DANGERS OF SECONDARY CRASHES

By Bill Fuller
DANGERS OF SECONDARY CRASHES

Danger to Motorists

- Can be more severe than original incident
- Can occur as a result of traffic slowing quickly:
  - Around a curve
  - Beyond hill crest
  - Larger vehicle blocking view of scene
  - Moving in MOT area (lane squeeze)
DANGERS OF SECONDARY CRASHES

Danger to Incident Responders

- Setting up initial MOT or adjusting MOT
- IRs are moving around emergency vehicles
- Distracted on scene by other activities:
  - Pulling equipment
  - Triage’
  - Extrication
  - Paperwork
  - Re-positioning vehicles or equipment
DANGERS OF SECONDARY CRASHES

Effect of Secondary Crash

- If close to original incident, draws off manpower and equipment to assess new incident
- Requires Incident Responders to move out of defined MOT area of first incident while moving to other incident, before MOT is established
- If farther away, secondary equipment and personnel have to respond
Safety for Motorists/Incident Responders

- Upstream warning to traffic is best method to reduce or eliminate secondary crashes
  - Dynamic Message Signs warn motorists of approaching incident.
  - Road Ranger responds to end of queue to provide advance warning to motorists
  - Reduce time on scene using TIM Quick Clearance practices reduces exposure to danger (Get out of there)!
Secondary Crashes

- Crashes upstream can “meter” or proportionally slow down traffic approaching first incident. (But, not at the secondary scene)
- Stay alert.!!! You can become the secondary incident!!!
- Secondary incidents can create tertiary incidents!!!
THANK YOU!