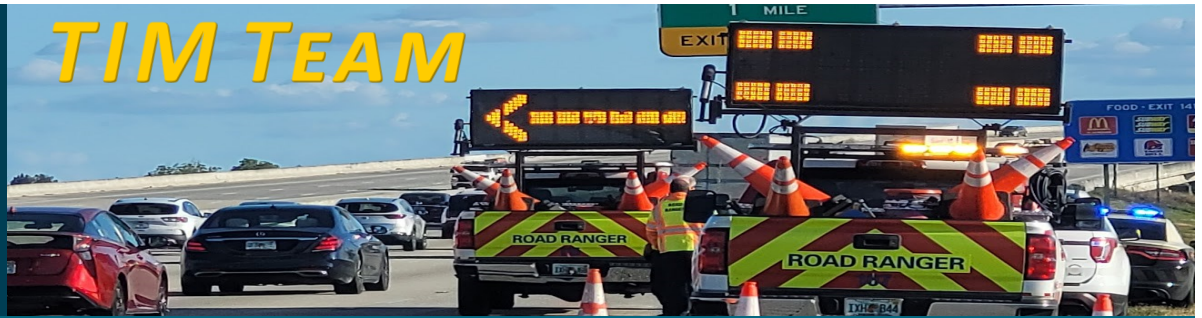




TIM TEAM



110th Edition

Polk County Traffic Incident Management Team

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Upcoming Events:

Next TIM Team Meeting
Thursday, January 11, 2024
10:00 am

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



Giving Thanks and Honoring Our First Responder's Dedication on the Highways

Beyond Celebrations: Prioritizing Road Safety in the Holiday Season

As the holiday season approaches, the period from November 22 to 26, encompassing Thanksgiving and its associated travel, demands heightened awareness of the perils associated with impaired driving. This time of year we often see an increase in festivities, family gatherings, and, unfortunately, instances of impaired driving. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) has designated this crucial week as an opportunity for a nationwide campaign to combat impaired driving, with a specific focus on drug-impaired driving.

As we gear up for the holiday season and the heightened travel it brings, it is crucial to address the dedicated first responders working tirelessly on our highways. This message is especially poignant for those who find themselves at the front lines, responding to incidents and emergencies during this festive period. We extend our deepest appreciation to the first responders, whose commitment to public safety is unwavering. Your role in ensuring the well-being of our communities is invaluable, particularly when faced with the added challenge of addressing impaired driving incidents. As we collectively advocate for responsible choices and combat impaired driving, we want our first responders to know that their safety and well-being are paramount. Thank you for your service and dedication to keeping our highways safe.



2023 Crash Responder Safety Week (CRSW): Protect Those Who Protect You



In recognition of the vital role played by our dedicated crash responders, November 13-17, 2023 is a week of acknowledgement and awareness for the Crash Responder Safety Week (CRSW). This annual initiative, spearheaded by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), underscores the significance of prioritizing the safety and well-being of those who selflessly respond to incidents on our highways. As responders face ever-increasing challenges in their line of duty, CRSW serves as a crucial platform to raise awareness, share best practices, and implement strategies that enhance the safety of those on the front lines.

As we embark on this week-long commemoration, it is incumbent upon all stakeholders, including government agencies, organizations, and the public, to actively participate and champion the cause of crash responder safety. By engaging with the CRSW toolkit, we contribute to a culture that prioritizes the well-being of those who rush to the aid of others in times of distress. Whether it's promoting safe practices, investing in advanced training, or advocating for the adoption of innovative technologies, our collective efforts can make a tangible difference in reducing the risks faced by crash responders. As we observe the 2023 Crash Responder Safety Week, let us unite in a commitment to safeguard those who dedicate their lives to ensuring the safety of our highways. Together, we can pave the way for a safer and more resilient future for all crash responders. The campaign's comprehensive toolkit is available at [CRSW Toolkit](#).

2023 Quarterly Road Ranger Assist

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. See the graph to the right which provides the 2023 Quarter Three Road Ranger Assist Statistics.

2023 Quarter 3 Road Ranger Assist

Abandoned Vehicles	1,068
Brush Fire	2
Crash	805
Debris on Roadway	1,168
Disabled Vehicles	5,941
Emergency Vehicles	20
Flooding	1
Other	10
Pedestrian	12
Police Activity	10
Vehicle Fire	23
Wildfire	3
Wildlife	4
Total	9,067

Capturing the Scene: The Crucial Role of Photography in Responding to Highway Incidents



In the challenging and often chaotic realm of responding to highway incidents, the importance of documenting crash scenes cannot be overstated. While eyewitness accounts and police reports offer valuable perspectives, crash scene photography stands out as a reliable source of evidence that can make a significant difference in investigations.

Overview of the Scene

The first step in crash scene photography is gaining a comprehensive understanding of the incident. Take a few steps back – ensuring safety, of course – and capture photos from various angles. These images should provide a clear representation of the involved vehicles' positions in relation to each other, the roadway, and other relevant objects such as buildings, trees, and guardrails.

360 Degrees with Only Four Photos

Efficiency is key. A clever approach is to take four photos, each showcasing one side of the vehicle. This technique offers a 360-degree view, allowing investigators to assess the full extent of the damage and the overall scene.

Traffic Signals Matter

While a photo might not reveal the color of a traffic light at the time of the crash, capturing the position of traffic lights, signs, and other indicators relative to the scene is crucial. These details can provide insights into the circumstances leading up to the incident.

Weather Conditions

Consider the environmental factors that may have contributed to the crash. Whether it's rain making roads slippery or the blinding sun affecting visibility, documenting the weather conditions adds a layer of context to the investigation.

Vehicle Damage and Beyond

Zoom in on the damage inflicted on each vehicle involved. Additionally, look beyond the cars to identify damage to guardrails, street signs, sidewalks, lampposts, trees, or any stationary object affected by the collision. This broader perspective can uncover additional details that might otherwise go unnoticed.

Safety First

In the midst of documenting the scene, safety remains the top priority. Even as you focus on capturing the necessary images, be vigilant and mindful of your surroundings. Your well-being is paramount in the execution of your duties.

Holding Your Camera

To maximize the effectiveness of your photographs, remember the basics of camera handling. Keep your camera parallel to your target, stand with your feet apart, put one foot in front of the other, bring your elbows in, and avoid leaning. These simple techniques ensure the clarity and accuracy of the images captured.

Beyond the act of capturing images, preserving the integrity of the crash scene is paramount in ensuring a thorough and accurate investigation. First responders play a pivotal role in safeguarding crucial evidence by refraining from disturbing the scene, including debris and other items. Every fragment, skid mark, or displaced object could be a piece of the puzzle that investigators need to reconstruct the events leading to the incident. Disturbing the scene might inadvertently erase vital clues or alter the landscape, potentially compromising the accuracy of the investigation.

In conclusion, crash scene photography is a vital component of the investigative process for highway incidents.

Join us at the upcoming TIM team meeting, where we will conduct a comprehensive presentation on the topic.

Article submitted by Tom Arsenault, Program Manager, Metric Engineering, Inc.



T I M TEAM WEBSITE!

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

