



## Roadway Incident Operations Safety

No. HS-2012-3 March 21, 2012

**Learning Objective:** The student shall identify techniques for improved safety during roadway incident operations.

Numerous firefighters and other emergency responders have been struck on the roadway with some resulting in fatalities.

### Some of the basics of safely operating on the roadway:

When operating on the roadway, always wear an appropriate American National Safety Institute (ANSI)-certified high-visibility traffic vest.

Park your emergency vehicle in a manner that shields the incident area from oncoming traffic in a manner that does not place you, other responders, or bystanders in danger. Also park away from hazardous areas such as downed electrical lines, falling debris and structures, flames, toxic gases, and smoke.

Ensure that your emergency vehicle can be seen by oncoming traffic by appropriately using its emergency warning lights. Do not blind oncoming traffic with the vehicle headlights, spotlights, scene lighting, or any other bright white light—turn them off when parked, especially at night.

Use orange Department of Transportation (DOT)-approved traffic cones at least 28 inches in height with retroreflective collars when setting up a safety zone on the roadway.

Another important safety measure is using retroreflective coral DOT-approved signs stating “EMERGENCY SCENE AHEAD,” positioned “upstream” from the incident scene to warn approaching drivers.

The use of illuminated warning devices such as flares and/or other equipment such as arrow boards can channel moving traffic away from the lane(s) in which emergency responders are working to create a safe working zone.

To enhance the roadway operations for emergency responders, the U.S. Fire Administration (USFA) has developed the following programs and partnerships: [www.usfa.fema.gov/fireservice/research/safety/roadway.shtm](http://www.usfa.fema.gov/fireservice/research/safety/roadway.shtm)



Fire service traffic control personnel setting up traffic cones on roadway.