

Malta McConnelsville Fire Department

Yield Safely for Emergency Vehicles

It's happened to all of us, peacefully motoring along in the family car, and from out of nowhere there's a fire engine in your rear view mirror. What happens next can be smooth and easy, or confusing and disastrous.

State law says that motorists must yield the right of way, pull over to the right as far as possible and stop, allowing the emergency vehicle to pass.

Well, that's easy to say – but hard to do, especially in heavy traffic or on our narrow rural roads. On a 4 lane road or when stopped at an intersection, if you can't get safely to the right side of the road, stay where you are and let the emergency vehicles drive around you. On a two lane road, do NOT slow down and stop on a curve or hill unless you can pull completely off the road. Remember, we cannot pass you on a curve or other blind spot. Whatever you do, don't jeopardize anyone else's safety, and don't panic. We are probably only going a few miles an hour faster than you are, but our trucks are much heavier and cannot stop quickly. In no case should you stop suddenly in front of us, especially if there is any oncoming traffic.

Many times emergency vehicles travel in groups, and will not necessarily be arriving from the same direction. So if you have just gotten out of the way for one emergency vehicle, be alert and expect to see other units and emergency personnel in their personal vehicles.



Here are some tips on not getting surprised while driving:

- ✓ Always drive defensively. Be aware of the possible problems around you.
- ✓ Check your mirrors on a regular basis. Never turn left without checking your rear view mirror first. Someone may not have seen your turn signal and may be passing you.
- ✓ Keep your radio volume down. You never know, maybe those emergency vehicles are responding to an emergency in your neighborhood, or maybe even to your own home.