

Operating Guideline # 512

Road Condition

October 9, 2019



PURPOSE:

The purpose of this Operating Guideline (OG) is to establish guidelines to provide measures that will prevent apparatus responding to emergencies from being incapacitated or damaged due to poorly maintained roads and driveways.

ISSUE/RATIONALE:

The Muskoka Lakes Fire Department response area covers some 795 square kilometers with hundreds of kilometers of asphalt and other types of public roads/laneways. In addition, thousands of properties in our community are accessible via “private” or “cottage” roadways, many of which are not constructed or maintained to traditional “municipal standards”. Long private driveways can also be a challenge in terms of safe and adequate passage. The weight and size of apparatus precludes the ability to operate on any roadway or surface that was not designed to carry heavy and large vehicles. Fire apparatus travelling on poorly maintained roads, lanes or driveways are subject to becoming stuck, overturned or damaged due to poor construction or maintenance conditions that will not safely allow the apparatus passage. The large size of fire apparatus may make entry into some areas impossible due to obstructions in narrow areas or improperly designed or maintained laneways. (See also OG 508 – Off Road Operation of Apparatus).

GUIDELINE:

1. When encountering a roadway, laneway or driveway which may be of questionable condition, the EVO shall stop the apparatus and ensure that a visual evaluation is done prior to the apparatus proceeding further. On occasion, this evaluation may need to be done on foot outside of the apparatus. This evaluation shall consider:
 - a. the width and elevation(s) of the roadway/laneway/driveway;
 - b. the construction of the roadbed;
 - c. travelled surface conditions;
 - d. height restrictions or overhead obstructions such as trees or hydro lines; and
 - e. The level of maintenance evident on the roadway/laneway/driveway.

2. Extreme caution should be exercised when encountering any culvert or bridge type structure on private roadways. The EVO is ultimately responsible for the safe operation of the vehicle he or she is driving and shall evaluate all such structures for safety in-so-far as they are able.

3. The EVO should only continue to operate/drive the apparatus further if he/she has assessed the road/laneway/driveway as safe.

RESPONSIBILITY:

It is the responsibility of all Emergency Operations Division staff to comply with the provisions of this Operating Guideline.