

# SAFETY BULLETIN

Ensure your Team is Prepared!

## Speed Remains an Issue

**FOCUS:** Excessive speed is responsible for far too many accidents. Last year twenty-three firefighters were criminally charged for their decisions resulting in traffic accidents.

### CHALLENGE

Every year the fire service experiences roughly 16,000 vehicle accidents. These accidents result in thousands of injuries, hundreds of civilian deaths, and roughly 20 to 30 firefighter deaths. In addition to the twenty-three criminal charges two firefighters began serving a prison sentence due to their driving.

Driving is one of the most dangerous tasks for firefighters. An analysis of many crashes reveal an overwhelming majority of accidents involving emergency responders are the result of operators driving the vehicle too fast for the conditions.

Life threatening speeds may save 10, 15, or maybe 20 seconds over the length of an average run. The risk versus the reward never makes sense. You cannot fight the fire if you don't make it to the scene.

We must consider many factors when operating fire apparatus. The condition of the roads, weather as well as traffic are but a few items that must be included in the equation when driving. We should exercise the same safety attitude we practice at emergency scenes when we are behind the wheel. The safety of your crew and the public are at risk when we drive at excessive speeds.

### DISCUSSION

- What is our department's policy regarding Code 3 response?
- Does department policy require that personnel are trained and certified prior to driving Code 3?
- How do we factor in road, weather and traffic conditions as we respond to calls?
- Is our apparatus training adequate to prepare us for the hazardous situations we may face?
- How can we improve our driving safety activities?

**The greatest asset of the fire service is our people; protect them!**

Funding and support for this project has been provided by the State of Washington, Department of Labor & Industries, Safety & Health Investment Projects (SHIP)

See more Safety Bulletins online: [www.washingtonfirechiefs.org](http://www.washingtonfirechiefs.org) and be prepared!