Produced by the
National Rural Transit Assistance Program

Learner's Guide

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES for Rural Transit Drivers

National RTAP is a Federal Transit Administration program administered by the Neponset Valley Transportation Management Association
www.NationalRTAP.org 888-589-6821

RTAP
Rural Transit Assistance Program

Produced by the
National Rural Transit Assistance Program (RTAP)

Learner's Guide

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES for Rural Transit Drivers

National RTAP is a Federal Transit Administration program administered by the Neponset Valley Transportation Management Association
www.NationalRTAP.org 888-589-6821

RTAP
Rural Transit Assistance Program

Acknowledgements

National RTAP's Emergency Procedures for Rural Transit Drivers module was first created in 1990 by Ream Lazaro and updated in 2010 to incorporate new industry practices and standards. This update and its related products were developed for National RTAP by Nusura, Inc. (www.nusura.com).

Project Management

Jim Chesnutt jim.chesnutt@nusura.com

Gary Gleason gary.gleason@nusura.com

Subject Matter Expertise

Gary Gleason

Adrian Moy

Interactive & Multimedia Production

Mark Amann

Jim Chesnutt

Andrew Hegel

Bryan Dahlberg

Table of Contents

Introduction

The role of a transit driver in an emergency can be critical to saving lives and protecting property. Because of the nature of the job, drivers are often the first on the scene of accidents and incidents. That's why it is important to be trained in emergency procedures. This training, combined with your experience and expertise, will help you remain calm, clearheaded and able to respond effectively during emergencies.

Here is a recent real-world example from northwest Arkansas, shared by the manager of a small rural transit system:

> *Our staff was recently put to the test when we learned a passenger on board was carrying what looked like a hand grenade and a hand gun tucked away in his waist band.*
>
> *I was able to make contact with the driver by cell phone at a satellite transfer point and the driver played out my ruse of a mechanical problem on the bus perfectly while standing next to the gunman. The driver informed the gunman that another bus had been dispatched to complete his destination, and other passengers were transferred to a second bus.*
>
> *Our dispatch office was coordinating with the police dispatch center the entire time in order to direct the officer to the subject. The gunman was standing just outside the bus when a police officer arrived. The driver of the first bus was able to take cover in the second bus as the officer was approaching the gunman. The officer was able to remove the gun as the subject tried to reenter the bus. A scuffle occurred just outside the bus at which point the subject pulled out a second gun and charged the weapon. The officer then shot the subject twice in the upper torso.*
>
> *The local media is focusing on the safe practices performed by the transit department that put passengers out of harm's way... I think the credit should go back to the training that mitigated this tragic event from becoming more tragic.*

As a transit driver you will probably never face an event as extreme as this example, but sadly, there is a chance. However, there is a good chance you will face the risks of extreme weather, erratic drivers and hazardous material spills. *Emergency Procedures for Rural Transit Drivers* is a training program to help you anticipate, prepare for and respond to emergency situations.

As a professional driver, you should be prepared for all emergency situations including:

- Vehicle collisions (accidents)
- Passenger falls and illnesses (incidents)
- Severe weather conditions (acts of nature)
- Chemical spills inside or outside your vehicle (hazardous materials)
- Mechanical breakdowns (critical infrastructure)
- Unruly passengers (can escalate to criminal activity)
- A bombing or bomb threat (terrorism)

This workbook will provide you with guidelines that, when combined with your agency's policies and your skills, will help you to make professional, effective decisions in emergency situations.

Vehicle Readiness

Pre-trip Inspection

Spot signs of trouble before getting your vehicle out on the road:

- On the approach, determine if the vehicle is leaning to one side. This could indicate a tire with low pressure or a suspension problem.
- Check for body damage and signs of tampering.
- Check the exhaust for signs of tampering or attached objects.
- Check tires for sidewall damage and uneven tread wear.
- Look for oil and other fluid leaks, especially under the engine, transmission and drivetrain.
- Always perform a complete brake check as appropriate for your vehicle.
- Cycle the wheelchair lift. Confirm proper raise and lower functionality. Check for fluid leaks coming from the lift mechanism.

To prevent problems that could lead to accidents or injury, no vehicle should be placed in service if any of these key safety items are defective:

- Windshield (should be free of cracks or defects)
- Rear view mirrors (should be free of cracks or defects)
- Windshield wipers
- Lights: headlights, brake lights, turn signals, hazard flashers
- Horn
- Tires and wheels
- Brakes

Emergency Equipment

Emergency equipment that must be on-board the vehicle includes:

- First aid kit
- Biohazard kit
- Fire extinguisher
- Three emergency triangles
- Seatbelt cutter within reach of the driver while seated

Additional recommended emergency equipment includes:

- Flashlight (check batteries frequently)
- Tools including screwdrivers, adjustable wrenches, pliers and other small tools to make minor vehicle repairs as your system policies permit
- Wheel blocks for securing the vehicle and preventing a rollaway when parked on an incline

Additional optional or seasonal emergency items include:

- Blankets — Useful in all climates, particularly for injury and shock victims.
- Water — Especially important in arid, dry areas.
- Sand / Salt — Used to improve traction in snow and ice or to free a stuck vehicle. (Salt should be stored in a waterproof container).
- Shovel — May be required to dig out a stuck vehicle. Is frequently used in combination with sand and salt.
- Tire chains to improve traction in ice and snow.

