

STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINE - 4.6.6

TOPIC - SAFETY: VISIBILITY – ROADWAY OPERATIONS

PURPOSE:

To improve safety during operations that occur in roadways through increased visibility and barrier procedures.

GENERAL:

We are often called upon to work in roadways, either as a result of motor vehicle accidents or due to the placement of apparatus during other operations. It is important to understand that this environment is potentially more hazardous than any other that we might encounter.

A few of the major factors that contribute to the danger are related to diverted attention of the motorist due to the emergency, habitual driving behaviors which rely on a normally unobstructed roadway, visibility of workers in the roadway, open exposure to moving vehicles, and single minded focus of the worker. Our solution will be to address increasing our visibility, creating a barrier, and improving our own personal attentiveness.

OR-OSHA has established a rule requiring that high visibility garments be worn whenever a worker is exposed to hazards caused by "on-highway type moving vehicles". This rule only applies when the road is open to traffic.

GUIDELINE:

1. Whenever possible create a barrier with apparatus by placing the apparatus between the workers and moving traffic.

Note: Do not compromise the efficient use of apparatus to create a barrier.

2. During the initial phase of emergency operations in a roadway, the reflective striping on turn-out gear will be sufficient to give visibility for those persons who are actively involved with the emergency.

Examples of emergency mode of operation: Vehicle fire extinguishment, MVA extrication, initial establishment of hose lines during any type of fire, etc.

3. Once operations have moved into a more routine mode, or when an assignment is not a part of the initial emergency action, anyone working in the roadway must don a high visibility vest.

Examples of routine mode of operation: Fire is no longer in an emergency phase, hose lines have been established, patient has been extricated and transported, traffic control operations, water supply operations, etc.

4. High visibility vests are not to be worn by firefighters who are engaged in fire suppression activities.
5. It is the responsibility of all personnel on the emergency scene to remind others to wear the appropriate apparel.
6. To improve the general visibility of all persons on scene apparatus operators must remember to turn off the head lights of apparatus and leave overhead warning lights on.
7. To improve the visibility of people working traffic detail during night time operations, each member of the traffic team should have a light directed on them so that they and the control sign become more apparent to motorists.
8. Establish traffic cone and fusee patterns as resources will allow.
9. Always look in all directions before entering into traffic lanes, and keep a watch out for other responders on scene.