of the apparatus.

- 2.05 Prior to Backing of Apparatus.

1) Apparatus operators shall do a 360° survey of the vehicle before moving the vehicle. The survey should identify open compartment doors, attached hoses, loose equipment, and etc. (Compartment doors should be checked to assure that they are closed AND latched).

2) Some apparatus are equipped with warning lights when compartment doors are open. If any warning light is activated, it is the responsibility of the apparatus

Subject: Safe Movement of Apparatus

Date: 5-23-11

Page 2 of 6

operator to assure that all compartments and doors are securely closed **before** moving the apparatus.

2.06 Parking of Apparatus

1) When parked, apparatus shall be secured in “neutral” and the parking brakes activated (larger apparatus) OR secure the apparatus in “park” as per the normal operation of individual apparatus (brush truck).

2) When apparatus is placed at any other location other than apparatus bay stall:

- a) Utilize wheel chocks and parking brakes on apparatus equipped with chocks
- b) Utilize hazard lights, and arrow sticks when needed
- c) Place one traffic cone at the rear traffic side corner of the truck. The placement of the cone is not only a reminder to check apparatus doors, equipment, chocks, etc. but also serves as an additional safety item for traffic to help traffic visualize our apparatus.
- d) When the assignment or duty is complete, the apparatus operator shall retrieve the cone by walking around the apparatus and place the cone back in the applicable compartment. The retrieval of the cone shall be done in a clockwise manner ensuring that the apparatus operator completes a 360° view of the apparatus starting with the front of the apparatus.

2.07 Vehicle Backing

Under circumstances where the vehicle is manned by only the driver, that vehicle or apparatus driver shall attempt to utilize any available fire department personnel to act as spotters. Where no personnel are available to assist, the vehicle driver shall get out of the vehicle and make a complete 360 degree survey of the area around the vehicle to determine if any obstructions are present.

When only a single spotter is available, the spotter should be located approximately 10 feet off the left rear corner, and will act as the primary spotter.

When available a secondary spotter should be located approximately 10 feet behind and to the right of the apparatus in a position that can be seen by the operator and which the secondary spotter can see the other side of the apparatus and the primary spotter.

Subject: Safe Movement of Apparatus
Date: 5-23-11
Page 3 of 6

When apparatus must be backed where other vehicle traffic exists, day or night, the apparatus emergency lights shall be operating and traffic safety vests shall be worn by all spotters

The backer is to be located at the driver's rear corner to direct driver until he/she is able to move apparatus in a forward direction or he/she is cleared of the restricted area.

If multiple backers are available, they are to be utilized **when needed** (i.e., navigating a constricted area in reverse may require that a spotter be placed at the front of the unit to assure that the apparatus does not "swing" into an object or other situations in restricted areas.) The lead spotter shall be located at the driver's side rear corner of the apparatus. Additional spotters will be totally clear of the apparatus and will assist the lead spotter. All spotters shall have a radio and shall assure that all spotters and the apparatus operator are operating on the same channel.

The apparatus operator shall assure that he/she can see spotters and that communication is established **before** moving the apparatus in any direction. The apparatus operator shall not back the apparatus if he/she cannot see or clearly communicate with the spotters. Anytime the driver loses sight of the spotter, the vehicle shall be stopped until the spotter is visible and the communication to continue backing is conveyed.

2.08 Hand Signals:

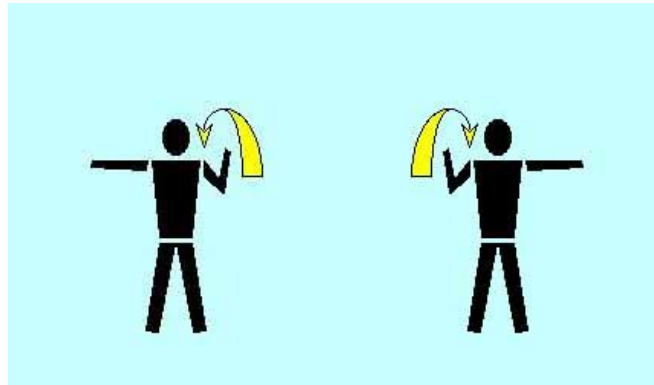
When using hand signals, it is the responsibility of both the apparatus operator and the spotter to know what signals will be used. There are many hand signals that can be used and it is not the intent of this SOG to limit the signals that may be used. It is critical that the operator and the spotter are in complete understanding of the hand signals being used. The standards hand signals are:

Straight Back: Hand(s) at face level with palm toward the face of the spotter, motioning towards the spotter's body.

