



APPARATUS BACKING

SCOPE

This guideline shall apply to all members of the Stoney Point Fire Department and shall be adhered to by all members.

PURPOSE

To establish the procedures and responsibilities for the safe backing of apparatus and vehicles by Stoney Point Fire Department members.

DEFINITIONS

Apparatus – vehicle designed and equipped for fighting and extinguishing fire

Guideline - a general rule, principle, outline of a policy

Member – any career, volunteer, staff, and auxiliary personnel affiliated with the department

Responsibility - the state or fact of having a duty to deal with something or of having control over someone, being accountable for one's actions

Shall - indicates a mandatory requirement

Spotter – individual responsible for assisting a driver in backing or moving a vehicle with the use of hand and arm signals or other communications

Vehicle - any motorized vehicle which is designed for transportation

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GUIDELINES

The safe operation of Stoney Point Fire Department vehicles and apparatus is a priority to ensure efficient and effective response to emergency incidents. It is the responsibility of all members to understand safe backing procedures for apparatus and vehicles as they may be required to assist a Driver/Operator or Engineer in moving a vehicle or apparatus. Driver/Operators, Engineers and Officers are responsible for ensuring that vehicles or apparatus are not backed without having spotters in place. Backing collisions account for approximately 85% of vehicle related collisions within Stoney Point Fire Department. Though these collisions generally occur at slow speeds and rarely result in injuries, however, they may cause significant damage to the apparatus, vehicles, or structures involved. These collisions may result in an apparatus being taken out of service or the department paying substantial reparations to injured parties to compensate for the damages. Therefore, whenever possible, backing shall be avoided. However, if backing a vehicle is unavoidable, or when operating in restricted spaces, spotters shall be utilized.



Procedures for Backing or Restricted Operation of Vehicles and Fire Apparatus

In some circumstances a vehicle or apparatus may be operated solely by the Driver/Operator. When backing or maneuvering through a restricted space is required, the Driver/Operator shall attempt to utilize available department members or other response personnel as a spotter. Whenever there are no other personnel available to assist, the Driver/Operator shall conduct a 360 degree walk around of the vehicle or apparatus to determine the location of any hazards or obstructions in the vehicle's path. The Driver/operator shall make full use of all vehicle or apparatus mirrors and back up cameras throughout the operation. If the Driver/Operator determines that they are unsure of the proximity of any hazards or obstructions, they shall immediately stop the vehicle and conduct another 360 degree survey before proceeding with moving the apparatus.

If operating in poor visibility conditions all exterior lighting shall be utilized to assist with the operation. Flashlights shall be utilized by spotters to assist the Driver/Operator in identifying hazards and in directing the apparatus.

Vehicle emergency lighting shall be activated prior to backing an apparatus or vehicle on a roadway, intersection, around a corner or into a restricted area. Spotters shall be wearing traffic safety vests unless wearing structural firefighting gear.

Spotters

Whenever a Stoney Point Fire Department vehicle or apparatus is being backed all crew members shall dismount and act as spotters. The lead spotter should be located at the left rear corner (driver's side rear) of the apparatus or vehicle to assist the Driver/Operator. If necessary and practicable, portable radios may be utilized to assist in the restricted area or backing operation. The Driver/Operator's window shall be down to permit verbal communication with spotters.

Prior to backing the vehicle or apparatus the Driver/Operator and lead spotter shall confirm visual contact with each other. At any time during the backing or restricted area operation that visual contact between the Driver/operator and spotter is lost the Driver/Operator shall immediately stop the vehicle. Movement shall not be initiated until contact is reestablished between the spotter and Driver/Operator. No spotter or other personnel shall move behind the apparatus or vehicle during a backing operation. Likewise, no spotter or other personnel shall move between the apparatus and any other obstacle during restricted area operations.

