

Emergency Vehicles Response Guidelines of Pelzer Rescue Squad

While responding to any emergency and non-emergency call, the Pelzer Rescue Squad places a great deal of responsibility on the drivers of our vehicles. It is not only important for vehicles, equipment, and personnel to arrive on scenes to provide service to those in need, but it is also important to accomplish this task in the safest and most prudent manner possible. Our drivers have in their care, custody, and control most of the major assets possessed by the Pelzer Rescue Squad (the vehicles, portable equipment, and personnel). Our vehicle drivers also have a higher standard of care to provide to the general motoring public and must make every attempt possible to provide due regard for the safety of others. Drivers must constantly monitor and reduce the amount of risk and exposure to potential losses during each and every response. Safe arrival at all scenes shall be, and must always remain, the first priority of all drivers. In order to accomplish this task, all vehicles drivers shall become familiar and constantly abide by the following policies and procedures:

1. Circle of safety

Prior to entering the cab and starting the vehicle, the emergency vehicle driver shall make a circle of safety around the vehicle to see that all equipment is secured, that all compartment doors are closed, and any physical obstructions are moved out of the way. During the circle of safety, the vehicle driver shall encircle the vehicle and visually inspect all 4 sides before entering the cab. This shall be conducted prior to moving the vehicle regardless of whether or not the vehicle is about to leave on an emergency or a non-emergency.

2. Warning devices and true emergencies

When responding to a true emergency, all audible and visual warning devices will be operated at all times regardless of the time of day and/or traffic conditions. All emergency vehicle drivers must understand that warning devices are not always effective in making other vehicle operators aware of your presence. Warning devices only request the right-of-way but do not ensure the right-of-way.

3. Vehicle control and right-of-way

All drivers shall attempt to maintain control of the vehicle that they are operating in such a manner as to provide the maximum level of safety for both their passengers and the general public. Vehicle operators should be aware that the civilian vehicle operator may not react in the manner in which is expected or felt to be appropriate. An attempt should be made to have options available when passing or overtaking vehicles. If another vehicle operator fails to yield

the right-of-way to an emergency vehicle, the emergency vehicle driver can not force the right-of-way nor can you assume the right-of-way. Therefore, you do not have the right-of-way until the other vehicle yields to you.

The emergency vehicle driver shall be aware of his/her rate of closure on other vehicles and pedestrians at all times to make sure that a safe distance is established and maintained. All drivers shall follow the rule for safe following distance and allow 1 second of following distance for every 10 feet of vehicle length for speeds under 40 mph and add 1 additional second for speeds over 40 mph.

4. Response speeds

When responding to an emergency response, drivers shall operate the vehicle they are driving as close to the posted speed limit as possible, but not to exceed the (10) miles per hour over the posted speed limit, conditions permitting. Examples of conditions requiring slower response speeds include but are not limited to:

- Slippery road conditions
- Inclement weather
- Poor visibility
- Heavy or congested traffic conditions
- Sharp curves

5. Intersection Practices

Extreme care should be taken when approaching any intersection as intersections are the locations responsible for a large percentage of major accidents involving emergency vehicles. Drivers are required to practice the organizations intersection operating guidelines during all emergency responses.

Uncontrolled intersections

Any intersection that does not offer a control device (stop sign, yield or traffic signal) in the direction of travel of the emergency vehicle or where a traffic control signal is green upon approach of the emergency vehicle all emergency vehicles should do the following:

- Scan the intersection for possible hazards (right turns on red, pedestrians, vehicles traveling fast, etc.)
- Observe traffic in all 4 directions (left, right, front, rear)
- Slow down if any potential hazards are detected and cover the brake pedal with the drivers foot
- Change the siren cadence not less than 200' from the intersection
- Avoid using the opposing lane of traffic if at all possible

Emergency vehicle drivers should always be prepared to stop. If another vehicle operator fails to yield the right-of-way to an emergency vehicle, the emergency vehicle driver can't force the right-of-way, nor can you assume the right-of-way, therefore you don't have the right-of-way until the other vehicles yield to you.

Controlled intersections

Any intersection controlled by a stop sign, yield sign, yellow traffic light, or a red traffic light requires a complete stop by the emergency vehicle driver. In addition to bringing the vehicle to a completed stop, these additional steps must be followed as well:

- Don't rely on warning devices to clear traffic
- Scan the intersection for possible hazards (right turns on red, pedestrians, vehicles traveling to fast, etc.) as well as driver operations
- Begin to slow down well before reaching the intersection and cover the brake pedal with the drivers foot, continue to scan in 4 directions (left, right, front, and back)
- Change the siren cadence not less than 200' from the intersection
- Scan the intersection for possible passing options (pass on right, left, wait, etc.) Avoid using the opposing lane of traffic if at all possible
- Come to a complete stop
- Establish eye contact with other vehicle drivers; have your partner communicate all is clear, reconfirm all other vehicles are stopped
- Proceed one lane of traffic at a time treating each lane of traffic as a separate intersection

Railroad intersections

At any time an emergency vehicle driver approaches an unguarded railroad crossing, he/she shall bring the vehicle he/she is operating to a complete stop before entering the grad crossing. In addition, the emergency vehicle driver shall perform the following prior to proceeding:

- Turn off all sirens and air horns
- Operate the motor at idle speed
- Turn off any other sound producing equipment or accessories
- Open the windows and listen for a train's horn

6. Non-emergency response

When responding to a call in a non-emergency response mode, the vehicle will be operated without any audible or visual warning devices an in compliance with all state motor vehicle laws that apply to civilian traffic. At no time should any emergency vehicle be operated during response with only warning devices.

