

# *Bethel Township Fire Department*

<b>GENERAL ORDER:</b> 403	<b>SECTION:</b> Apparatus
<b>SUBJECT:</b> Backing of Apparatus	<b>AFFECTS:</b> All Personnel
<b>ADOPTED:</b> 05/01/2016	<b>SUPERSEDES:</b> All Previous
<b>REVISED:</b> 09/20/2020	

## **PURPOSE:**

To provide a policy that reduces accidents, injuries, or death when backing emergency vehicles. Apparatus have many blind spots thereby making the backing of these vehicles potentially dangerous.

## **GENERAL ORDER:**

Backing of fire department vehicles should be avoided whenever possible. Where backing is unavoidable spotters shall be used. In addition, spotters shall be used when vehicles must negotiate forward turns with restrictive side clearances and where height clearances are uncertain.

Under circumstances where the vehicle is manned by only the driver and no personnel are available to assist, the vehicle driver shall get out of the vehicle and make a complete 360-degree survey of the area around the vehicle to determine if any obstructions or dangers are present. If there are no immediate hazards the driver may continue to back with care.

When vehicles are backed, crew members will dismount the apparatus. The spotter should be located off the driver rear corner.

Spotters shall not ride tailboard positions while backing fire apparatus.

The vehicle shall not be backed until all spotters are in position and communicate their approval to start the backing. Spotters will remain visible to the driver. Anytime the driver loses sight of the primary spotter, the vehicle shall be stopped immediately until the spotter is visible, and the communication to continue backing is processed.

When vehicles must be backed where other vehicle traffic exists, the vehicle's emergency lights shall be operating and all spotters shall wear traffic safety vests or bunker coat.

The driver and apparatus officer are responsible for compliance with this procedure and the safe backing of the apparatus.

It may be desirable for the spotter(s) and driver to utilize the radio to communicate. Personnel should take advantage of this method and may use one of the assigned talk groups.

## **SIGNALS**

**STRAIGHT BACK:** One hand above the head with palm toward face, waving back. Other hand at your side.

**TURN:** Both arms pointing the same direction with index fingers extended. (Driver will advise the spotter which way the turn will be made. The spotter then assists the driver in backing apparatus. The driver's intentions must be verbally communicated to the spotter).

**STOP:** Both arms crossed with hands in fist. Be sure to yell the stop order loud enough that the engineer/driver can hear the warning.