



FIRE DEPARTMENT • CITY OF NEW YORK

Department Order No. 21

February 22, 2001



2.3

APPARATUS SAFETY

Operators of Fire Department vehicles shall be directly responsible for the safe and prudent operation of the vehicles under all conditions. **When the driver is under direct supervision of an officer, that officer shall also assume responsibility for the actions of the driver.**

Unsafe vehicle operation endangers the lives and health of both the public and Fire Department employees, including members of the public who are patients or who are awaiting a Department response. **While response time is an important factor in saving lives, a Department vehicle that does not make it to the scene of the emergency because of a collision delays the delivery of emergency assistance.**

Department Policy: The driver of a Fire Department vehicle shall bring the vehicle to a full and complete stop at every red light, stop sign and yield-right-of-way sign. The position and/or positions to stop must afford the officer (when present) and chauffeur maximum vision of the intersection in all directions, allowing an unobstructed view without entering the intersection traffic lanes. When the right of way has been yielded by all intersection traffic in all opposing traffic lanes, the officer shall then order the chauffeur to proceed and enter the intersection.

Remember: You do not have the right of way until all other vehicles have granted it to you.

All fire vehicles in the City of New York, when responding to or returning from alarms, must stop for school buses under the following conditions:

1. When the bus is stopped with its red lights flashing or is showing a visual signal indicating stop.
2. When children are being loaded on or discharged from the bus.
3. When approaching the stopped bus from any direction.

Fire vehicles shall remain stopped until the bus resumes motion or the bus driver or police officer signals you to proceed.

Almost all responding "intersection" accidents are preventable and can be eliminated by strict compliance with the above sections and a professional attitude exhibited by the officer and chauffeur. Our members sustain an average of 100 injuries per year where the cause has been apparatus accidents. Nationwide firefighters were injured in 14,650 accidents while responding to, or returning from incidents. In 1998, 11 firefighters perished in some form of an apparatus accident.

In the interest of assuring the safety of our members and the public, Chief Officers shall insure this policy is strictly enforced.