

## **Case Study B Cicero, Illinois September 6, 2001**

At approximately 17:25 hours on September 6, 2001, Cicero Fire Department Engine 2, under the command of Lt. Robert Augustyn, was dispatched along with Ambulance F-10 to the scene of a reported automobile accident with injuries on the Laramie Avenue Bridge in Cicero, Illinois. Ambulance F-10 arrived on the scene first and quickly determined that there were no injuries at the original collision. As Engine 2 arrived on the scene, personnel from the ambulance told them that they could return to quarters.

Because of traffic and collision conditions on the bridge, it was determined that Engine 2 should be backed off the bridge in the same direction as they had arrived. Lt. Augustyn and one other fire fighter exited Engine 2 to assist with backing the apparatus. It is reported that the fire fighter was walking along the driver's side of Engine 2 and Lt. Augustyn was walking behind the apparatus towards the driver's side. Both were providing directions to the driver as the vehicle was operated in reverse.

A fire department training officer who happened upon the collision reported that it appeared that Lt. Augustyn's knee buckled as he was walking behind the apparatus and Augustyn fell to the ground. The rear wheels of the apparatus drove completely over Augustyn before the apparatus could be stopped. Despite immediate care by paramedics who were already on the scene, Lt. Augustyn was pronounced dead at 00:18 on September 7, 2001. The cause of death was listed as massive internal injuries as a result of being crushed by the apparatus.

### **Lessons Learned From This Incident**

In reviewing the details of this incident, the student should recognize the following important points:

**1. Fire fighters who are serving as back-up guides should not walk directly behind the moving apparatus.** The back-up guides should be slightly off to the side of the apparatus so that the apparatus will not run over them in the event the fire fighter stumbles.

**2. Avoid operating emergency vehicles in reverse whenever possible.** All avenues of moving the apparatus forward should be exhausted before operating the vehicle in reverse. It is safer to wait a few minutes for traffic conditions to clear and then drive forward than it is to back the apparatus up.