VEHICLE EXTRICATION

Fire Department Town of Menasha
Standard Operating Guidelines
October, 1993
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Section 30
Last Revised 12/12

30.01 Scope:
This guideline provides fire department personnel with operational guidelines to extricate victims from vehicles and to minimize the risk to rescue personnel working at the scene of an emergency. This guideline does not address the medical treatment of patients. The extent to which emergency medical treatment is given will be limited to the department members’ credentials and available personal protective equipment.

30.02 Size Up:
Upon arriving at the scene of a vehicle accident with an entrapment, the officer or Incident Commander shall determine the best placement for the responding vehicles to ensure the protection and safety of all personnel operating on the scene. The officer shall size up the situation and either establish or pass command to the next arriving unit. The Officer/Incident Commander should evaluate the following criteria:

A. The number of vehicles involved.

B. Number of persons injured or trapped.

C. Type of vehicles involved such as car, truck, hybrid, or alternative fuel vehicle.

D. Actual fire present.

E. Leaking fuel causing a potential fire or explosion hazard.

F. Stability of vehicles involved.

G. Presence of vehicle safety systems such as air bags and whether they have deployed.

H. Involvement of electrical power lines or other electrocution hazards;

I. Involvement of any actual or suspected hazardous materials.

30.03 Emergency Medical Treatment:
If an ALS (Advanced Life Support) unit has not arrived prior to the Fire Department's arrival, emergency medical treatment shall be rendered by TMFD Certified First Responders utilizing department equipment. Only qualified EMS Personnel should have direct patient contact!!!
30.04 Scene Preparations and Securement:
The Officer in charge shall survey the scene for possible hazards. If utility hazards are present, utility company assistance shall be requested and/or confirmed. Contact shall also be made with the EMS team present to determine the extent of extrication required.

Proper scene preparation before operations begin is critical to the overall success of the operation. Scene preparation should include but is not limited to establishing a tool resource staging area (placed on tarp) and providing scene lighting when necessary.

All ignition sources shall be eliminated from the area. The batteries of all vehicles involved shall be disconnected if possible unless power is needed to activate windows, door locks or power seats.

Extrication can only begin after the vehicle has been deemed stabilized. In addition a means of fire suppression (1 ¾” hose line or fire extinguisher) is deployed and positioned, and all personnel working in the extrication zone (Fire and EMS) have been briefed on the actions that will be undertaken.

Due to the addition of safety restraint systems placed in newer vehicles, it is critical to evaluate and determine what potential systems and their hazards are placed in the vehicle where the extrication takes place. The Incident Commander or Operations/Extrication Officer should refer to the Halmatro “Rescuer’s Guide to Vehicle Safety Systems” for the location of the safety system components. In addition the interior plastic trim shall be stripped to locate system devices that may cause a hazard during the extrication process.

In addition to safety restraint systems there are Hybrid and alternative fuel vehicles being utilized by the citizens that create more unique hazards to personnel. These types of vehicle must be identified quickly and potential hazards eliminated.

30.05 Extrication Process:
The extrication of patients shall begin with the appointment of an Operations/Extrication Officer. The officer in charge working in conjunction with the EMS provider shall establish an extrication zone. The perimeter of the extrication zone should be marked with orange cones. Access to this area shall be limited only to those firefighters involved in the extrication process and those providing fire suppression equipment. The officer in charge, again working with EMS shall determine the best and most efficient means of extrication.
The extrication team shall consist of an Operations/Extrication Officer and a minimum of two firefighters. The use of full protective clothing by the team with protective EMS gloves worn under the fire gloves shall be enforced (SCBA is an option to be considered by the Incident Commander and the appointed safety officer). It will be the duty of the Operations/Extrication Officer to oversee the extrication and also inform the Incident Commander of the extrication progress. If at any time the officer in charge feels that the extrication may require more specialized tools, he should not hesitate in making this request to the Incident Commander.

When the need for extrication exceeds the resources of our department, additional vehicle rescue tools shall be requested from the nearest municipality. (Example-Grand Chute Fire, Town of Neenah Fire, Neenah-Menasha Fire)

30.06 Safety:
The Incident Commander is responsible for the safety of all individuals working in and around the emergency scene. All personnel working on the scene shall wear all protective clothing appropriate to the task they are performing which normally includes full protective clothing. Gloves, helmet with chin strap fastened and eye protection (face shields down or safety glasses/goggles) must always be worn. Reflective safety vests are also required to be worn when working in or around the incident scene.

The position of Safety Officer shall be carried out by the Incident Commander unless the need arises to appoint an individual be assigned to the position. Their safety role is to supervise the operations, which includes awareness of approaching vehicles. It is critical that all precautions are taken to warn motorists of personnel working in the area (Refer to Highway Safety Guidelines). The deployment and placement of safety cones and the proper vehicle placement to protect the responders on the scene are some of the critical precautions that shall be addressed. Adequate law enforcement personnel must be present to assist with controlling traffic hazards. It is imperative that the Incident Commander or the Safety Officer work closely with the responding law enforcement agency to ensure the safety of all personnel on the scene.