

	Operational General Order	12.09 Road Hazards and Motorist Assistance	PAGE 1 OF 2
	SUBJECT		EFFECTIVE DATE
	Virginia Beach Police Department General Order Chapter 12 – Traffic Operations		09/15/2005
	DISTRIBUTION		ORIGINATOR/REVIEW
	ALL	CALEA: 61.4.1, 61.4.2	Special Operations
BY THE AUTHORITY OF THE CHIEF OF POLICE:		<i>James A. Coonan</i>	

Purpose

To establish responsibilities of Officers and Community Service Officers as they relate to providing assistance to highway users and correcting hazardous highway conditions.

Policy

The Virginia Beach Police Department is committed to providing a safe roadway system for the public that is clear of hazardous conditions and to provide assistance to highway users whose vehicles may be disabled.

Roadway Hazards

Members of the department who identify a traffic hazard are responsible for ensuring the public safety until the hazard is corrected. The traffic hazards can be such items as debris in the roadway, defects in the roadway; visual obstructions, damaged or down traffic signals or signs, lack of or defective roadway lighting systems, and other roadside hazards including abandoned, disabled or parked vehicles on or near the roadway.

Members shall make take appropriate actions to insure the hazard is corrected as quickly as possible. The actions can include, but are not limited to:

- Clearing debris from roadway if possible.
- Notifying E911 Emergency Communications Division of the traffic hazard to ensure the proper city department is notified of and responding to the traffic hazard. These departments can include Traffic Engineering, Highways, and Landscape Services.
- Providing assistance to disabled motorists and/or contacting communications to obtain the services of a wrecker service to remove a vehicle that is a traffic hazard.

Members of the department shall insure that the traveling public is safe until the traffic hazard is clear. This may include the need to direct traffic, divert traffic from the area, or to obtain temporary signs to replace damaged signs or signals.

If a member discovers a traffic hazard that is not an immediate danger to the public; such as a street light out, the member should fill out a City of Virginia Beach Agency Referral Notice (form DF 157-2) and forward it to the Records Unit which will in turn forward the notice to the City of Virginia Beach Traffic Engineering Division.

Disabled Vehicles

Members of the Department on routine patrol or via dispatched calls may encounter disabled vehicles. Upon arrival, the member should position their vehicle to provide safety to the person needing assistance and to also alert the traveling public to the problem. Members should be aware that disabled vehicle calls are often the result of a medical problem of the motorist or a mechanical problem of the vehicle that could result in a fire. In such cases members should be prepared to render first aid in accordance to their training and summons emergency medical services as required. Members should also be prepared to address minor fires with issued fire suppression equipment and summons the Virginia Beach Fire Department as required. The member providing assistance shall contact communications to provide a tow truck on the police tow list or one of the owners request for mechanical assistance or towing if the requested service can respond in a reasonable amount of time. If the disabled vehicle is off the roadway and not a hazard, it is up to the officer's discretion to provide transportation to the disabled motorist. The officer should be cognizant not to leave a disabled motorist or any passengers in a dangerous situation.