

# SAN JUAN COUNTY FIRE DEPARTMENT

**APPARATUS DRIVING:**

**Policy Number: SJCFD-OP 200-01**

**Issue Date: October 2008**

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## **Policy Statement**

The purpose of this operating procedure is to reduce the injuries and financial losses of the department, and the County. These procedures are to help avoid accidents by establishing qualifications for drivers, general driving rules, and emergency response procedures.

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All personnel who drive fire department vehicles must possess a valid New Mexico State Drivers License Class A, B, or E and must be at least 18 years of age. A person over the age of 18 with a valid Class "D" New Mexico Drivers License may drive vehicles under 26,000 G.V.W.

All persons should complete a recognized defensive driving or Emergency Vehicle Operators Course, prior to operating a County Vehicle.

All driver training shall include:

1. Validation of authority to drive county vehicles including all county fire vehicles and apparatus.
2. Approved VFIS classroom training (6 hours) done by county fire VFIS approved instructors. Individual districts shall not perform this training without prior approval from Fire Operations.
3. After completion of the classroom portion, the next portion is a driving course that shall involve backing, serpentine, angle, stopping, etc.
4. District specific driver training for each vehicle the firefighter will drive: 1 hour per vehicle operating as below.
5. District specific apparatus operation on:
  - a) Full sized engines – drafting, basic pumping, more advanced pumping
  - b) Tender/tankers – nursing, porta tanks, pumping
  - c) Brush/rescue – drafting
  - d) Aerial devices – drafting and pumping

Before a person is authorized to operate a County Fire Department vehicle they must complete a familiarity session on the specific unit they will be operating. This shall consist of familiarizing the person with the operation of the various systems, such as lights, sirens, engine, transmission, brakes, pumps, etc. This shall be performed by a District appointed trainer, who shall conduct adequate driving sessions to determine the persons ability to safely operate the vehicle.

Lights and sirens **DO NOT** give the driver any rights; they merely request the right-of-way, due caution must be used at all times.

When driving apparatus, that operation should be in a defensive posture at all times.