

### 3.1.1.3 Operating Special Apparatus



YOUR ORGANIZATION  
STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES/GUIDELINES

**TITLE:** Operating Special Apparatus

**SECTION/TOPIC:** Operating Emergency Vehicles

**NUMBER:** 3.1.1.3

**ISSUE DATE:**

**REVISED DATE:**

**PREPARED BY:**

**APPROVED BY:**

X

Preparer

X

Approver

These SOPs/SOGs are based on FEMA guidelines FA-197

#### 1.0 POLICY REFERENCE

CFR

NFPA

NIMS

#### 2.0 PURPOSE

This standard operating procedure/guideline addresses operator qualifications, operator behavior, placement and operation of special apparatus, safety in special apparatus operations, operation in high-risk areas.

#### 3.0 SCOPE

This SOP/SOG pertains to all personnel in this organization.

#### 4.0 DEFINITIONS

These definitions are pertinent to this SOP/SOG.

#### 5.0 PROCEDURES/GUIDELINES & INFORMATION

##### 5.1 Operator Qualifications:

## **5.2 Operator Behavior:**

## **5.3 Placement and Operation of Special Apparatus:**

## **5.4 Safety in Special Apparatus Operations:**

### **Apparatus check**

Check overall apparatus for readiness for response to routine and emergency incidents.

- A. Engine oil level/oil leaks – Check oil level and maintain at full level. Check for unusual leaks especially when drips are found under the apparatus. If oil is added – note how much was added in the appropriate daily box.
- B. Engine coolant/cap seal/leaks – Check coolant level and maintain at full level (usually at or within 1 inch of bottom of fill neck). Check for leaks especially when unusual drips or puddles are found under the apparatus. If coolant is added – note the amount added in the daily box. Check radiator cap for torn seal and/or leaks.
- C. Hydraulic oil levels – check oil level in all areas necessary on the apparatus. Maintain levels at or near the bottom of filler neck or screen. Check filler cap for torn seal and/or leaks. Check all hoses and connections (where accessible) for leaks. This includes all rams, rods and shafts of outriggers and aerial ladder raising, lowering and moving equipment. If oil is added – note the amount added in the daily box.
- D. Fire apparatus pumps/controls – Check that the pump engages/disengages when valves are shifted into and out of operation. Check that all valves and controls (manual and electrical) work freely and are in the correct position (OPEN or CLOSED) for normal operations. Check that all caps, adapters and fittings are in place. Check for loose, broken or missing knobs and switches.
- E. Drive belts and hoses – Visually check drive belts and hoses for wear, cracks and/or deterioration.
- F. Seats and seat belts – check seats for wear, splits and/or exposure of metal or rigid plastic parts that could cause a potential injury. This included recessed areas for SCBA equipment. Check seat belts for wear tears, nicks, cuts, frayed edges or linings. Check seat belt locks and catches for ease of operation and for missing or broken parts.
- G. Steering – check for freeness of turning (L and R). Check steering wheel adjustments (tilt, telescopic) for freeness of movement and adjust as needed for driver comfort.

- H. Brakes (Stopping and Parking) – Check for freeness, holding ability, dragging, unusual odors and sounds. Check for air leaks and/or fluid leaks. Check fluid reservoir and maintain at full levels where appropriate.
- I. Mirrors/Radios/Sirens/Horns/Back-up alarms – Check mirror-mounting brackets for tightness and adjust as needed. Check radios, sirens, horns (electric and/or air) and back-up alarms for proper operation.
- J. Lights/Reflectors – Check vehicle lighting (headlights, stop lights, turn signals, etc.) and reflectors for proper operation. Check emergency lighting (beacons, strobes, etc.) for proper operation. Check vehicle reflectors to insure that there are no broken or missing items on the vehicle.
- K. Ladders/Ladder locks – check all ladders for serviceability. Check for loose or broken rungs, plates, beam parts lanyards, etc.
- L. Instrument gauges (Dash/Pump panel) – check that all gauges are operational and showing/indicating if the apparatus and/or pump are operating properly.
- M. Windshield wipers/Washers – check wipers and washers for correct operation. Check wipers for cracks, chips and pliability. Check that washer reservoirs are filled with cleaning solution.
- N. Tires/Wheels/Lug nuts – Check tires for gouges, cuts, tread wear, etc. Check wheels for being bent or damaged and that all lug nuts are in place. Check tire pressures weekly.
- O. Booster tank – Check for leaks. Check water level in tank – Maintain at full.
- P. Vehicle fuel – Maintain fuel at reasonable level –  $\frac{3}{4}$  minimum. Apparatus should not be left for oncoming shifts with low fuel. Reasonable exception would be when returning from working fire call that occurred during early morning hours.
- Q. Vehicle body/Doors/Lifts/Latches/Handles/Cranks – Check vehicle for new damage, scratches, etc. Check doors (cab and compartment) for freeness of operation. Check doors, door lifts, locks, handles and cranks for operation and for loose, damaged or missing parts.
- R. Heater/Defroster/Defogger/Air conditioner – Check that all these are functional and that all controls are properly operating. Check that all vents and directional vents are in place and working properly.
- S. If immediate service is needed on any item or an unusual amount of fluid was required – note on repair request and notify the Maintenance Officer and or Operations Chief.

## **5.5 Operation in High-Risk Areas:**