

WEST SAND LAKE FIRE DISTRICT #1

VEHICLE USE POLICY

Revised Date: February 03, 2021

PURPOSE: To ensure that any and all vehicles owned and maintained by the Fire District are operated at all times by qualified personnel, and are continually maintained in a state of readiness to respond to every emergency to which the Fire Department may be dispatched.

SCOPE: This policy applies to all personnel who are authorized to operate or maintain District-owned vehicles by the Board and/or the Chief.

AUTHORITY: This policy is developed by the Board of Fire Commissioners of the West Sand Lake Fire District #1 and administered by the Chief.

THE FOLLOWING SPECIFICATIONS APPLY TO ALL VEHICLES AT ALL TIMES:

1. A valid New York State driver's license is required at all times to operate a District-owned vehicle.
2. No person under the age of 21 shall operate a District-owned vehicle at any time.
3. Because all members of the Fire Department are covered by the Fire District's liability insurance from the time they respond to an emergency call to the time they return to their homes, each member who holds a driver's license shall submit to a search of his or her DMV records by providing a copy of their license to the Chief. The Chief shall disclose the results of this search to the Firefighter and the Board, and shall treat the results accordingly (see Appendix):
 - a. Clear or Acceptable – Firefighter may operate, or be trained to operate, one or more District-owned vehicles.
 - b. Borderline – Firefighter shall not operate a District-owned vehicle unless authorized by the Board. The firefighter shall have the opportunity to submit documents, such as his or her Driver's License Abstract to the Board as part of this process.

- c. Poor – He or she shall not be approved for operating or training in the operation of a District-owned vehicle, nor be permitted to operate his/her vehicle in an emergency or official capacity until such time as a more acceptable rating is received by the Board.
4. The Chief shall compile and maintain a “Drivers’ List” of all personnel who are trained and have demonstrated competence in the operation of specific District-owned vehicles. This list shall specify the radio identifiers of vehicle(s) that the member is eligible to operate, or “All Vehicles,” where applicable. All additions or deletions to the Drivers’ List must be approved by the Board of Fire Commissioners.
5. All operators of District-owned vehicles shall successfully complete an Emergency Vehicle Operator Course (EVOC) before being added to the Drivers’ List.
6. No person shall be added to the Driver’s List for a specific vehicle until he or she is fully trained in its operation and in the use of its equipment (generators, pumps, lights, etc.).
7. Firefighters in training to become apparatus operators shall operate said vehicles only while under the direct supervision of a Line Officer or other qualified driver as designated by the Chief.
8. District-owned vehicles may be used during non-emergency times for training and familiarization purposes, or to transport personnel to approved functions such as parades, funerals, meetings, training, official Fire District business, or for other activities as authorized by the Chief and approved by the Board. During these times, only approved operators, or supervised operators-in-training may operate a District-owned vehicle.
9. During non-emergency operations, only personnel who are authorized by a Line Officer may ride in a District-owned vehicle.
10. All District-owned vehicles shall be operated in compliance with the New York State Vehicle and Traffic Law (VAT).
11. No District-owned vehicle shall be moved until all occupants are seated and their seatbelts are properly fastened.
12. The Fire District may, at its option, make one or more Command Vehicles available to its Chief, Assistant Chief(s) or other personnel for personal use during non-emergency times. These uses may include commutation to and from work, short errands, official Fire District or Fire Department

business, or other tasks from which the operator of the vehicle can be reasonably expected to respond to an emergency call.

