

Salt River Fire Department Operating Guidelines

Backing of Fire Department Apparatus

June 2013

205.05E

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VEHICLE BACKING

Backing of Fire Department vehicles should be avoided whenever possible.

Emergency warning lights will be activated whenever backing, whether you are in traffic or not.

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 staffed by only the driver, that vehicle driver shall attempt to utilize any available fire department personnel to act as spotters. Where 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 are present.

Where engine or ladder companies are backed, **all crew members** (except the driver) will dismount the apparatus and act as spotters, including the Company Officer. Spotters should be located at as many corners as possible with at least one spotter at the left rear corner of the apparatus. Where only a single spotter is available, the spotter should be located off the left rear corner, and will act as the primary spotter.

Spotters are not permitted to ride tailboard positions while backing fire apparatus.

Spotters will discuss the backing plan with the engineer/driver before proceeding. The communication/warning process will be agreed upon prior to backing. Both door windows (driver and front passenger) will be in the down position to allow for maximum communication/hearing between spotters and the engineer/driver. Fire radio volumes will be turned down.

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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 engineer/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, safety vests shall be worn by all spotters.

The company officer is responsible for compliance with this procedure and the safe backing of the apparatus.

SIGNALS:

STRAIGHT BACK: One hand above the head with palm toward face, waving back, other hand at your side. (Left or right hand optional)

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.