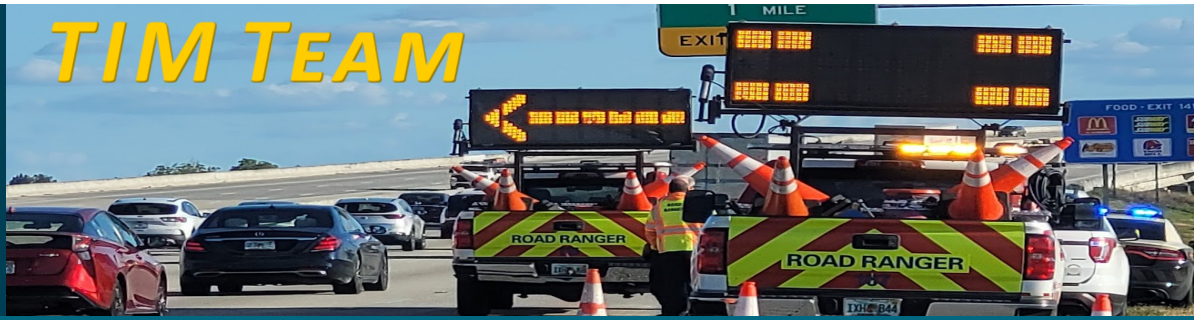




# TIM TEAM



118th Edition

Polk County Traffic Incident Management Team

March 2025



## INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

April 2025: National Distracted Driving Awareness Month 1

Support Your Towing Partners at the 2025 Florida Tow Show 1

FDOT District One Road Ranger Assists 1

Supporting First Responders: Enhancing Safety and Reducing Secondary Incidents 2

## Upcoming Events:

Next TIM Team Meeting  
Thursday, **April 10, 2025**  
**10:00 am**

Polk County Sheriff's Office  
1895 Jim Keene Boulevard  
Winter Haven, FL 33880



## Stronger Together: 2025 Roadway Safety Initiatives and Training

As we continue through 2025, we recognize the dedication of first responders working tirelessly to keep Florida's roadways safe. Collaboration, training, and awareness are key to preventing incidents and protecting lives.



### April 2025: National Distracted Driving Awareness Month

April is National Distracted Driving Awareness Month, shining a spotlight on the growing dangers on our roads. Distracted driving remains one of the leading safety concerns, posing risks not only to drivers but also to the dedicated first responders working along our highways and the public. From April 7 to 14, law enforcement agencies will participate in the "U Drive. U Text. U Pay." campaign, increasing enforcement efforts against texting and driving violations. Raising awareness and promoting safer driving habits can help prevent crashes and save lives. To access the 2025 campaign materials and raise awareness, please visit the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration at: <https://www.nhtsa.gov/campaign/distracted-driving>

### Support Your Towing Partners at the 2025 Florida Tow Show

The 2025 Florida Tow Show takes place April 10-12 at the Hilton Orlando Buena Vista Palace in Lake Buena Vista, FL. This premier event brings together towing professionals, first responders, and industry leaders for training, networking, and live demonstrations.

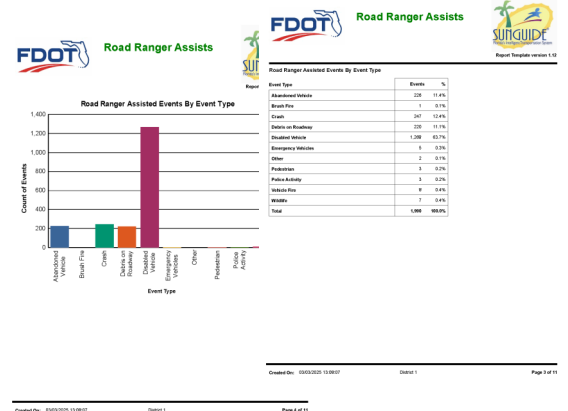
Attendees can participate in free training sessions covering roadside safety, electric vehicles, towing techniques, and Traffic Incident Management (TIM) certification.

Live demonstrations will showcase the latest recovery equipment and emergency response techniques. Industry exhibits will feature the newest tow trucks, tools, and technology. Networking opportunities include the kickoff party, street party, and family fun night. First responders attending will gain valuable insight into improved roadside safety, and stronger partnerships with towing professionals. Registration is free! Visit [FloridaTowShow.com](https://FloridaTowShow.com) for details.



