



HEMPFIELD FIRE DEPARTMENT – OPERATIONS

200.5 – APPARATUS RESPONSE

ISSUED:

January 25, 2021

REVISED:

EMERGENCY AND NON-EMERGENCY RESPONSE TYPES

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this standard operating policy is to state response types for responding firefighting apparatus.

SCOPE:

This standard operating policy shall apply to all Hempfield Fire Department Firefighters.

ENFORCEMENT:

The Fire Chief and all Hempfield Fire Department Officers are ultimately responsible for ensuring the safety of firefighters in Hempfield Township. Any person deviating from this policy may be required within five days to submit in writing within the Fire Chief an explanation for the deviation from this policy.

GENERAL:

1. General
 - a. Prior to entering the cab, the driver shall circle the vehicle to ensure all compartment doors and equipment are secured and any physical obstructions are moved out of the way.
2. Emergency Response
 - a. Vehicles responding in an emergency mode shall operate all visual warning devices at all times.
 - b. Audible warning devices shall be used at all times when driving in traffic or when approaching an intersection.
 - c. An emergency incident may be reduced to a non-emergency response. Upon instructions from the highest-ranking company officer responding or on scene or by additional information received by responding units, if a non-emergency response is requested or warranted, all audible and visual warning devices shall be terminated, and all vehicles shall respond in accordance with the Non-Emergency Response section.

- d. When responding in the emergency response mode, drivers shall operate with due regard as close to the posted speed limit as possible, but not to exceed ten (10) miles per hour over the posted speed limit in a safe and prudent manner, roadway and weather conditions permitting.
- e. Conditions that may require slower response speeds include but are not limited to:
 - a. Slippery road conditions
 - b. Inclement weather
 - c. Poor visibility
 - d. Heavy or congested traffic conditions
 - e. Sharp curves
- f. When an emergency vehicle approaches any uncontrolled intersection (does not offer a control device ex. Stop sign, yield or traffic signal) in the direction of travel of the emergency vehicle or where the traffic signal is green for the emergency vehicle, drivers shall do the following:
 - a. Scan the intersection for possible hazards (right turns on red, pedestrians, fast moving vehicles, etc.).
 - b. Observe traffic in all four (4) directions.
 - c. Slow down if any hazards are detected and cover the brake pedal with the driver's foot.
 - d. Change the siren cadence not less than two hundred (200) feet from the intersection.
 - e. Avoid using the opposing lane of traffic if at all possible.
 - f. Proceed with due regard
- g. When an emergency vehicle approaches any controlled intersection (presence of a control device ex. Stop sign, yield sign, yellow or red traffic light) the driver shall come to a complete stop before proceeding through the intersection.
 - a. In addition to bringing the vehicle to a complete stop, the following steps shall be performed:
 - i. Do not rely on warning devices to clear traffic.
 - ii. Scan the intersection for possible hazards (right turns on red, pedestrians, fast moving vehicles, etc.)
 - iii. Observe traffic in all four (4) directions.
 - iv. Begin to slow down well before the intersection and cover the brake pedal with the driver's foot

- v. Change the siren cadence not less than two hundred (200) feet from the intersection.
 - vi. Scan the intersection for possible passing options; avoid using the opposing lane of traffic if at all possible.
 - vii. Establish eye contact with other drivers; have officer communicate all is clear reconfirming all other vehicles have stopped.
 - viii. Proceed with due regard, one lane at a time treating each lane as a separate intersection.
- h. When an emergency vehicle approaches an unguarded rail crossing, the driver shall bring the apparatus to a complete stop before entering the crossing.
- a. In addition to bringing the vehicle to a complete stop, the following steps shall be performed:
 - i. Turn off all sirens and air horns.
 - ii. Operate the vehicles engine at idle speed.
 - iii. Turn off any other sound producing equipment or accessories
 - iv. Open the window and listen for a train's horn.
 - v. Proceed with due regard.
- i. When an emergency vehicle approaches a school bus with activated red lights, the driver shall bring the apparatus to a complete stop.
- a. In addition to bringing the vehicle to a complete stop, the following steps shall be performed:
 - i. Reduce speeds when approaching a school bus that is stopped for loading or unloading.
 - ii. Be observant of any students who may be at bus stops or crossing the street near the bus.
 - iii. Come to a complete stop a safe distance from the stopped school bus
 - iv. If the school bus driver signals the driver to proceed:
 - 1. Look right, left, right and left to ensure that no children are in the roadway.
 - 2. Proceed at a rate of no more than five (5) mile per hour past the bus.

3. Scan the area to make sure that no students are in the street in the area of the rear of the school bus.
 4. Continue to respond with due regard.
- j. When an emergency vehicle approaches a school zone, the driver shall operate at the posted school zone speed.
 - k. When approaching a crosswalk, the vehicle operator shall operate the vehicle at the posted speed limit and be prepared to stop if any pedestrians are located within or in proximity to the crosswalk. Fire apparatus will stop in order to allow pedestrians located in or near the crosswalk to cross the street.
 - l. Drivers should not force or assume that the emergency vehicle driver has the right of way, and operator should be prepared to stop.

3. Non-Emergency Response

1. Vehicles responding in a non-emergency mode shall be operated without any audible or visual warning devices; and, in compliance with all state motor vehicle laws that apply to civilian traffic
2. The following is a list of incidents requiring a non-emergency response:
 - a. Carbon Monoxide Alarms with no symptoms reported.
 - b. Search Details
 - c. Debris/Fluid Clean up on Roadway
 - d. Standby Assignment
 - e. Public service calls including pump details and lockouts.
 - f. Animal rescue
 - g. Utility Pole/Trees/Wires/Transformers
 - h. Smoke Investigation Outside
 - i. Fire Alarms – Reported False
 - j. Fire Alarms- Requested Cancel
 - k. Flooded Roadway
 - l. Flooding

- m. Tree Down
- n. Traffic Control
- o. Vehicle Accident – No injuries
- p. Vehicle Accident – Debris on the Roadway
- q. Gas/Odor Investigation Outside
- r. Ambulance Assist – Non-Emergency
- s. Assist the Police Department or other agency, unless requested emergency.
- t. Any other incident where common sense dictates a non-emergency response.

This list may be modified by the Hempfield Fire Chief as needed.

3. A non-emergency incident may be determined to be an emergency response based upon additional information received. The highest-ranking company officer responding or on scene shall determine appropriate response.
4. Upon arrival at a non-emergency incident, visual warning devices may be employed depending on the circumstances for safety of personnel working at the incident. An example may be a spill control incident on the highway. Upon arrival, the apparatus shall be positioned appropriately in accordance and warning lights shall be activated to alert motorists of emergency service workers.