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Report of the Week

Should we be rolling?

07/15/2010

Report Number: 10-0000452

Report Date: 03/11/2010 18:07

Synopsis

Unsecured vehicle rolls down hill during extrication.

Demographics

Department type: Combination, Mostly volunteer

Job or rank: Other : Fire Inspector

Department shift: 24 hours on - 48 hours off

Age: 25 - 33

Years of fire service experience: 4 - 6

Region: FEMA Region V

Service Area: Rural

Event Information

Event type: Non-fire emergency event: auto extrication, technical rescue, emergency medical call, service calls, etc

Event date and time: 09/05/2007 19:00

Hours into the shift:

Event participation: Involved in the event

Weather at time of event: Cloudy and Rain

Do you think this will happen again?

What were the contributing factors?

- Situational Awareness
- Human Error
- Communication
- Teamwork

What do you believe is the loss potential?

- Minor injury
- Lost time injury
- Life threatening injury

Event Description

We responded to a motor vehicle accident with injury. The victim in the driver's seat was restrained. A small amount of extrication was required. The fire crew was already on the scene, stating they needed a medic in the vehicle. The vehicle was off the road on top of a hill with a pond on both sides of the hill. I arrived on the scene and got in the backseat to hold c-spine and do patient care during extrication.

The vehicle had been chocked, but no one had checked to see if it was in park or if the emergency brake was on. As the extrication started, the vehicle started moving down the hill toward the pond. The patient and I were in the vehicle. It stopped prior to making it down the hill and we finished the extrication and transported the patient to the hospital.

Should we be rolling?

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Lessons Learned

Scene safety – Always be aware of surroundings.

Teamwork – Work together and remind each other of possible safety issues.

Command – Just because scene is established and units are on scene does not mean all safety aspects have been taken care of.

Training – Always chock vehicles and make sure they are in park with the emergency brake set.

Discussion Questions

Scene safety is preached during every extrication class. But the neatly packaged term almost becomes an afterthought as crews get drawn into fighting to save someone's life. The reality of the hazard doesn't change because we don't perceive it. Overlooking critical scene stabilization actions early in extrication, leads to interruptions later in the event that are not good for patient and care provider alike. After you have read the entire account of [10-452](#) and the related reports, consider the following:

1. Compare your last extrication with this week's reports. Were there any similarities that placed you and your crew in a near-miss situation?
2. Is the same member of your crew always assigned stabilization responsibilities or does it vary incident by incident?
3. Does your department have a clearly defined stabilization process personnel are to follow at extrication incidents?
4. Is every firefighter equipped with a valve stem remover for rapid deflation of tires?
5. Are your EMS crews permitted to enter vehicles prior to stabilization being completed?

Related Reports – Topical Relation: Vehicle Stabilization.

[05-657](#)

[06-348](#)

[07-1136](#)

[08-652](#)

[09-325](#)

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.