

**TOWN OF WATERTOWN FIRE DEPARTMENT  
STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINES**

**SECTION:** Rescue Operations  
**SUBJECT:** Vehicle Accident and Extrication  
**REVISED:** 7/2013

**PURPOSE:**

To establish guidelines for handling vehicle rescue and extrication safely and effectively.

**POLICY:**

In the event of a vehicle accident or extrication the following guidelines have been established.

**RESPONSE:**

The response to vehicle accidents and extrications should be:

1. Pumper/rescue
2. Rescue.
3. Pumper
4. Tanker

**PROCEDURES:**

- A. If commercial trucks are involved, check placarding, and take necessary precautions.
- B. Give actual location of incident to dispatch if other than original reported location.
- C. Request law enforcement for towing company notification.
- D. Use the Crash Recovery Computer Program located in the apparatus to locate electrical and air bag hazards within the vehicle.

**SAFETY:**

- A. All personnel should be in protective clothing and wearing safety vests.
- B. Spot apparatus uphill and up wind from accident scenes if possible. Apparatus should be parked between rescuers and oncoming traffic with parking brakes set and wheels turned towards the curb.
- C. Stop all fuel leaks if possible, and prevent use of flares if fire hazards exists. Hose lines should be positioned and charged.
- D. Prior to rescue personnel entering the vehicle, stabilize the vehicle. Think about utilizing the rescue jack vehicle stabilization strut system.
- E. Utilize cribbing, chock blocks, ropes, vehicle emergency brake, etc. Always crib and chock while using air bags or rescue jacks.
- F. Overturned vehicles should not be "righted" until patients have been removed.
- G. Do not disconnect the battery cables if flammable vapors are present.
- H. On interstate 81 no personal vehicles will be allowed to respond, keep all POV's off the interstate.

**FUEL SPILLS:**

- A. Should stop the leak if possible and prevent ignition utilizing hose lines to safeguard patients as well as rescue personnel.
- B. If unable to stop the fuel leak by crimping fuel lines, you may be able to fill the tank with water to the level of the leak so only water comes out.
- C. With large fuel spills a light water or other type of foam may be needed to prevent ignition of the fuel vapors.
- D. Make sure the air bag system is de-energized, usually by disconnecting the battery.
- E. Make sure the fuel system is de-energized, usually by turning off the ignition.
- F. If the vehicle is a hybrid vehicle make sure the electrical system is de-energized usually accomplished by disconnecting the battery cables. Use the Crash Recovery System Computer Program located in the apparatus to locate disconnect points.

**OPERATIONAL CONSIDERATIONS:**

- A. Officer in charge shall coordinate with ambulance squad personnel concerning patient care.
- B. Officer in charge should coordinate with law enforcement concerning traffic control, and any other law enforcement function required.
- C. Officer in charge should consider the many available stabilization systems available to stabilize the vehicle.
- D. Safety should be foremost in the mind of the officer concerning emergency operations.
- E. Be alert for high voltage on hybrid vehicles.
- F. All personnel operating at a scene will wear their issued safety vests.