


A102	Spicewood Fire Rescue Standard Operating Policies & Procedures	
Effective Date	Title	To
June 1 <sup>st</sup> , 2020	Safe Driving Guidelines	All members

### 1) Purpose

- a) To establish a standard policy that provides for safe operation of all BCESD9 Spicewood Fire Rescue (SFR) members as they aid the public.

### 2) Policy

- a) First and foremost, personnel driving SFR vehicles will abide by Texas Traffic Law TRC 546.005, which states that emergency vehicle operators have “the duty to operate the vehicle with appropriate regard for the safety of all persons.
- b) Personnel driving SFR vehicles will abide by all traffic laws and statutes and by Emergency Vehicle Operator and Defense Driving Standards.
- c) Responding to call in a department vehicle is ***highly preferred***, rather than responding in a Personally Owned Vehicle (POV).
- d) Drivers are accountable for their own actions and bear the responsibility to reduce to Code-1 as conditions warrant.

### 3) Procedure

The procedures outlined in this document are guidelines for specific driving circumstances. There are other circumstances that may be encountered by the SFR driver daily, and must be negotiated using experience, judgement, knowledge and caution.

#### a) Response Driving Procedures

- Driving Code 3 (emergency response) means using all emergency lights and sirens. Code 1 means no lights and nor sirens. There is no Code 2.
- Members operating a POV or SFR apparatus Code 3 may exercise privileges set forth in Article 2, Section 24 of the Texas Uniform Traffic Act:
  - i) May park or stand where otherwise restricted or regulated.
  - ii) May disregard regulations governing direction of movement or turning in specified direction [travel “wrong” way on roadways, make otherwise-prohibited turns].
  - iii) **HOWEVER**, The foregoing provisions shall not relieve the driver of an authorized emergency vehicle from the duty to drive with due regard for the safety of all persons, nor shall such provisions protect the driver from the consequences of their reckless disregard for the safety of other [Code-3 asks vehicles to yield the right of way but doesn’t allow the driver of an emergency vehicle to seize the right of way].

**c) Authority to drive a SFR vehicles Code-3.**

Authority to drive Code-3 is dependent on the approval of driver's Company officer and Chief. Approval is vehicle specific. The driver must:

- (a) Pass a written test on the equipment and compartments on the apparatus.
- (b) Demonstrate skills proficiency (driving and operating the equipment)

**d) Restrictions to Code-3 operations**

- (1) Members who are impaired by drinking, taking medication, which advises against driving, or taking any illegal drug, may not respond to any call.
- (2) Under no circumstances will an apparatus designated as a tanker exceed 50 mph.
- (3) Under no circumstance will an engine exceed 65 mph.
- (4) Under no circumstance will the posted speed limit be exceeded by more than 10 mph.
- (5) **All drivers must obey posted speed limits in school zones.**

**e) Tactical restrictions for Code-3 driving:**

- (1) When approaching intersections controlled by a **green light facing** the vehicle, the driver should slow down and ensure control of all lanes of the intersection before proceeding.
- (2) When approaching intersections controlled by a red light (solid or blinking) or **stop sign facing** the vehicle, the driver shall stop and ensure control of all lanes of the intersection before proceeding.
- (3) When following another emergency vehicle, the member is to remain at least 500 Feet back unless the vehicle in front grants permission to pass.
- (4) When approaching a school bus that has its flashing red light on, the driver must **stop and wait for the bus's red lights to be turned off before proceeding.**
- (5) **Driving in oncoming lanes should be avoided; when it is necessary; the driver will make substantial efforts to reduce or eliminate the hazards.**
- (6) The member should maintain a safe distance behind other traffic allowing for sudden stops.
- (7) Any member cited for a moving violation and/or involved in a collision while responding a vehicle Code-3 must report the incident to a shift officer or Chief as soon as possible.
- (8) All private vehicles will be parked clear of the emergency scene and access routes, so as to allow necessary movement of emergency apparatus.

**f) Equipment to drive Code-3 in a POV**

Once a driver has received authority from the Chief to respond Code-3, the driver's Captain must verify that the following equipment is installed and functional on the driver's POV prior to permitting Code-3 response in that vehicle.

- (a) Alternating/flashing red lights mounted as high and widely spaced laterally as possible and visible 360 degrees, with sufficient intensity to be visible both front and rear at 500 feet in normal sunlight.
- (b) Have a siren capable of projecting a signal audible to 500 feet.
- (c) Display SFR reflective sticker on both front and rear of vehicle.
- (d) An approved two-way radio.
- (e) A vehicle meeting all applicable state laws (e.g. inspection & registration).
- (f) Proof of liability insurance.

**~~g) Justification for Code-3 response~~**

~~Our statutory duty to respond does not require a Code 3 response. Prior to responding on a Code 3 call, the driver shall consider the following:~~

- ~~(a) Location of the call. Members are not authorized by SFR to automatically respond to calls unless their company is dispatched or a general manpower request is issued.~~