



119th Edition

Polk County Traffic Incident Management Team

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Upcoming Events:

Next TIM Team Meeting
Thursday, July 10, 2025
10:00 am

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



United for Safer Roads: 2025 Initiatives in Action

As we move through 2025, our commitment to responder safety and roadway efficiency remains stronger than ever. This issue highlights key efforts aimed at supporting the dedicated professionals who respond to incidents across Florida's highways.

New Road Ranger Contract Brings Enhanced Safety and Technology to District One

The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) District One is proud to welcome IncidentClear as the new provider of Road Ranger services throughout Southwest Florida. With programs active in 10 states, IncidentClear brings a proven track record of success in safety service patrol operations and traffic incident management.

Under this new contract Road Rangers will have a dedicated fleet that includes tow trucks, a Lane Blade debris-removal vehicle, and units equipped with PTZ (pan-tilt-zoom) cameras providing live streaming to the Traffic Management Center (TMC). These upgrades will enhance situational awareness, improve coordination between agencies, and allow for quicker, safer response times.

The contract features IncidentClear's DebrisClear system, specialized tool that allows operators to remove debris from travel lanes without exiting the vehicle. This not only reduces response time but also keeps operators safer when working on high-speed roadways.

Road Rangers continue to be a vital support system to all responders working along Florida's highways the law enforcement, fire rescue, and towing professionals who work daily along Florida's most dangerous corridors. Their presence helps secure the scene, direct traffic, and assist motorists, allowing other responders to focus on their primary duties.

IncidentClear's partnership with the District One Traffic Incident Management (TIM) Program will further strengthen the communication and collaboration already in place between responding agencies. Their technology, resources, and commitment to quick clearance will contribute to the shared mission of keeping responders safe and roadways moving efficiently.

We look forward to building this partnership and continuing to support the men and women who serve on the front lines of Florida's highway systems.



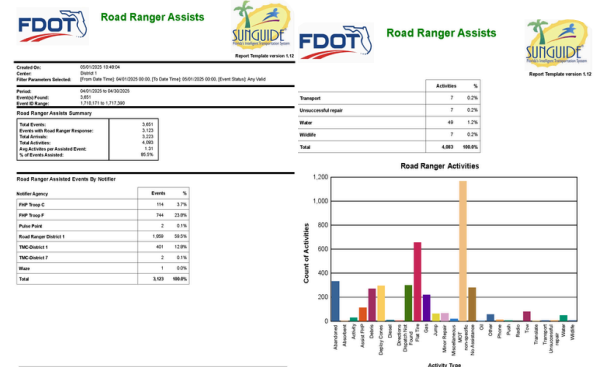
2025 Click It or Ticket Campaign

May marks the return of the national Click It or Ticket campaign, a high-visibility effort to enforce seat belt laws and promote safer driving habits. Occupants without seatbelts continue to be among the most at risk for serious injury or death in a crash. From May 19 to June 1, 2025, law enforcement agencies across Florida will increase patrols and citations for seat belt violations, reminding drivers and passengers to always buckle up. This campaign plays a key role in protecting not only motorists but also the first responders who work at roadside incidents every day.

To access 2025 campaign materials and help spread the message, please visit the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration at: <https://www.nhtsa.gov>

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 April Road Ranger Assist report, please click on the following link: [Report](#)



Jaws of Life Demo Reinforces Interagency Coordination and Responder Safety



At the April 9, 2025, Collier-Lee-Charlotte TIM Team Meeting in Fort Myers, first responders had the opportunity to witness a live demonstration of the Jaws of Life in action. Hosted by South Trail Fire Department with vehicle support from Alligator Towing, the demo gave attendees a front-row view of a full extrication scenario. It showcased the power and precision of the hydraulic rescue tool that can mean the difference between life and death in a crash.

While the demo took place in Collier-Lee-Charlotte, the lessons shared extend far beyond one district. Traffic Incident Management (TIM) Teams across all counties benefit from hands-on training and joint agency demonstrations like these. They serve as a strong reminder of the importance of understanding every responder's role at the scene.

Whether it is law enforcement managing traffic, fire rescue performing extrications, tow operators clearing wreckage, or Road Rangers setting up cones, each agency plays a critical role in ensuring safety and achieving one common goal: clearing the scene quickly, efficiently, and safely. When responding to a crash, emergency teams must act swiftly to free occupants trapped in severely damaged vehicles. In some cases, a car may release toxic fluids or gases, which can increase the risk of explosion during rescue efforts. The Jaws of Life is a vital device that allows responders to open crushed vehicles and rescue victims in a timely manner. This tool plays a crucial role in emergency response during both vehicle collisions and structural collapses.

It gives responders the equipment and techniques needed to safely and rapidly reach trapped individuals. Its hydraulic power enables rescuers to cut through metal, spread openings, and lift heavy objects to gain access to those in need of immediate medical care.

For first responders, seeing a demonstration of the Jaws of Life is essential to understanding how to quickly and safely perform vehicle extrications. This life-saving tool helps responders cut through mangled metal to reach victims. Demonstrations provide valuable insight into how the tool functions and teach proper usage techniques for different rescue situations. The longer responders remain on the roadway, the greater the chance of a secondary crash. According to the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), the likelihood of a secondary incident increases by 2.8 percent for every minute the initial scene remains uncleared. These crashes are often more severe than the first and increase the danger to both responders and passing drivers. Florida continues to see incidents where responders are struck and injured or killed while assisting at crash scenes. In the past year alone, multiple Road Rangers, law enforcement officers, and tow truck drivers have been hit while working on the highways. These are preventable tragedies that highlight the need for public awareness, stricter enforcement of Move Over laws, and continued responder training. Demonstrations like the Jaws of Life event help improve communication among agencies and build mutual respect. Seeing how fire crews stabilize vehicles and conduct extrications provides insight that helps others at the scene work more safely and effectively. It reduces confusion, minimizes risk, and encourages a more coordinated response.

This work is not just about using tools, it is about building trust. When agencies understand each other's responsibilities and communicate well, the entire response becomes safer and more successful. That is the goal of TIM Teams: collaboration that enhances safety for everyone on the roadway.

To all first responders, your role is essential and your safety matters. Your participation in TIM Team meetings and training strengthens the network that protects lives every day.

Let's continue to learn from each other and work together to ensure that no responder is hurt or killed while helping others. **Stay engaged. Stay connected. And most of all, stay safe.**

Article submitted by Tom Arsenault, TIM Program Manager, and Brandy Boccuti, TIM Coordinator, Metric Engineering, Inc.



TIM TEAM WEBSITE!

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.