Emergency equipment should be readily available but stored out of the way of passengers and the driver. All equipment should be secured so as not to present a safety hazard to passengers in the event of a sudden stop.

En-route Inspection

While you are driving, watch gauges and use your senses (Look, Listen, Smell, Feel) to check for signs of trouble.

*L*ooking for trouble

- Monitor gauges and warning lights (alternator, coolant temperature, oil pressure, air pressure)
- Loss of electrical power in lights, heater fans or other accessories
- Evidence of oil or other fluid leaks
- Smoke or steam coming from under the dash or hood

*L*istening for trouble

- Sharp knock when accelerating
- Light knock when the engine is idling
- Clicking or tapping (valve noise)
- Continuous or intermittent squeal (belt noise)
- Loud exhaust
- Engine backfiring, sputtering or missing
- Steam or hissing from the engine
- Squealing or grinding sound from the brakes

*S*melling trouble

- Fuel odor
- Burning rubber
- Burning oil
- Hot brakes
- Hot electrical wires
- Exhaust fumes

*F*eeling trouble

- Excessive vibration in the engine, steering wheel or transmission
- Low or high speed shimmy
- Difficult or wandering steering (pulling to the left or right)
- Pulling to the left or right when braking

Post-trip Inspection

When changing vehicle assignments, relieving another driver in service or at the end of a shift, you should perform another vehicle inspection and complete the appropriate inspection form. Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) regulations (Part 396 — Inspection, Repair and Maintenance) state that, "A motor vehicle shall not be operated in such a condition as to likely cause an accident or a breakdown of the vehicle." Key items to check include:

- Parking brake is set and secure
- Transmission is in park or neutral, or left in gear (manual transmission), as appropriate for the type of bus
- Engine is turned off
- All passengers have exited the vehicle
- No passenger's personal property was left on board
- All windows and hatches are closed
- No new signs of damage or vandalism are apparent inside or outside the vehicle
- Interior and exterior lights and other electrical accessories turned off

For additional information on vehicle safety, see the National RTAP module, *Safety Training and Rural Transit* (START), available for free at:

http://portal.nationalrtap.org/iframe/getfile.aspx?id=184

Personal Preparedness

An emergency can happen at any time. Challenging weather conditions, vehicle breakdowns, other drivers' mistakes or a passenger's illness can happen at anytime. You must be prepared for all possibilities.

Mental Preparation

Preparing yourself mentally is not automatic. It takes time and thought to identify and consider the types of emergencies that you might encounter.

- Evaluate your personal limitations. The way you feel physically can influence your ability to react. Lack of sleep, illness, personal problems, and especially drug and alcohol use will reduce your ability to avoid emergency situations, or worse, could be the reason you become involved in an emergency.

Physical and Emotional Conditions

Your safety begins with reporting to work rested, calm and in control. To achieve this, maintain a healthy lifestyle that includes exercise, a healthy diet and sufficient rest. Strive also for a degree of mastery over unnecessary stress.

Alcohol in any amount affects focus and judgment. Federal law prohibits its use on the job or within four hours before reporting for work. Prescription medication may also diminish your ability to safely operate a vehicle. Possible side effects of medication should be discussed with your physician. Several common over-the-counter medications, including cough and cold remedies and antihistamines, can also cause drowsiness which affects safety.

Health Risks

According to the FMCSA, the following have been identified as core risk factors for professional drivers:

- Smoking — Increases heart disease, lung disease and is a leading risk factor in contracting cancer.
- Obesity — Increases the risk for cardiovascular diseases, hypertension and diabetes, and can increase problems with arthritis, back and joint pain.
- Hypertension (high blood pressure) — Increases the risk of heart disease, kidney failure and stroke. While it can be controlled with drugs, weight reduction sometimes eliminates the need for drug therapy. Symptoms may include fatigue, severe headache, chest pain, breathing difficulty and irregular heartbeat.
- Depressants and alcohol — Can produce drowsiness, slurred speech, loss of coordination and impaired reaction time. A Brunel University study found that hung-over drivers left their lanes four times as often and committed twice as many traffic offenses as their sober counterparts.
- Stimulants, legal and illegal — Elevate blood pressure, can produce restlessness and headaches, and may induce insomnia and irrational behavior such as aggression and hostility.
- Stress — Increases the incidence of hypertension as well as cardiovascular, gastrointestinal and immune deficiencies, and is a risk factor in other diseases including depression and obesity.
- Poor eating habits — Can be one of the most decisive factors in individual health.
- Lack of physical activity — Can increase the risk of physiological illnesses such as depression, anxiety and stress, as well as physical illnesses such as obesity, heart disease, hypertension and some cancers.

