

**Vehicle Backing Policy**



PURPOSE

This policy establishes the safety measures to be followed by district personnel while backing vehicles. This policy intends to prevent injuries and damage to property resulting from unsafe vehicle backing practices.

#### SCOPE

This policy applies to district vehicles and other vehicles used to conduct district business. The following vehicles are subject to this policy:

A. Any vehicle, including motorized equipment, which does not provide full vision around the vehicle or backing area. This includes standard automobiles, which do not provide full vision because of cargo, etc.

B. Dump trucks

C. Rack body trucks

D. Bucket trucks

E. Service vehicles

F. Van trucks

G. Pickup trucks, when the rearview is obstructed by equipment, hydraulic tailgate, towing equipment, cargo, etc.

H. Low-bed trailers

I. Vactor trucks

J. Construction equipment of any type

Nevertheless, in all instances, the operator must still exercise caution and good judgment to ensure the safe operation and backing of all vehicles.

# PROCEDURES

## **Operator's Responsibilities**

The operator of a vehicle is responsible for all actions of the vehicle and all personnel in the vehicle.

**Operators will:**

1. Avoid backing whenever possible. *When parking at a curb, allow sufficient clearance to pull out without backing. Avoid turning into any place where it is necessary to back into traffic.* The operator's first option is to select parking locations where backing will not be necessary when leaving the site.
2. Avoid getting into a position where a vehicle would be backed without a spotter. Whenever possible, choose pull-through parking spaces. If the vehicle can be driven forward when leaving, a backing accident may be prevented.

**This model form/template must be customized to meet your Agency’s needs.**

1. Obtain guidance from a spotter to back a vehicle. *If no spotter is available, get out and physically check the rear of the vehicle to ensure that it is clear. If not, clear the area of people and objects, then back as soon as possible after engaging the backing alarm (if the vehicle is not equipped with a backing alarm, sound the horn).*
2. Determine conditions and clearances before backing a vehicle. Be alert and use caution while backing.
3. Stop the vehicle while a spotter checks for obstructions on the blind side of the vehicle. Do not proceed until the spotter is visible. If these conditions cannot be met, an additional spotter will be required.
4. Stop the vehicle immediately if the operator loses sight of the spotter.

**Circle** **Check:**

A. To improve safety and accident prevention, District Management has reviewed the benefits of establishing a "circle check" for district vehicles.

B. The prevention of accidents can be enhanced by operators of service and utility vehicles placing suitable markers (traffic cones) at the front and back of the vehicle when parking.

**Procedure:**

1. Operators of service vehicles will place at least one 28-inch fluorescent traffic marker at the front and rear of the vehicle and/or trailer when parking in areas other than the "home base" or “district yard” for the vehicle.

2. Operators of service vehicles will pick up the cones by making a complete circle check of the vehicle before driving away or backing up.

3. Operators are responsible to ensure cones are in place on the vehicle before starting and returning from any assignments.

**How to Perform the “Circle of Safety”**

**Note**: Placing a second cone at the left front of the vehicle can help increase the level of safety.

**Operators will not:**

A. Back into intersections or over pedestrian crosswalks. *Such action is prohibited. Instead, where appropriate, operators should drive forward for a reasonable distance until a safe place to turn around without backing is found.*

B. Accept guidance from an employee while that employee is inside the vehicle.

## **Spotter's Responsibilities**

**Spotters will:**

A. Help guide an operator in backing a vehicle when requested by the operator.

B. While giving guidance in backing a vehicle, stand on the ground at the rear driver's side of the vehicle whenever possible. Spotters must stand far enough behind the vehicle to observe the backing path and any obstructions, including pedestrians, and to allow for sufficient stopping distance in an emergency.

C. Use hand signals to communicate to the operator backing a vehicle. Do not use voice communication for this purpose.

D. Remain in clear view of the driver at all times. Spotters will refrain from moving back and forth behind the moving vehicle.

## **Supervisor's Responsibilities**

**Supervisors will:**

A. Inform affected employees about the district's Vehicle Backing Policy and of their responsibilities under the policy.

B. Ensure that the operator and spotter employees comply with the requirements of this policy.