

GENERAL ORDER

PORT WASHINGTON POLICE DEPARTMENT

SUBJECT:	TRAFFIC CRASH PROCEDURES	NUMBER:	6.2.4
		ISSUED:	5/5/09
SCOPE:	All Sworn Police Personnel	EFFECTIVE:	5/5/09
DISTRIBUTION:	General Orders Manual	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> RESCINDS	27.3
		<input type="checkbox"/> AMENDS	
REFERENCE:		WILEAG 3 RD EDITION STANDARDS: 6.2.7, 6.2.8	

INDEX AS: Crash Scene Procedures
 Hazardous Materials at Traffic Crashes
 Investigating Traffic Crashes
 Traffic Crash Procedures

PURPOSE: The purpose of this Order is to establish procedures for the investigation and reporting of traffic crashes.

This Order consists of the following numbered sections:

- I. TRAFFIC CRASH PROCEDURES
 - II. TRAFFIC CRASHES ON PRIVATE PROPERTY
 - III. HIT AND RUN TRAFFIC CRASHES
 - IV. TRAFFIC CRASHES INVOLVING CITY OWNED VEHICLES
 - V. TRAFFIC CRASHES INVOLVING POLICE DEPARTMENT EMPLOYEES

- I. TRAFFIC CRASH PROCEDURES
 - A. Officers will respond to the scene and investigate all traffic crashes reported to the Police Department, including but not limited to Death, Injury, Hit and Run, Property Damage only, Damage to Public Vehicles or Property, Hazardous Materials, and Occurrences on Private Property.
 - B. Officers will respond to crash scenes in a safe manner, arriving at the scene, protecting the scene, aiding any injured persons and requesting needed support services; officer assistance, ambulance, wrecker(s), etc.
 - C. Crash scenes should be cleared as quickly as possible to expedite traffic flow and remove the hazards present from the crash.

- D. Generally the initial responding officer will be in charge of the crash scene and responsible for the processing of the crash, except when relieved by a ranking officer. The initial responding officer will assess the circumstances of the crash and make a determination whether additional assistance is required to conduct the on-scene or follow-up investigation. Officers' actions may include:
1. Notifying the Emergency 911 Center of the exact location of the crash, probable severity, and any other pertinent circumstances.
 2. Requesting the response of Emergency Medical Services and/or additional assistance as needed.
 3. Protecting the crash scene.
 4. Preserving short-lived evidence.
 5. Establishing a safe traffic flow around the scene.
 6. Locating witnesses and recording crash information.
 7. Photographing crash.
 8. Expediting the removal of vehicles and debris from the roadway.
- E. In the event injuries are present at the scene:
1. Officers shall immediately summon medical assistance for all injuries encountered. In all crashes, police actions to determine and deal with possible injuries take precedence over any investigative or reporting activities.
 2. Officers should identify those most seriously injured or dead;
 3. While emergency aid should be administered to injured persons, officers should not attempt medical aid beyond their training and abilities.
 4. Under normal circumstances, the Port Washington Ambulance Service will be responsible for the transportation of injured persons.
- F. Identifying and dealing with fire hazards and/or hazardous materials involvement:
1. Officers arriving at the scene of a traffic crash involving a reported or apparent hazardous materials spill shall respond promptly but approach the scene cautiously, upwind, uphill etc. Officers shall attempt to determine if the container or vehicle is displaying hazardous materials placards or labels, and shall record the displayed information and refer to the Emergency Response guidebook located in each squad car.

2. Officers shall observe persons already at the scene for any symptoms of a reaction to contact with the material or vapors. If nothing unusual is noted, the officers shall move closer and speak to persons at the scene as to their physical condition and observations, and take appropriate protective measures.
 3. Officers shall locate the operator and determine the vehicle contents and/or examine the shipping papers or the bill of lading. The vehicle operator may also provide information as to the relative danger of any spilled materials.
 4. Officers responding to any traffic crash at a business which may use chemicals or other hazardous materials should be observant for possible involvement of the materials.
 5. Officers confirming hazardous material involvement in a crash should immediately notify the Emergency 911 Center and request the Port Washington Fire Department be dispatched. Once on the scene, the ranking Fire Department officer shall be in charge of the scene.
- G. Officers' initial actions at the suspected hazardous materials crash scene:
1. The first officer(s) to arrive at the scene shall primarily control the scene and prevent the incident from worsening. These measures may include but are not limited to:
 - a) Requesting additional officers and supervisors to the scene.
 - b) Requesting the Fire Department respond to the scene.
 - c) Controlling access to the scene.
 - d) Establishing a point of entry to the scene.
 - e) Assisting in identifying the hazardous material.
 2. If a hazardous materials spill is suspected, officers should approach and park their vehicles updrift and upwind of the scene of the spill at a sufficient distance to protect the officers from the effects of the spill.
 3. If people closer to or at the scene appear to have been overcome or contaminated by the spilled materials, officers should use caution before entering the scene. Fire personnel with self contained breathing devices should make entry.
 4. After consultation between Police and Fire commanders and depending on severity, it may be necessary to;
 - a) Request mutual aid in the form of a Hazardous Materials Response Team.
 - b) Call in additional Police and Fire personnel

- c) Secure services of the Street Department.
 - d) Summon the Department of Natural Resources
 - e) Contact gas and electric utilities if appropriate
 - f) Contact the Ozaukee County Division of Emergency Government
 - g) Contact the State Division of Emergency Government
- H. Officers will investigate all traffic crashes reported to the Police Department at the time of the crash and which meet the definition of “accident” as defined in TRANS 100.02.

