

# SPOKANE COUNTY FIRE DISTRICT 8

## Standard Operating Procedures

**40.04.09**  
**BACKING OF VEHICLES**



Adopted: 12/20/16  
Reviewed: 11/01/18  
Revised: 03/15/19

Approved:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tony Fisher".

**Purpose:** To provide a procedure that allows for safe backing of fire apparatus or fire department vehicles.

**References:** WAC 296-305-08000, Appendix E  
Emergency Vehicle Incident Prevention program

### **Procedure:**

1. Backing of fire apparatus or vehicle should be avoided when possible.
2. Each operator of a Fire District 8 apparatus is responsible for safe backing and parking of the apparatus or vehicle.
3. Before placing the apparatus or vehicle in reverse all emergency lights shall be turned on.
4. The operator should not place the apparatus or vehicle in reverse gear until the apparatus has come to a complete stop.
5. A ground spotter should be used to assist in and assure the safety of any apparatus or vehicle backing maneuver. The ground spotter and apparatus operator shall discuss a backing plan prior to backing.
6. Before backing, the following procedures must be completed:
  - a) A ground spotter shall be wearing his/her safety vest and will be positioned approximately ten feet back of the left rear of the apparatus.
  - b) There must be constant eye contact established between the ground spotter and the operator through the left-hand side rearview mirror, as well as voice and hand signals. If communications or line of sight between the operator and the ground spotter are lost at **anytime**, the operator must come to an immediate halt/stop.
  - c) The apparatus must remain at a complete stop until proper communications (both visual and audible) are restored between the operator and the spotter.
  - d) When a ground spotter is not available, the operator must park the apparatus, get out and walk around the apparatus (complete 360-degree walk around) to survey backing area before proceeding to back the apparatus.
  - e) The responsibilities of the ground spotter are to get out of the apparatus and to survey 360-degrees around the apparatus or vehicle, remove any obstacles that would damage the unit if contact were made during the backing process, and position themselves in the proper place to guide the operator during the backing maneuver.
  - f) The ground spotter will observe any abnormalities that the backing apparatus may have (such as ladders extending past the rear of the apparatus) by looking left, right, up, and down.

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- g) The ground spotter will then make the necessary adjustments to the distance to prevent contact with other objects.
- h) Backing will be done slowly.
- i) The driver and spotter will use standard signals for maneuvering the apparatus as stated in WAC 296-305-08000 and EVIP.