

Occupational Safety and Health, SOG 235

EMERGENCY RESPONSE

1. Scope. This standard applies to the driver of an emergency vehicle owned or operated by the department while responding to an incident. It was promulgated to establish safety guidelines during emergency responses.
2. Categories of Response.
 - A. Emergency: Those incidents that pose a significant risk to life or property. Emergency response requires the use of all audio (siren and airhorns) and visual (lights) warning devices. These devices must be in use during the entire duration of the response unless the response is downgraded to a nonemergency by a competent authority. The initial response to the following types of incidents shall be considered emergencies:
 - (1) A reported fire in a structure.
 - (2) A reported fire outside of a structure that involves the potential destruction of property or poses a risk to human or animal life.
 - (3) Responses to a man-made or natural disaster involving the destruction of property and the potential for injury or death. This would include requests for assistance from other jurisdictions.
 - B. Nonemergency: Those incidents that do not pose a significant risk to life or property. Audio and visual warning devices shall not be used during nonemergency responses unless ordered by a competent authority to upgrade the response to emergency status. The initial response to the following types of incidents shall not be considered to be emergencies:
 - (1) Automatic fire alarms until confirmation is received that an actual emergency exists.
 - (2) Public service calls to assist the public when there is no immediate threat to life or property.
3. Response Guidelines.
 - A. Apparatus and vehicles engaged in a nonemergency response shall obey all applicable traffic safety rules and regulations and shall not exceed the posted speed limit.

- B. Apparatus and vehicles engaged in an emergency response shall at all times govern their response by the traffic, weather, and road conditions present at the time of response.
 - C. During an emergency response, drivers shall bring their vehicles to a complete stop for any of the following:
 - (1) When directed by a law enforcement officer.
 - (2) Stop signs.
 - (3) Red traffic signals.
 - (4) Negative right-of-way intersections.
 - (5) Blind intersections.
 - (6) When the driver cannot account for all lanes of traffic in an intersection.
 - (7) When other intersection hazards are present.
 - (8) When encountering a stopped school bus with flashing warning lights.
 - D. Drivers shall proceed through an intersection only when the driver can account for all lanes of traffic in the intersection.
 - E. Drivers shall bring their vehicles to a complete stop at all unguarded railroad grade crossings and shall not cross the tracks until determining that it is safe to do so.
4. Responsibilities.
- A. Drivers shall be directly responsible for the safe and prudent operation of their vehicles in all situations.
 - B. When a driver is under the direct supervision of an officer, the officer shall assume responsibility for the actions of the driver and shall be responsible for immediately correcting any unsafe condition.