



97th Edition

Polk County Traffic Incident Management Team

September 2021



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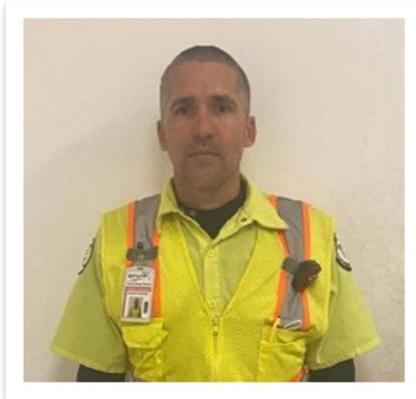
**TIM Team Meeting:**

Thursday  
October 14, 2021  
10:00 am



## Going Above the Call of Duty

### Recognition for District One Road Ranger



While all of our responders from our District One TIM teams risk their lives every day, and our members are more successful when they work as a team, individuals are recognized for actions that go “above the call of duty.” On August 19, 2021, around 2:30 am, Road Ranger Yosvany Garcia was traveling southbound on I-75, mile marker 101, when he observed a Wrong-Way Driver (WWD) and their headlights coming up the exit ramp towards him from Collier Blvd. Mr. Garcia was able to intercept and stop the WWD by pulling in front of the car. The driver of the vehicle exited his Nissan Altima, put his hands up, and stated to Mr. Garcia to ‘go ahead and take me to jail’. Mr. Garcia was in contact with dispatch and was able to communicate tag information from the vehicle while trying to defuse the situation with the motorist. When the driver became aggressive and hostile, Mr. Garcia retreated to the safety of his

truck while the driver started walking around the truck and pounding on the windows. The driver eventually returned to his vehicle and went back up the ramp in the correct direction. Law enforcement was notified but did not locate the vehicle. This is an example of being in the right place at the right time. If it were not for Road Ranger Garcia being in that location this could have been a very tragic ending. Thank you to Road Ranger Garcia and all the District 1 Road Rangers.

## Crash Responder Safety Week

### #CRSW

The Crash Responder Safety Week (CRSW) initiative, recognizing all traffic incident management (TIM) response communities, will take place this year from November 8 -14, 2021. The goal of CRSW is to reach out to every responder, and to every driver, and to every passenger, to make it more clear that every person has a role to play.

The FHWA TIM program highlighted the six core efforts active TIM responder communities can typically undertake during CRSW:

- Proclamations – Six State’s Governors issued proclamations that commemorate this week in year 2020.
- Mass media – State and local agencies collaborate with news stations (radio and television) to bring attention to the State’s Move Over laws and this week.
- Mass Training – Instructor or responder challenges to complete the National TIM Responder Training during this week.
- Dynamic Message Signs (DMS) – Many States use of DMS for safety related messages to raise public awareness on responder and motorist safety around traffic incidents.
- Public events – Statewide conferences, multidisciplinary open house, responder ride along with elected officials, responder in-person events.
- Direct messaging – Playing brief videos or providing fliers at Departments of Motor Vehicles, Rest Stops, and other high-traffic motorist locations.



**The Dangers of Electric Vehicle Fires**

On August 27, 2021 at 6:51 p.m. District One First Responders were called to a car fire located on northbound I-75 near mile marker 226 in Manatee County. See picture timeline of the incident to the right. Upon the arrival of the North River Fire Department, it was observed that an Electronic Vehicle (EV) was on fire. The Fire Captain on the scene called for a second engine knowing that an EV requires more water than usual car fires. A recent NBC News report indicated that EV battery fires can take upwards of 25,000 gallons of water to be fully extinguished. By comparison, a typical car fire involving an internal combustion engine can be put out with around 300 gallons of water. As an additional hazard, the vehicle was directly under power lines.

As a precaution, the Interstate was closed while the fire was attended to. Traffic was diverted at Exit 224 for just over two hours. The fire required a total of four fire engines. As the vehicle was thought to have been distinguished the EV restarted while being placed on the Tow Truck and more water was applied.

The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) issued an 80-page report in January 2021 entitled "Safety Risks to Emergency Responders from Lithium-Ion Battery Fires in Electric Vehicles." To read the full report, please visit the NTSB website at: <https://www.nts.gov/safety/safety-studies/Documents/SR2001.pdf>. In the summary NTSB proposed including the availability of emergency response guides for EVs in a US New Car Assessment Program score for any vehicles. There, regulators can encourage automakers to pay more attention to safety and batteries for first responders. To address a lack of research on the subject, the NTSB called for -- you guessed it -- more research in reducing runaway energy in lithium-ion batteries following a crash and how to reduce hazards for professionals tending to the scene of a crash or fire.

When it comes to emergency response guides, the NTSB suggested each particular EV should include essential information on how to fight a fire concerning the specific battery in the EV, and how to alleviate the risk of high voltage reigniting the fire. The government said in four investigations of EV Fires last year, first responders witnessed the fire reignite in three instances. The three batteries that did catch fire again were involved in serious crashes, prompting the NTSB to push for more research into how batteries react after high-speed crashes.

Finally, the NTSB called on emergency response guides to include information on how to alleviate the risk associated with remaining energy stored in the EV while removing a vehicle from a crash scene, and how to properly store an EV after the fact. There remain risks of a fire breaking out in a battery even after professionals clean up the scene and carry the EV away.

Article submitted by Tom Arsenault, Metric Engineering, Inc.



**T I M TEAM WEBSITE!**

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

*The Polk 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*

