



18th Edition

Charlotte-Sarasota-Manatee Traffic Incident Management Team

January 2008



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Upcoming Events:

- TIM Team Meeting – February 12, 2008
- TIM Team Meeting – April 8, 2008
- TIM Team Meeting – June 10, 2008
- TIM Team Meeting – August 12, 2008
- TIM Team Meeting – October 14, 2008
- TIM Team Meeting – December 9, 2008



Florida Division of Forestry

Drought conditions are expected to worsen over the spring months as the La Niña in the eastern Pacific Ocean persists. The potential will be high for another active wildfire season this spring once again.

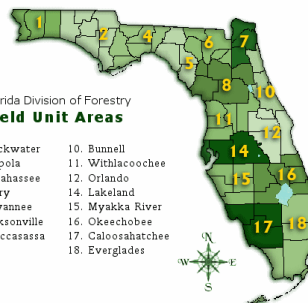
According to the U.S. Drought Monitor, most of the state is experiencing abnormally dry conditions with the south central part of the state seeing moderate to severe drought conditions. The outlook for the next three months is for the current La Niña pattern to continue. Drought conditions are expected to worsen as La Niña tends to bring below average rainfall to the state and above average temperatures. Periodic freeze events will act to increase fuel loading in already dry areas and increase the fire danger through the spring months.

The mission of the Forest Protection Bureau is to provide a level of fire management that reduces threats to life and property, forests, and other related at-risk wildland resources, while promoting natural resource management through the use of prescribed fire. Prescribed Fire is a cost effective tool to reduce fuel buildups which can cause dangerous wildfire conditions, thus providing increased protection to people, their homes and the forest.

Our Fire Management Information System Mapping Tool indicates where all existing or active wildfires are in Florida as well as where all open burn authorizations are planned on any particular day. http://flame.fl-dof.com/wildfire/tools\_fmis.html

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Florida Division of Forestry
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Bradenton, FL 34203
941-751-7627

Caloosahatchee District 17 Office
Florida Division of Forestry
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Fort Myers, FL 33905
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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.

The Wildland-Urban Interface (WUI) is "the area where structures and other human developments meet or intermingle with undeveloped wildland," such as highways in close proximity to wildland areas. Emergency Management Planners work hard to develop a comprehensive plan to detect wildfires, respond effectively and to mitigate against negative impact. Potentially, the smoke column from wildfires can hover close to the ground reducing visibility on the highway. Reduced visibility is an incident that impacts traffic safety and commands management to the best of our team's ability. Traffic Incident Management Teams will be reviewing existing plans for dealing with WUI.

The TIM Team community knows that if we have a good plan and it is well known, people know what to expect and do. Working together in an inter-agency environment presents some challenges to be considered. Only by having everyone well briefed and practiced on how to implement emergency procedures can a rapid and professional response occur during emergency situations that nearly always develop rapidly. Since each year typically brings new people into and takes people out of the multi-organization TIM Team, emergency procedures must be reviewed frequently if everyone is to know their role and serve it well. At large scale traffic incidents, the Unified Command structure works very well. Each agency should have a designated commander who will consult with the other incident commanders located at the command post, and offer support to each agency as they take a lead role to accomplish their mission. A good plan will be proactive to establish the multi-agency notification and resource contact list for prompt communications. TIM Teams have developed a Notification and Resource Guide (NARG) that is updated annually and as needed throughout the year.

February TIM Team meetings will focus on WUI and effective TIM practices.

# Hidden Hazard: An Invisible Threat Lurks Inside a Wrecked Vehicle



First Responders to a traffic incident should be aware (beware) of the potential for vehicle airbags to deploy. You don't want to put your body in the airbag path! An airbag is defined as a pyrotechnic device powered by a solid propellant compound in a pressurized cylinder. The airbag ignites, filling the bag with inert nontoxic gas. This reaction occurs in approximately four to six milliseconds, and the airbag deploys at a speed of up to 200 mph. In 30 percent of serious crashes, airbags do not deploy. This puts rescue workers and tow operators at risk of an accidental deployment. The explosive expansion can seriously injure both the responder and the motorist. Automotive air bags are designed to save lives ... and they have. However, they can also pose minor to life-threatening problems for crash victims, tow operators and other responders. Even disconnecting the vehicle battery may not mitigate the threat, since the airbags may have their own battery systems. A residual charge can also remain with the airbag deployment system for up to a half hour. In Pennsylvania, two firefighters were inspecting the dash for an electrical fire in a 2002 Mercedes when suddenly the airbags deployed, knocking both in the head. One was knocked unconscious and suffered a concussion and some retrograde amnesia. Lessons Learned: 1. Always respect the deployment path of any airbag. 2. Be alert that there is no way to make an un-deployed airbag safe. 3. Caution must be paramount when working a crash scene. (Towing & Recovery Footnotes, September 2007, Section II, p.25)



Article & Picture courtesy of Bald Eagle Towing  
[www.baldeagletow.com](http://www.baldeagletow.com)

**T I M TEAM NEW WEBSITE!**

[www.swfitim.org](http://www.swfitim.org)

### Contact Information

If you have any questions regarding this newsletter, or would like to submit an article, please contact Don Olson at [don.olson@dot.state.fl.us](mailto:don.olson@dot.state.fl.us).

The Charlotte-Sarasota-Manatee 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.

