



WADING RIVER FIRE DISTRICT BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS

4.4 Seatbelt Policy

OBJECTIVE:

To establish a policy to assure maximum operator and passenger safety, thus minimizing the possibility of death or injury as a result of motor vehicle crashes.

APPLICABILITY:

This policy will apply to all personnel operating or riding in Wading River Fire Department and Fire District vehicles, as well as personnel operating and riding in other vehicles for Fire Department or Fire District use.

Research clearly indicates that the use of safety belts has a significant effect in reducing the number of deaths and the severity of injuries resulting from traffic crashes. The use of safety restraints reduces this risk to death and serious injury and assists personnel in maintaining proper control of their vehicles in emergency and non-emergency operations.

Recommendation

It is strongly recommended that safety belts be used by Department and District personnel and their families at all times in vehicles while in an off duty capacity to further reduce the risk of death or injury.

POLICY:

To assure the safety of all personnel riding aboard Fire District and Department motor vehicles, safety belts, in all riding positions so equipped, shall be worn at all times the vehicle is in motion by all drivers and passengers in all vehicles owned, leased or rented by the Fire District or Department. Safety belts shall be worn at all times the vehicle is in motion by all personnel, in all riding positions so equipped, in privately owned or other vehicles whenever such vehicle is used for Department or District use, including, but not limited to, response to and from alarms, drills, meetings, trainings and District/Department social and recreational activities.

Personnel shall use the safety belts installed by the vehicle manufacturer properly adjusted and securely fastened when operating or riding in any vehicle so equipped if used while on duty.

Lap belts shall be properly secured in those vehicles equipped with automatic safety belt systems that require the lap portion of the belt be manually secured.

The driver of the vehicle is responsible for insuring compliance by all occupants of the vehicle they are operating. Approved child safety restraints shall be used for all children of age, size or weight for which such restraints are prescribed by law.

No person shall operate a Department or District vehicle in which any safety belt (if present) in the driver's seating position is inoperable. No person shall be transported in a vehicle seating position in which the safety restraint (if present) is inoperable.

No person shall modify, remove, deactivate or otherwise tamper with the vehicle safety belts except for vehicle maintenance and repair and not without the express authorization of the Board of Fire Commissioners.

Personnel who discover an inoperable restraint system shall report the defect using the appropriate mechanism of notification (e.g. discrepancy form) and, if applicable shall notify the respective vehicle's company officers and chiefs. Prompt action will be taken to replace or repair the system.

All civilians (patients and family members) are required to be secured in the vehicle by a safety belt in all seating positions for which safety belts are provided by the vehicle manufacturer.

Patient Transport Vehicles

When traveling in patient transport vehicles, all passengers and patients shall travel in designated passenger locations and be securely belted. Department members riding in the patient care areas of the vehicle shall also be seated and belted in an approved passenger seat. The exception to this rule shall apply when a member, while in the performance of patient care procedures, determines that he or she must be mobile to complete a procedure or provide necessary patient care. Members must remember that riding in an ambulance without a seat belt is a high-risk activity. Apply risk management analysis (i.e. "risk a life to save a life") when deciding to render care without a seat belt.

Driver and/or Passenger Negligence

If negligence or noncompliance with the requirements of this order is displayed, appropriate corrective or disciplinary action shall be initiated as prescribed by Department and District policies.

RELATED POLICIES

- 1.2 Whistle Blower Policy
- 1.12 Disciplinary Procedure Policy
- 4.2 Chief's Vehicle Policy
- 4.3 Fire Apparatus Usage Policy
- 4.3.1 Vehicle Usage Policy

Adopted by the Wading River Fire District Board of Fire Commissioners on Monday, 09/26/11.

Edward Frost, Chairman
Timothy Deveny, Commissioner
Michael Harrigan, Commissioner
Thomas Lateulere, Commissioner
James Meier, Commissioner