For minor vehicle crashes, the investigating officer may choose, at his/her discretion and in compliance with the requirements set forth in the Law Enforcement Officer’s Manual for the (MV4000), to document the vehicle crash report with an incident report instead of the MV4000 report, as long as the following conditions are met:

1. The vehicle crash does not meet **any** of the three criteria listed in the Law Enforcement Officer’s Manual for the MV4000 and is therefore considered “non-reportable”.
 2. The total apparent damage to one person’s property does not exceed the threshold of \$1000 and falls within the “minor” category (plus 100%, adjusting for annual price increases of 10% since publication of the manual) as illustrated in the “Exterior Vehicle Damage Appraisal Guide” located on the back cover of the Law Enforcement Officer’s Manual for the (MV4000).
 3. The Port Washington Police Department incident report contains sufficient information necessary to complete the MV4000 form, should it later be determined that the vehicle crash is in fact “reportable” due to injuries received or property damage determined to be greater than first apparent.
- I. A “Drivers Report of Traffic Accident” form will be available for those persons who did not initially report a crash to police, but later wish to report it to the state. This form may also be used by drivers who wish to modify an officer’s report of a crash, such as reporting an injury that was not apparent during the initial investigation. If a citizen insists on an officer doing a belated crash report, both drivers and vehicles will have to be at the police department at the same time within 10 days of the crash.

II. TRAFFIC CRASHES ON PRIVATE PROPERTY

- A. Motor vehicle crashes occurring on private property held out for public use will be investigated and reported in accordance with the all applicable procedure and Wisconsin State Statutes governing traffic enforcement on such property;

- B. On private property, held open to public use, the uniform traffic citation will be issued only for the following violations:
 - 1. Driving Under the Influence
 - 2. Reckless Driving
 - 3. Hit and Run

III. HIT AND RUN TRAFFIC CRASHES

- A. All hit and run traffic crashes reported will be investigated.

IV. TRAFFIC CRASHES INVOLVING CITY OWNED VEHICLES

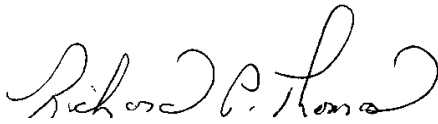
- A. Officers will, upon being dispatched to a traffic crash involving city owned vehicles, investigate the crash and complete a Motor Vehicle Crash Report form regardless of the criteria necessitating such a report under normal circumstances. On-duty crashes involving police department employees are excepted-see Section V.
- B. In general, operators of municipal vehicles who violate the traffic laws will be treated like any other citizen. If an officer concludes that a traffic citation is warranted, based upon the evidence, the officer shall issue it.
 - 1. The only exception will be for an emergency vehicle (fire) in the actual conduct of an emergency response and for maintenance vehicles engaged in the actual conduct of maintenance operations including snow removal. For police emergency vehicle crashes see Section V.
 - 2. For these exceptions, the investigation and the circumstances will be reviewed by the Shift Supervisor and the City Attorney's Office prior to the issuance of a citation. The Shift Supervisor may also discuss the matter with the Chief of Police or the Chief's designee.
- C. The Records Division will forward to the appropriate division or department head and to the Finance Department a copy of the crash report.

V. TRAFFIC CRASHES INVOLVING POLICE DEPARTMENT EMPLOYEES

- A. In general, traffic crashes involving on-duty police department employees will be investigated by an outside agency. Port Washington Police Department units will respond to assist with injuries, secure the scene, etc.
 - 1. A Port Washington Police Department supervisor may oversee the crash investigation and reporting of a minor single vehicle traffic crash involving an on-duty police department employee.

- B. If the Wisconsin State Patrol is unable to assist, the Ozaukee County Sheriff's Department will be asked to assist.
- C. The first request for assistance with the investigation will be made to the Ozaukee County Sheriff's Department.
- D. In the event neither department is available to conduct the investigation, a Port Washington Police Department supervisor will oversee the crash investigation and reporting.
- E. A Port Washington Police Department incident number will be obtained. The crash report and related documents will be on file at the police department.
- F. A copy of the crash report and related documents will be forwarded to the Chief of Police.

APPROVED:



Chief Richard P. Thomas

DATE:

5/5/09