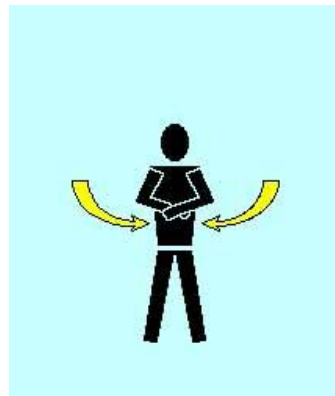


Subject: Safe Movement of Apparatus
Date: 5-23-11
Page 4 of 6

Back Left/Right: Point in the direction that the operator is to back the vehicle and signal to back-up with the free hand.



Stop: There are three primary hand signals for stop; the clenched fist(s), an outstretched hand(s) with palms facing away from the spotter and two crossed arms as shown or in the up position with the back of the hands facing the spotter.



Night Movement: Signals will be the same. The spotter will assure that the lights on the apparatus are turned on before allowing the apparatus to be backed. A flashlight may be carried but at no time will it be directed towards the mirrors.

2.09 Safety Tips

- **Spotters are not permitted to ride on steps or tailboard(s) at any time while backing fire apparatus.**
- Spotters will discuss the backing plan (hand signals, flashlights, radio) with the engineer/driver before proceeding. The communication method and warning process will be agreed upon prior to backing.
- The vehicle shall not be backed until all spotters are in position and communicate their readiness to start backing.
- Spotters will remain visible to the engineer/driver at all times. Anytime the driver loses sight of the primary spotter, the vehicle shall be stopped immediately until the spotter is visible, and the communication to continue backing is given.
- The operator is in control of the apparatus and therefore responsible for its movement. He/she should not move the apparatus until directed by the spotters.
- If more than one spotter is being used, the operator will need to maintain contact with both of them. This means shifting his/her attention from one spotter to another frequently so as to safely move the apparatus. This should result in an apparatus that is moving at a slower than normal rate to watch both spotters.
- If at any time the operator feels that the situation is not safe, he/she should stop the apparatus until the situation is corrected. This may mean getting out and walking around the apparatus and down the road where the apparatus is headed.

2.10 The Spotters Responsibilities

- The spotter is there to direct the operator while backing up the apparatus.
- The spotter needs to be constantly aware of the surroundings while performing this function and will not get between the apparatus and any other vehicles or objects.
- The spotter needs to be constantly looking and listening for other vehicles and people that may enter the path of the apparatus that is backing up.

Subject: Safe Movement of Apparatus

Date: 5-23-11

Page 6 of 6

- The spotter must either stop the oncoming hazard or stop the apparatus being backed up.
- The spotter must be aware of objects and direct the operator safely around them.
- The spotter must not only look at the ground level for obstructions, but also look up for overhead hazards – tree branches, wires, signs, canopies, ladders...
- The spotter shall maintain visual contact with the operator at all times.
- The spotter needs to be in the line of sight of the mirrors of the apparatus being backed up at all times.
- At night, the spotter should position one of the rear spotlights on themselves or use a flashlight to help the operator see them. DO NOT point the flashlight directly in the mirror of the operator, as it may blind him/her.
- The spotter shall use hand signals to direct the operator. These hand signals should be somewhat exaggerated so that the engineer can be clear as to what the spotter is signaling in the mirror.
- When backing into roadways or traffic, extreme caution must be exercised to ensure that all cross traffic is stopped prior to entering the roadway.
- Spotters must also be vigilant in managing their own safety by being alert to traffic and changing traffic conditions.
- In congested or tight areas, additional personnel may be needed as spotters.
- In congested or tight areas, one spotter may be needed at the rear and one at the front of the apparatus being moved either forward or backwards.
- Spotters should also be used when going forward in tight areas, to avoid hitting objects.