

SOUTH PORTLAND FIRE DEPARTMENT

STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINES

Policy #:	5.121	Effective Date:	3/5/2024
Title:	Vehicle Accident Reporting and Investigation	# of pages:	2
Category:	Administration	Classification:	Green

1. **PURPOSE:** To provide standard guidelines for reporting all accidents involving Fire Department Vehicles.
2. **POLICY:**
It is the responsibility of all Fire Department members to be familiar with and follow this SOG.

Definitions:

Fire Department Vehicle – Any vehicle owned by the City and being operated by a Fire Department member including emergency apparatus, service vehicles, and/or utility vehicles. *Boats will be handled similarly but fall under the jurisdiction of the United States Coast Guard.*

Accident – an accident (which could involve, but does not require, a collision) involving a Fire Department Vehicle and another vehicle, person, or property that results in property damage, bodily injury or death to a person.

3. **PROCEDURES:**

Accidents with Injuries

- If an accident involving any Fire Department Vehicle(s) results in injuries, the care of any injured personnel or civilian(s) must be our first priority. Care of any injured persons should begin as soon as is prudently possible.
- If involved in an accident that results in injuries, members should immediately notify Fire Alarm of their location and request additional resources as needed.

General Accident Requirements

- If involved in an accident with any Fire Department vehicle(s), members shall notify Fire Alarm of their location and their status.
- If an accident occurs during an emergency response, members will notify Fire Alarm and request alternative resources to respond to the original emergency.
- All accidents involving Fire Department Vehicles must be reported to the Company Officer or Officer Candidate (O/C) and Duty Chief as soon as prudently possible. The report to the Duty Chief must include the following:
 - Unit(s) involved and names of involved employees.

- Location of the Accident.
- Whether or not a cover assignment is needed.
- Whether the vehicle(s) is/are drivable, in-service or out-of-service.
- An estimate of the extent and nature of any injuries and/or vehicle damage.
- The Company Officer, O/C or Duty Chief will also request a Police Officer to complete any necessary reports (MCRS CRASH report) as required under Maine Law (regardless of what municipality the accident occurred).
- Do not discuss the incident with anyone other than Fire and Police representatives.
- Make every effort to document the event with pictures (i.e. cellphone) prior to making and adjustments to the scene.
- Do not move the vehicle(s) unless a traffic hazard is present.
- If moving the vehicle is necessary, mark the original position of the vehicles tires prior to moving.
- Remain at the incident scene until the Police have completed any investigation(s).

Duty Chief Requirements

- The Duty Chief will be dispatched to all accidents involving Fire Department Vehicles.
- The Duty Chief should ensure that Fire Department employees involved in the incident are isolated from the general public, the other parties involved in the incident and the news media. In the event of a serious accident, employees should be taken to a nearby fire station. They must not be permitted to talk to anyone about the incident except to Police and Fire officials.
- The Duty Chief should ensure that members involved in serious accidents have access to CISM.
- The Duty Chief is responsible for ensuring that the following paperwork is completed:
 - City Injury/Accident Investigation Form
 - A narrative account of the incident (for serious accidents if required by the Police Department investigation).

Investigations

- All accident investigations will be conducted by the Police Department as warranted and dictated by Maine Law.
- All measurements, photographs shall be taken as deemed necessary by the Police Department.
- Any accident that there is any reportable damage shall also require a City Injury/Accident Investigation Form be completed and submitted to the Department Safety Committee within 24 hours.
- The Fire Department (normally via the Deputy Chief of Safety) will review all investigation forms. Any significant event would require a panel to review.
- Regardless of who/how review is conducted, the available outcomes will be one of three options:
 - Accidental: Unpreventable – examples would be acts of nature (such as a tree falling on vehicle or other driver running red light).
 - Accidental: Preventable – examples would be inattentiveness, hurrying, loss of situational awareness.

- Intentional/Negligent – examples would be moving vehicle with warning light/horn sounding, ignoring department rules/regulations, general disregard for safety.
- Disciplinary actions, if required, will follow department policy and will be based on which outcome is identified and previous history of the offender.

4. REFERENCES:

- None

By Order Of:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Phil Selberg', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Phil Selberg
Fire Chief