

### 5-MINUTE SAFETY DRILL

## Driving: Safe Backing Takes Practice

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Shift: \_\_\_\_\_

Dept: \_\_\_\_\_

Station: \_\_\_\_\_

Training Code: \_\_\_\_\_

### NOTES:

**FOCUS:** We've seen the demonstrations and read of the positive results that occur when we use safe techniques. Training is a technique to improve our skill levels. Safe backing requires practice using our procedures, personnel and equipment.

### CHALLENGE

Backing is an every day activity for firefighters. Far too many of our vehicle incidents and damage to property are the result of unsafe backing!

As professionals, we have determined that the best practice when backing is to use a "spotter". Many departments have established this practice as a policy. Yet backing accidents continue to happen. Accident investigations reveal that one of the most common reasons for not using spotters is the lack of available personnel. Another reason provided is firefighters often don't feel there is time to locate personnel to assist them.

We must put additional emphasis on enforcing our backing procedures. We should create a culture where it is the exception and not the rule when policies are violated. Through training, resource allocation and positive reinforcement, we can develop a safer culture with regards to "backing".

We know safe backing takes an effort but it's worth it! We save in the monetary gain that results from reducing costly repairs or injury to staff and members of the public. Let's work harder to protect our personnel, buildings, equipment and apparatus!

### DISCUSSION

- Have you been involved in a backing accident or near miss?
- Did you report the near miss?
- Were you using a spotter, if not why not?
- Did you use radio to communicate?
- What was the result of the accident investigation?
- Do you believe this decision supported department policy, why?
- What are the safety precautions that must be taken to safely back emergency equipment?
- How can we strengthen our safe backing procedures?
- How can we improve our safety culture?

**The greatest asset of the fire service is our people; protect them!**