68th Edition

Collier-Lee-Charlotte County Traffic Incident Management

May 2016

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Upcoming Events:

Next TIM Team Meetings:

SWIFT SunGuide Center

10041 Daniels Parkway

Fort Myers, FL 33913

9:30 AM

- **June 8, 2016**

Emergency One-Way Evacuation Routes

The U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT), in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS), reviewed and assessed Federal and State evacuation plans for catastrophic hurricanes and other catastrophic events impacting the Gulf Coast region and reported its recommendations to Congress. One of those recommendations was for the creation of regional mass evacuation plans and Florida responded with the creation of One-Way (or contra-flow) evacuation routes.

The main benefit of a One-Way Evacuation Operation is the ability to use the maximum number of highway travel lanes possible for evacuating people from a threatened area. This increases the amount of traffic that the highway can accommodate during an evacuation when it is likely that more cars will be on the road.

Florida has One-Way Evacuation plans prepared for the following highways:

- I-10 WB from I-295 in Jacksonville to west of I-75 Interchange
- SR 528 (the Beachline Expressway) WB from Brevard Co to SR 417
- I-4 EB from the I-275 Interchange in Tampa to SR 417 just west of Orlando
- Florida Turnpike (NB from Lantana) to MP 254, just north of Orlando
- I-75 NB From Tampa to Wildwood
- I-75 in South Florida / Alligator Alley
  - ⇒ Northbound from just east of the US-27 Interchange (Exit 23) in Broward County to just north of Golden Gate Blvd./Exit 105 in Collier County Mile Marker 105/ Alligator Alley
  - ⇒ Southbound from SR-951 (Collier Blvd) Exit 101 in Collier County to just east of the US-27 Interchange (Exit 23) in Broward County.

One-Way Evacuation Routes include the following:

- One-Way operations begin at dawn and must allow for all vehicles to clear One-Way ops by dusk.
- Local evacuation programs are activated first and One-Way ops are used as needed to supplement the local plans.
- One-Way ops are carried out by FHP with close coordination and support of local agencies.
- Exit and re-entry points are limited so access to services such as fuel and food are also limited. Road Ranger operations are especially critical due to the limited access to services.
- Close coordination between FDOT, FHP, Fire/EMS, Road Rangers, Towing Companies and Local Agencies must occur prior to and during One-Way ops as well as be followed by after action analysis and discussion of lessons learned.

To view all evacuation routes by county along with an interactive map, please visit FloridaDisaster.org

Please also visit www.onewayflorida.com, where you can find additional information.

New Road Ranger Procedure Policy

A new Road Ranger Procedure Policy, Topic No. 750-030-015 became effective April 1, 2016. The policy states that the Road Rangers are now designated as emergency vehicles under Florida Statute. The statute will help establish a uniform and consistent statewide Road Ranger program that supports Florida's Open Road Policy.

To view the full policy, please visit our TIM team website at: http://www.swfltim.org

The Dangers of Hydroplaning/Aquaplaning

Traffic Incident Management (TIM) is the process of coordinating the detection of, response to, and clearance of traffic incidents as quickly as possible to reduce the impact of incidents on safety and congestion.[1] A proactive approach to TIM is to raise awareness of driver safety issues to minimize the number of traffic incidents to be managed. In previous articles, we've discussed the dangers of Distracted Driving and Roadside Dangers. This article will focus on Hydroplaning, also known as Aquaplaning, which plays a significant role in rain-related traffic incidents.

The topic of Hydroplaning has intrigued me personally since the day I experienced it firsthand in a traumatic fashion. At the experienced driving age of 16, driving home from work on an old two lane road full of dips, puddles, and standing water, I had a very interesting and educational experience, which resulted in my white 1979 Ford Pinto declared as totaled, with the front end wrapped around a wooden power pole. More importantly, I wasn't hurt, no one else was hurt, and I learned two valuable lessons. The first lesson was that seatbelts save lives. The second lesson was that my car tires weren't even touching the roadway asphalt; I was hydroplaning.

In my experience, the first sign of hydroplaning was both peculiar and a bit confusing. Stepping on the gas pedal didn't seem to accelerate the car in a noticeable manner, but the speedometer and RPM gauge did show noticeable increases. Only later did I realize that my tires were spinning faster but I wasn't moving faster, meaning my tires weren't making direct contact with the roadway. My tires were literally spinning on a thin sheet of standing water.

Shortly afterwards, the Ford Pinto began to veer ever so slightly off the roadway, unresponsive to the steering wheel. At 60 miles per hour in the pouring rain on a dark night, I realized I had no control over the 2,000+ pound metal box sliding off the roadway; I was just along for the ride. The ride was short, not more than 10 seconds, but felt much longer. As the car veered off the road, it spun 180 degrees before I left the asphalt, probably from attempting to turn the steering wheel. As the car slid down the grassy slope, it continued to spin another 180 degrees before coming to a crashing halt, colliding head-on with a wooden power pole in conjunction with the horrifying sounds of crunching steel and broken glass.

Here is just a small list of critical factors related to hydroplaning:

- Poorly Maintained Tires - Inadequate Tire Tread (Bald Tires) increases the risk of Hydroplaning.
- High Vehicle Speed - High Vehicle Speed (Speeding) increases the risk of Hydroplaning.
- Hard Breaking - Hard Breaking increases the risk of Hydroplaning.
- Unawareness - Being unaware of the dangers & factors related to Hydroplaning increases the risk of Hydroplaning.

As mentioned above inadequate tire tread increases the risk of hydroplaning. In recent years, there have been a number of fire service injuries and fatalities that were a direct result of tire-related crashes. Few people realize the importance of keeping a vehicle's tires in proper working condition. Tire pressure, tire tread depth and road conditions all play an important role in keeping your vehicle safely on the road. [2]

An example that even first responders can be a target of hydroplaning is of a Polk County Firefighter/EMT Ben Lang. Mr. Lang who was tragically killed when the ambulance he was riding in hydroplaned on a wet road, overturned and crashed. Ben was wearing his seatbelt and sitting in the captain's chair in the rear of the ambulance at the time of the crash. [2]

In summary, all drivers, including first responders should reduce driving speeds when traveling in rain or on wet roadways. In addition to properly maintaining the vehicle, and not driving distracted, taking extra precaution while driving in wet roadway conditions is critical in order to decrease the probability of being involved in a traffic incident.

1) "Traffic Incident Management." New York DOT. 05/13/2016 Web. https://www.dot.ny.gov/tim?nd=nysdot
2) "Hydroplaning Hazard". Fire Rescue. 06/25 Web. http://www.firerescue1.com/vehicle-safety/articles/290116-Hydroplaning-Hazard/

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T I M TEAM WEBSITE!

www.swfltim.org

*The **Collier-Lee-Charlotte County TIM Team** is committed to implementing the Quick Clearance principles of Florida's Open Roads Policy through the "3 Cs" of TIM: Communication, Cooperation and Coordination, and providing the public with the best real-time Motorist Information available. Team membership draws from state, regional, and local transportation agencies, public safety providers, and other organizations and companies that service the traveling public. The Teams, sponsored by the FDOT, meet bi-monthly.*

Mission

The TIM Team Program brings together all agencies involved in clearing the roadway crashes with the objective of improving detection, verification, response, and clearance times to expeditiously remove a motor vehicle crash or incident from the roadway while providing the best real-time information to motorists, resulting in a safer highway environment for both incident responders and motorists.