### FDOT District One Road Ranger Assists

The Road Rangers play a vital role in assisting first responders on the roadways. They collaborate closely with emergency personnel, providing a valuable support system during incidents. Their seamless coordination ensures that the response time is optimized and the overall effectiveness of the emergency response is enhanced, ultimately saving lives and minimizing the impact of incidents on the roadways. Their tireless efforts and unwavering dedication have undoubtedly made a significant impact on improving the safety and efficiency of the Florida's roadways. To view and download the 2025 February Road Ranger Assist report, please click on



## Supporting First Responders: Enhancing Safety and Reducing Secondary Incidents



With April being Distracted Driving Awareness Month, now is the perfect time to highlight the dangers first responders face on the road. Every time they step out to assist at an incident, they risk being struck by passing vehicles. Despite ongoing safety efforts, these incidents continue to rise. Road Rangers, law enforcement officers, firefighters, and tow truck operators have all been hit while working to clear crashes, with some suffering serious injuries or fatalities. Raising awareness and reinforcing Move Over laws are critical in preventing these tragedies.

When a traffic incident happens, first responders work to clear the roadway as quickly and safely as possible. Every minute a scene remains active increases the risk of a secondary crash, putting both responders and motorists in danger. Law enforcement, fire rescue, Road Rangers, towing services, Traffic Management Center (TMC) Operators, and asset maintenance crews all play a role in stabilizing the scene and getting traffic moving again. Quick clearance techniques, proper traffic control, extrication tools, and strong communication between agencies help reduce delays and improve safety.

The number of first responders struck while working has increased in recent months. Multiple Road Rangers, law enforcement officers, and tow truck operators have been hit while assisting at crash scenes. Some incidents resulted in minor injuries, while others led to life-threatening situations and fatalities. These tragedies highlight the urgent need for driver awareness, strong enforcement of Move Over laws, and safer work zones.

Secondary incidents are crashes that occur due to an initial (primary) incident. They often result from sudden slowdowns, inattentive driving, or unsafe maneuvers near the crash site. The likelihood of a secondary crash increases by 2.8% for each minute the primary incident remains unresolved. This statistic underscores the need for efficient incident management to minimize road closures and reduce risks for first responders.<sup>1</sup>

Every agency on scene plays a role in ensuring safety, efficiency, and quick clearance. Law enforcement, fire rescue, Road Rangers, towing services, Traffic Management Center Operators, and asset maintenance crews all work together with the same goal, protecting lives, reducing congestion, and clearing the roadway as safely and quickly as possible. Strong coordination between all agencies helps reduce risks and prevent secondary crashes.

Traffic Incident Management (TIM) Teams support first responders by bringing together those who work along highways to share their experiences and challenges. One way this is accomplished is through live demonstrations and presentations from first responders who operate on the road daily. These demonstrations help responders better understand each other's roles at crash scenes, improving safety and coordination.

A great example is the Collier-Lee-Charlotte TIM Team Meeting on April 9, 2025, in Fort Myers, where attendees will get a firsthand look at how first responders utilize the Jaws of Life during major traffic incidents. South Trail Fire will conduct a live demonstration, with vehicles provided by Alligator Towing, giving responders the opportunity to see the extrication process up close and learn how to work safely alongside these operations.

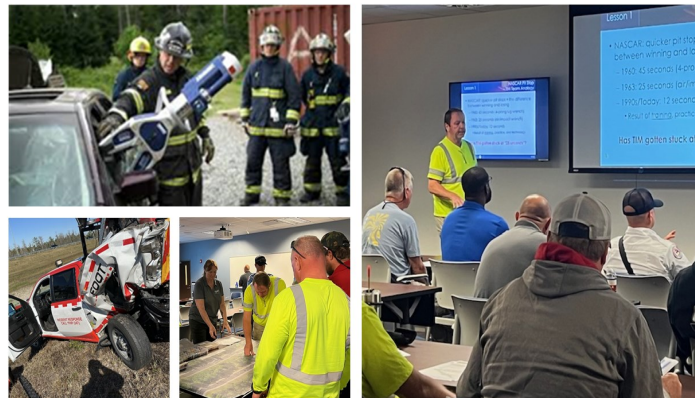
In addition to live demonstrations, there are many ways to improve responder safety on highways. TIM Responder Training teaches best practices for managing roadway incidents, while TIM Team Meetings strengthen coordination between agencies. After-Action Reviews (AARs) help assess major incidents and identify areas for improvement. Enforcing Move Over laws remains critical in protecting responders, and April's Distracted Driving Awareness Month is a timely reminder to reinforce driver attentiveness, especially near active scenes.

Make sure to attend your next TIM Team meeting, where you can collaborate, build relationships, and gain a better understanding of how responders contribute to incident response. Strong coordination keeps responders safer while working on the highways.

If you would like to learn more about the FDOT District One TIM Team meetings or the free National First Responder Training, please contact Brandy Boccuti, TIM Coordinator, at [Brandy.Boccuti@metriceng.com](mailto:Brandy.Boccuti@metriceng.com)

<sup>1</sup> Motor FHWA Focus States Initiative: TIM Performance Measures Final Report. Web 11.2024 <https://ops.fhwa.dot.gov/publications/fhwahop10010/presentation.htm>

Article submitted by Brandy Boccuti, TIM Coordinator, 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 the Open Roads Policy of Florida 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 of 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*