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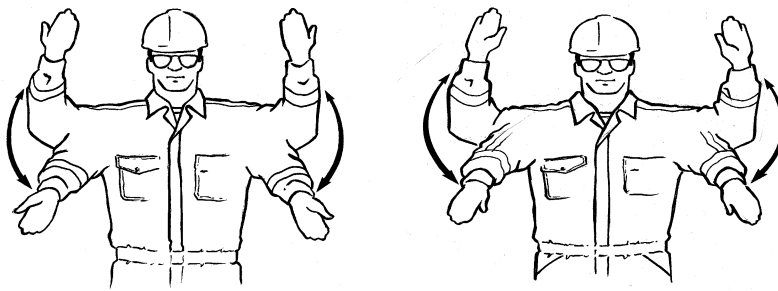


Hand and Arm Signals

The use of hand and arm signals is the approved non-verbal method for directing the movement of a Stoney Point Fire Department apparatus or vehicle. These signals can be used for both backing and restricted area operations as they are universal. The lead spotter is responsible for utilizing these signals to assist the Driver/Operator in maneuvering the apparatus or vehicle while backing or operating in restricted areas. If the Driver/Operator does not understand the directions given they will immediately stop the vehicle and confer with the lead spotter for clarification.

Proceed Slowly – Straight Forward or Straight Backward

Purpose: To move the vehicle in a straight line either forward or backward



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Actions:

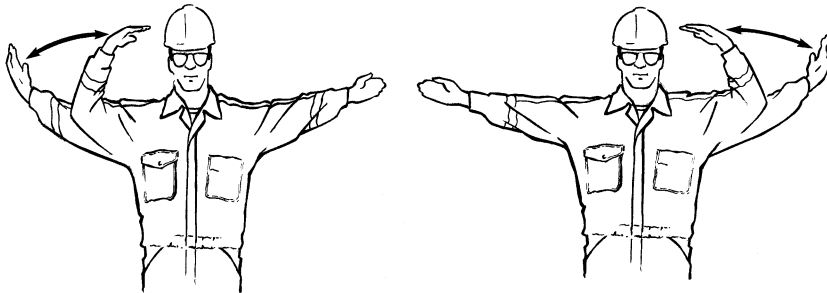
Both arms extended forward and slightly wider than the body, parallel to the ground. Palms facing the direction of desired travel. Together bend both arms repeatedly toward the head and chest then extend.



Move Slowly – Right or Left

Purpose: To move the vehicle either to the right or left while the vehicle is moving.

Note: When backing, the rear of the vehicle should travel in the direction that the stationary arm is pointing.



Actions:

Both arms extended forward and slightly wider than the body, parallel to the ground. Palms facing the direction of desired travel. Together bend both arms repeatedly toward the head and chest then extend.

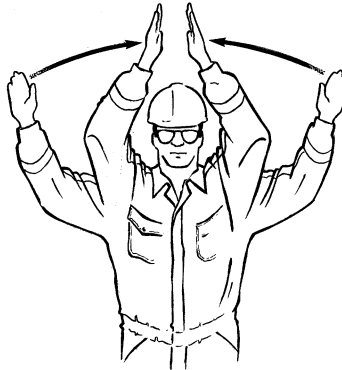
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Prepare to Stop – Distance to Stopping Point

Purpose: To provide the driver a visual reference for the distance to the stop point.



Actions:

Both arms extended sideways with elbows bent upward at 90 degrees. Palms facing forwards. Keep hands above head bring elbows forward as the distance narrows. As the elbows reach the straightforward position continue the hands coming together above the head to indicate the stop point is being reached.



Stop

Purpose: To stop all movement of the vehicle immediately.



Actions:

Both arms extended above the head with crossed arms at the wrists, palms forward. Both arms waved repeatedly down until parallel to the ground then return to the stop position above the head (Signal #5) until the vehicle stops moving.

Failure to Adhere to Spotter Requirements

Any member that fails to adhere to this guideline may be subject to disciplinary actions. Any failure to utilize these procedures that result in damages or injuries shall be referred to the Fire Chief for disciplinary action. All accidents resulting in damage or injury require an alcohol and controlled substance screening by the Driver/Operator.

References

Guide to IAFC Model Policies and Procedures for Emergency Vehicle Safety

NFPA 1002

NFPA 1451

Vehicle Spotter Hand and Arm Signals

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