- a. The vehicle may not be operated at a distance of more than 25 miles from the Fire Station except on official District business, or as otherwise approved by the Board.
 - b. Whenever fuel is added to the vehicle, the number of gallons added and the mileage between fill-ups shall be recorded.
 - c. In situations where one or more of the officers for whom Command Vehicles have been provided are not available for response, the Chief or the Board may designate the highest-ranking available officer to have use of one of the vehicles, until such time as one or more of the regularly-assigned officers becomes available again.
 - d. Persons permitted to use a Command Vehicle for personal reasons, are responsible for any applicable taxes resulting from this benefit.
13. Except in compliance with an applicable mutual aid agreement, or as noted above in the case of a Command Vehicle, no District owned vehicle shall travel outside the boundaries of Rensselaer County, without specific approval by the Board or its designee.
14. Persons who operate, supervise, or are permitted to use a District-owned vehicle shall ensure that the vehicle presents a clean, professional appearance at all times as practicable, and that all of its equipment and supplies are properly cleaned, maintained, adjusted, stowed, and ready for use at any time. In the case of Fire Apparatus, this responsibility shall fall to the Line Officer and/or Engineer assigned to the vehicle. In the case of Command Vehicles, the responsibility shall fall to the officer to whom the Board assigns the vehicle.

ADDITIONAL SPECIFICATIONS FOR EMERGENCY RESPONSES:

1. During emergency responses, all operators will observe the provisions of Section 1124 of the VAT.
2. The response order for each District-owned vehicle shall be determined in advance by the Chief and prominently posted in the Fire Station. There shall be no deviations from the response order without specific instructions from the Officer in Charge.

3. The use of lights and sirens is permitted only as specified in the response order document. Wherever possible, a “non-emergency” response should be called for.
4. Auxiliary members, and Associate members who may assist them, may be requested to assist at the scene by the Officer in Charge. These members may respond in their own vehicles or in an Ancillary or Command Vehicle, if one is made available for their use. No lights or sirens shall be used when responding in this capacity. Upon arrival, these members, their vehicles, and equipment shall be positioned by the Officer in Charge and shall remain in said place until otherwise directed.
5. Mutual Aid Members, as defined above, may ride in a District-owned vehicle, during response operations, as needed.
6. Only approved apparatus operators shall be permitted to operate a District-owned vehicle during an emergency operation. If an alarm is received during training operations, the vehicle shall stop, the trainer shall replace the trainee at the controls of the vehicle, and the vehicle shall continue to the place to which it has been dispatched.
7. Civilians are not permitted to ride in District-owned vehicles while lights and sirens are in use.
8. Personally owned vehicles shall not be transported to the scene of an emergency at any time, except as approved by the Board, or as specifically requested by the Officer in Charge.

ENFORCEMENT: No deviations from this policy will be permitted without the specific approval of the Board of Fire Commissioners. Failure to comply with this policy may result in disciplinary action by the Board of Fire Commissioners pursuant to Town Law

REVISION HISTORY:

Date	Action	Author(s)
02/03/2021	Draft From Previous Version	Policy Committee
03/16/2021	Added Revision History	Deutsch
03/16/2021	Final Draft	Deutsch
03/18/2021	Approval	BOFC

02/01/2023	NEXT REVIEW DATE	
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APPENDIX

MVR Driving Record Matrix

Number of Violations (Last 3 Years)	Number of At-Fault Accidents (Last Three Years)			
	0	1	2	3
0	Clear	Acceptable	Borderline	Poor
1	Acceptable	Acceptable	Borderline	Poor
2	Acceptable	Borderline	Poor	Poor
3	Borderline	Poor	Poor	Poor
4	Poor	Poor	Poor	Poor
Any Major Violation	Poor	Poor	Poor	Poor

Major Violations:

- Drivers without valid driver's licenses will be found Unacceptable (ie: expired license, suspended license, revoked license, different state, etc.)
- Driving under the influence of alcohol/drugs
- Failure to stop/report an accident
- Reckless driving/speeding contest
- Driving while impaired
- Homicide, manslaughter or assault arising out the use of a vehicle
- Making a false accident report
- Driving with a suspended/revoked license
- Attempting to elude a police officer

Minor Violations: Any moving violation other than a major violation including:

- Speeding
- Failure to obey a traffic control device
- Driving with a suspended/revoked registration
- Driving an unregistered vehicle

The following will not count against the driver as a violation:

- Motor vehicle equipment, load or size requirements
- Improper failure to display license plates
- Failure to sign or display registration
- Failure to have driver's license in possession (if valid license exists)
- A minor violation in which the driver has been charged with an accident

(As provided by the Fire District's insurance carrier)