

# Uniform Guidelines *for* State Highway Safety Programs



DOT HS 812 007E  
April 2014

## Highway Safety Program Guideline No. 16

# Management of Highway Incidents

Each State in cooperation with its political subdivisions should have a program which provides for rapid, orderly, and safe removal from the roadway of wreckage, spillage, and debris resulting from motor vehicle accidents, and for otherwise reducing the likelihood of secondary and chain-reaction collisions, and conditions hazardous to the public health and safety.

1. The program should provide at a minimum that:
  - a. Traffic Incident Management programs are effective and understood by emergency first responders.
  - b. Operational procedures are established and implemented to:
    - i. Define responsibilities of all first responders;
    - ii. Certify and classify all rescue and salvage responders and equipment;
    - iii. Enable rescue and salvage equipment personnel to get to the scene of accidents rapidly and to operate effectively and safely on arrival —
      1. On heavily traveled freeways and other limited access roads;
      2. In other types of locations where wreckage or spillage of hazardous materials on or adjacent to highways endangers the public health and safety;
    - iv. Extricate trapped persons from wreckage with reasonable care- to avoid injury or aggravating existing injuries;
    - v. Warn approaching drivers and detour them with reasonable care past hazardous wreckage or spillage;
    - vi. Ensure safe handling of spillage or potential spillage of materials that are —
      1. Radioactive
      2. Flammable
      3. Poisonous
      4. Explosive
      5. Otherwise hazardous; and
    - vii. Exeditiously remove wreckage or spillage from roadways or otherwise ensure the resumption of safe, orderly traffic flow.
  - c. All rescue and salvage personnel are properly trained and retrained in the latest accident cleanup techniques.

- d. An interoperable communications system is provided, adequately equipped and manned to provide coordinated efforts in incident detection and the notification, dispatch, and response of appropriate services.
2. The program should be periodically evaluated by the State to ensure adherence to the principles and concepts of the National Incident Management System using the Federal Highway Administration's Traffic Incident Management State Self-Assessment ([http://ops.fhwa.dot.gov/eto\\_tim\\_pse/preparedness/tim/self.htm](http://ops.fhwa.dot.gov/eto_tim_pse/preparedness/tim/self.htm)). The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration should be provided with an evaluation summary.