

ACCIDENT INVESTIGATION POLICY

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In order to assure that all accidents are properly investigated, the following policy will be implemented:

All Accidents To Be Investigated

The Officer in Charge shall investigate all accidents involving Western Reserve Joint Fire District personnel and/or property.

Injury Accidents

The OIC will investigate all injury accidents by interviewing the firefighters involved including witnesses. The OIC may find it necessary to physically examine the location of a personal injury accident so as to prepare a detailed report and so that he may make recommendations, if necessary, as to corrections that may need to be made to prevent a reoccurrence of the accident. Pictures and/or sketches should be included when this type of information is applicable to properly report the incident.

Equipment, Vehicle, Or Property Accidents

The OIC will investigate all property, equipment, or vehicle damage accidents by interviewing the firefighters involved including witnesses. The OIC shall personally examine the vehicle, equipment or property that has been damaged. The OIC will find it necessary to physically examine the location of the accident so as to prepare detailed report and so that he may make recommendations, if necessary, as to corrections that may need to be made to prevent a reoccurrence of the accident. Pictures and/or sketches should be included when this type of information is applicable to properly report the incident. (Photograph the scene to document damage to vehicles or property or lack of damage to vehicles or property.)

Report all accidents that involve personal injury and all accidents that cause damage, other than of a minor nature, immediately to the Fire Chief.

Forward all accident reports to the Fire Chief.

TOWNSHIP ACCIDENT INVESTIGATIONS

The following procedure will be used for all traffic accidents involving Western Reserve Joint Fire District vehicles.

1. Accidents occurring on the public roadway will be handled by contacting the Poland Township or Village Police Departments.
2. In the event that the accident involves the immediate transportation of any of the participants in the accident to a medical facility, the Fire District will conduct a separate independent investigation. This investigation will be for the internal use of the Fire District.
3. In the event that the accident results in serious bodily injury or death to any of the participants, the Fire Chief will be immediately notified and he or his designee will respond to the scene.
4. Employees are to cooperate with the investigation of the accident to the best of their ability. A printed form will be provided in each vehicle indicating to the investigating police officer that the employee involved is not permitted to give a statement at this time.

This Statement will read:

“Due to WRJFD Regulations, the operator of this vehicle/equipment is unable to provide a statement regarding this accident at this time. An accurate written statement will be available to complete your investigation within 48 hours. If the operator is injured and taken to the hospital a statement will be available as soon as practicable.

After the accident, the employee will complete a written statement and will forward it to the Fire Chief or designee for review, before providing it to the investigating officer. This will be done no later than the date indicated on the form.

This written statement will serve as the official record of the employee’s actions and recollections of the accident and will be attached to any reports required by the District. This is being done to avoid duplicate work and possible contradictions.

WRJFD ACCIDENT POLICY DISCIPLINARY STEPS

This policy will be for all employees of the WRJFD while driving or operating District vehicles or equipment.

For the purpose of this policy, an accident is defined as follows:

- A. “Accident” or “Motor Vehicle Accident” means any accident involving a motor vehicle, which results in bodily injury to or death of any person, or damage to the property of any person in excess of five hundred dollars (\$500.00).

OR

- B. After investigation by the investigating officer, the operator of the vehicle or equipment is found to be at fault and/or is issued a citation.

All accidents that occur within a two (2) year period, commencing with adoption of this policy, shall be treated in the following manner:

1. The result of the first accident, regardless of dollar amount, in which item “B” is applicable will be a letter of reprimand and shall be placed in the employee’s personnel file.
2. A second accident with item “A” or “B” being applicable will result in the employee being suspended from driving duties, until a driving course is completed and approval is received by the Fire Chief.
3. A third accident, regardless of dollar amount, and when item “B” is applicable, will result in the employee being suspended from driving for a minimum of six (6) months.
4. Four or more accidents in a two (2) year period, regardless of dollar amount and when item “B” is applicable”, will result in each employee being dealt with on a case by case basis and each case shall be reviewed by the WRJFD Board of Trustees. A driving suspension not to exceed one (1) year may be given. In extreme cases, this could be considered a pattern of complete disregard for District property and neglect of duty, thus being grounds for dismissal.

Incompetence, with regard to destruction of District property, will not be tolerated. Further, it is completely understood that nothing in this policy preempts the enforcement of District Rules and Regulations and all such rules shall be strictly enforced.

It is further understand that due to the emergency of some duties of employees controlled by this policy, exceptions can arise. Though it is the complete responsibility of the operator of any vehicle to have his/her vehicle under control at all times, situations that may be treated as exceptions and reviewed by the Accident Review Committee are as follows:

1. Accidents arising from criminal action against a vehicle or driver.
2. Accidents arising as a result of proven mechanical failure.
3. If after complete review of the accident the department head feels the accident merits further review because of extraordinary circumstances, he/she may request a hearing before the Board of Trustees.