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Report of the Week

Turn into the slide.

12/16/2010

Report Number: 10-0000431

Report Date: 03/11/2010 09:25

Synopsis

New vehicle slides on icy roadways.

Demographics

Department type: Paid Municipal

Job or rank: Assistant Chief

Department shift: 24 hours on - 48 hours off

Age: 52 - 60

Years of fire service experience: 27 - 30

Region: FEMA Region V

Service Area: Rural

Event Information

Event type: Vehicle event: responding to, returning from, routine driving, etc.

Event date and time: 02/07/2005 13:00

Hours into the shift:

Event participation: Involved in the event

Weather at time of event: Clear with Frozen Surfaces

Do you think this will happen again?

What were the contributing factors?

- Equipment
- Weather
- Situational Awareness

What do you believe is the loss potential?

- Life threatening injury
- Property damage
- Lost time injury

Event Description

I was the driver of a new response vehicle for our department. It was a winter day and the roads were icy. The car hit an icy spot on the road and slid to the right. We went off the road, heading for a brick wall. I remembered to turn into the slide, which was hard to do. The car stopped sliding and I was able to steer it out of the slide, not hitting the brick wall. It was a near-miss, but with a good outcome.

Lessons Learned

Our department takes this vehicle out of service when the roads are icy because it slides easily. We learned through experience that this not a good first response vehicle when road conditions are bad. Driver training and experience was helpful in this situation.

Turn into the slide.

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Report of the Week

Icy roads and snow have already hit much of the country and winter hasn't even officially arrived. Those first few heart stopping moments when the vehicle you are driving breaks traction is a familiar experience for many of us. How we react to that sliding sensation often makes the difference between regaining traction or ending up in a brick wall.

"I was the driver of a new response vehicle for our department. It was a winter day and the roads were icy. The car hit an icy spot on the road and slid to the right. We went off the road, heading for a brick wall. I remembered to turn into the slide, which was hard to do. The car stopped sliding and I was able to steer it out of the slide, not hitting the brick wall. It was a near-miss, but with a good outcome."

The good outcome in report [10-431](#) reinforced by the lessons learned, are a reminder of the value of a comprehensive driver training program and accumulation of experience. Once you have read the entire account of [10-431](#) and the related reports, consider the following:

1. How many different inclement weather conditions are encountered by your department's drivers? List them and discuss their hazards.
2. Do you, or your department, require drivers to complete an annual driver/operator evaluation?
3. What type of training does your department provide for driving in inclement weather?
4. Who among your crew has been involved in a skidding/sliding event? Have them recount the incident and identify critical points for consideration.
5. What practice does your department use to evaluate the suitability of vehicles purchased for the driving conditions encountered in your department's service area?

Related Reports – Topical Relation: Inclement Weather Driving

[05-582](#)

[06-330](#)

[07-876](#)

[08-068](#)

[09-1095](#)

Have you experienced an inclement weather road experience? Submit your report to www.firefighternearmiss.com today so the next driver that slides on an icy road is ready for the challenge.

Note: The questions posed by the reviewers are designed to generate discussion and thought in the name of promoting firefighter safety. They are not intended to pass judgment on the actions and performance of individuals in the reports.