7. Ordinary travel procedures

All drivers shall obey all traffic laws and traffic control devices when driving any vehicle under ordinary travel conditions. Any driver observed breaking any traffic laws or driving any vehicle in an aggressive manner will be subject to disciplinary action including suspension of driving privileges or termination.

8. Riding policy

The Pelzer Rescue Squad requires all persons riding in a vehicle to be seated in approved riding positions and be secured to the vehicle by seat belts whenever the vehicle is in motion. Personnel who perform emergency medical care while the vehicle is in motion should be secured to the vehicle by a seat belt unless there is a need to provide care.

9. Backing

The Pelzer Rescue Squad recognizes that backing emergency vehicles is made hazardous by the fact that the driver cannot see much of where he/she intends to go. The Pelzer Rescue Squad recommends that whenever possible drivers should avoid backing as this is the safest way to avoid an accident. When it is necessary to back-up any of the Pelzer Rescue Squad's vehicles, all drivers shall follow one of the two following measures:

- The Pelzer Rescue Squad's first choice of backing is that before any vehicle is put into reverse and backed that a spotter be put in place near the rear of the vehicle. The spotter should be safely positioned so that the emergency vehicle driver can see them at all times. If at any time the emergency vehicle driver loses sight of the spotter, the driver shall stop immediately until the spotter makes himself/herself visible again.
- If conditions exist that make use of spotters impossible, all drivers, before attempting to back up any vehicle, 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 emergency vehicle driver should also note potential obstructions in the intended path of travel.

10. Response in private owned vehicles

Private vehicles are not emergency vehicles and therefore are not afforded any exemptions or special privileges under state law. No personnel should respond to any scene in their personal vehicle unless a situation warrants their response. Anyone responding just for the sake of responding is not permitted. If the need for any personnel to respond to a scene in their privately owned vehicle does arise, the person should not use any audible or visual warning devices and should obey all motor vehicle laws including but not limited to:

- Speed limits
- Going through traffic control devices
- Passing in an unsafe manner

11. Motor Vehicle Violations

All drivers submitting an application for employment shall submit at least a 3 year driving record from the Department of Motor Vehicles. Also, the Pelzer Rescue Squad may periodically obtain copies of employees driving records to audit for violations. In addition, any person who receives a motor vehicle violation should notify the Operations Manager or Business Manager before driving any of the Pelzer Rescue Squad's vehicles again.

Violations will be either a Type A or Type B violation. Examples of each are as follows:

Type A Violations

- Driving while intoxicated
- Driving under the influence of drugs
- Negligent homicide arising out of the use of a motor vehicle
- Operating during a period of suspension or revocation of a driving license
- Using a motor vehicle for the commission of a felony
- Aggravated assault with a motor vehicle
- Operating a motor vehicle without the owner's authority
- Permitting an unlicensed person to drive
- Reckless driving
- Hit and run driving

Type B Violations

- All moving violations not listed as Type A violations.

Anyone convicted of a Type A violation will not be allowed to drive the Pelzer Rescue Squad's vehicles for a minimum period of 3 years. If at that time driving privileges are restored, the person shall be recertified to operate an emergency vehicle.

Anyone who has a combination of two class B moving violation convictions and/or chargeable accidents in a three year period will be issued a warning letter from the Operations Manager.

Anyone who has a combination of three moving violation convictions and/or chargeable accidents in a three year period will be issued a suspension from driving Pelzer Rescue Squad's vehicles for a period of ninety days by the Operations Manager. In addition, the same person will be required to complete an approved driver improvement program and be recertified to operate emergency vehicles.

Anyone who has more than 3 moving violations convictions or three chargeable accidents or any combination of the two in a three year period will be suspended from driving the Pelzer Rescue Squad's vehicles for a period of one year. In addition, the same individual will be required to complete an approved driver improvement program and be recertified to operate emergency vehicles.

Acknowledgment

I _____ acknowledge that I have received a copy of the Pelzer Rescue Squad's Emergency Vehicle Response Plan and have also been trained and understand the items and instructions contained in this policy. I also understand the importance of safe operation of the Pelzer Rescue Squad's vehicles and will abide by all of the tactical and administrative operating guidelines in this document.

Signed _____

Date _____