


Title:	Vehicle Fires			
Section:	400 Fire Operations			
SOG #:	404	Page:	1 of 2	
Effective Date:	January 1, 2024	Reviewed Date:		
Authorized By:	Fox River Fire District Chiefs			

A. PURPOSE

The purpose of this guideline is intended to provide members with information regarding special concerns and hazards that exist when responding to vehicle fires.

B. SCOPE

This topic is limited to the fires in light-duty vehicles and does not address fires or other emergencies involving large commercial vehicles.

C. TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

There are no special terms or definitions for this guideline.

D. GUIDELINE

1) Priorities.

- a) Establish general scene safety, i.e., potential electrical hazards (downed wires), etc.
- b) Safely remove vehicle occupants who are in or near the vehicle.
- c) Keep the public away from the vehicle for a minimum distance of 50 feet in all directions.
- d) Stabilize the vehicle from rolling using wheel chocks or deflating a tire.
- e) Control the fire, protect exposures, and extinguish.
- f) Control fuel spills.

2) Full protective clothing, including SCBA, shall be worn at the scene of vehicle fires.

3) Protect members from traffic. A minimum of two lanes of traffic shall be stopped by placing the apparatus in position (stop all traffic if needed) and/or by having law enforcement control traffic.

4) Be aware of fuel spills and hazardous gases produced by fire. Keep members, apparatus, pedestrians, and vehicular traffic out of the spill area. If possible, position fire

apparatus uphill and upwind of the spill and at a safe distance. Foam may be needed to prevent ignition or re-ignition of fuel spills.

5) Be aware of driver and passenger air bags and the hazards associated with them.

6) Fuel system ruptures are rare but must be guarded against. Newer vehicles have pressurized fuel systems, and some vehicles now use propane or other flammable gases as a fuel, increasing the potential for violent fuel system rupture. Motor homes and small commercial vehicles may also carry flammable and/or pressurized cylinders.

7) Many vehicles are equipped with energy-absorbing suspension systems and/or bumpers that are capable of violent rupture causing injury.

8) The electrical system can produce electrical shock and injury due to arcing. Use caution when cutting or disconnecting battery cables. Always disconnect the ground (negative) side first, then the positive.

9) Water Supply. It is not usually necessary to secure a source of water supply when a light-duty vehicle is involved in fire. The company officer shall determine the need for a water supply but will secure a source of water when large vehicles are involved.

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