Exercise 1: Proactive Steps for Health ~ 20 Minutes

Directions:

After reviewing the physical and emotional conditions that are known to affect driving behavior, carefully consider each of the questions below. List the action steps (in short answer or bullet form) you could take under each category, and be prepared to discuss your answers.

1. Fatigue — What proactive steps will you take to be well rested before your shift begins?
2. Stress Management — What proactive steps will you take to live a low-stress lifestyle?

3. Health and Nutrition — What proactive steps will you take to live a healthy lifestyle?

Exercise 2: On-board Orientation ~ 60 minutes

Directions:

You will practice and demonstrate emergency procedures in simulated operating conditions using a bus or paratransit vehicle. Your instructor will be available for discussion, coaching and post-exercise debriefing.

1. Identify and locate required emergency equipment on your vehicle.
2. Demonstrate proper operation of all emergency exits — doors, windows and hatches — on each type of vehicle in your fleet.
3. Demonstrate operation of the wheelchair lift with and without power.
4. Demonstrate use of a seatbelt cutter: receive hands-on practice cutting restraint belt material.
   - Variation 1: simulated practice cutting personal restraint belts, leaving wheelchair-securing belts intact. In this scenario, the person is extracted from the mobility device and moved from the vehicle. The mobility device is left behind and the lift is assumed to be non-operational.
   - Variation 2: simulated practice cutting personal restraint and restraint belts so the individual can be evacuated along with the mobility device; the lift is assumed to be operational.
5. Emergency evacuation: hands-on practice using a drag blanket, practicing using the grasping-under-the-armpits drag method, and the two-person-under-the-armpits drag method.

Chapter 1 Quick Quiz: Preparedness

1. **True or False: As a transit driver you are required to report to work fit for duty. This includes appropriate physical, mental and emotional condition.**
   A. True
   B. False

2. **The purpose of the pre-trip inspection is to:**
   A. Ensure that every shift starts off smoothly
   B. Eliminate the threat of terrorism
   C. Determine what repairs are needed
   D. Assess the safety of your transit vehicle before putting it into service

3. **True or False: There are five basic life safety items that must be on your vehicle: a fire extinguisher, a first aid kit, a biohazard kit, a seatbelt cutter and three triangle reflectors. Additional emergency equipment may be recommended in your agency's policies and procedures.**
   A. True
   B. False

4. **What is your most important driver safety tool?**
   A. Fire extinguisher
   B. Biohazard disposal kit
   C. Flashlight
   D. Your brain

5. **When conducting a pre-trip inspection you should look for signs of tampering. This includes:**
   A. Scratches or marks made by prying tools
   B. Additional wires leading from the battery
   C. Items attached to the vehicle, wheel wells or frame with magnets or duct tape
   D. Missing or unusual light bulbs
   E. All of the above

Chapter 2 — Hazards and Threats

As a transit driver you face safety hazards and security threats on a daily basis. This section identifies those hazards and threats in each of the six categories:

- Accidents and Incidents
- Acts of Nature
- Hazardous Materials
- Critical Infrastructure
- Criminal Activity
- Terrorism

Accidents and Incidents

Vehicle accidents and incidents may include any of the following:

- Passenger slip, trip, bump or fall while boarding, exiting or riding on the vehicle
- Passenger illness or medical emergency
- Blood or bodily fluid spill
- Vehicle breakdown
- On-board fire
- Vehicle going off-road
- A collision with another vehicle, bicyclist, pedestrian or fixed object
- Injury to the driver, a passenger or other vehicle occupants due to any of the vehicle actions above

Preventing accidents is, in large part, adapting to the conditions that allow you to maintain a margin of safety. This may include deciding not to drive any farther in unsafe conditions.

Vehicle Fires

Vehicle fires can be caused by faulty wiring, engine failure or other factors, and are a prime cause of transit fatalities.

Skids and Skid Recovery

Tires rolling over snow, ice, water, wet leaves, loose material, extremely hot tar or oily patches can reduce traction and cause skids. There are two types of skids: power skids and braking skids.

Power Skids

A ***power skid*** occurs as a result of too much acceleration, causing the drive wheels to lose traction and spin free of the road surface. This usually results in fishtailing, with the rear of the vehicle sliding to one side or the other.

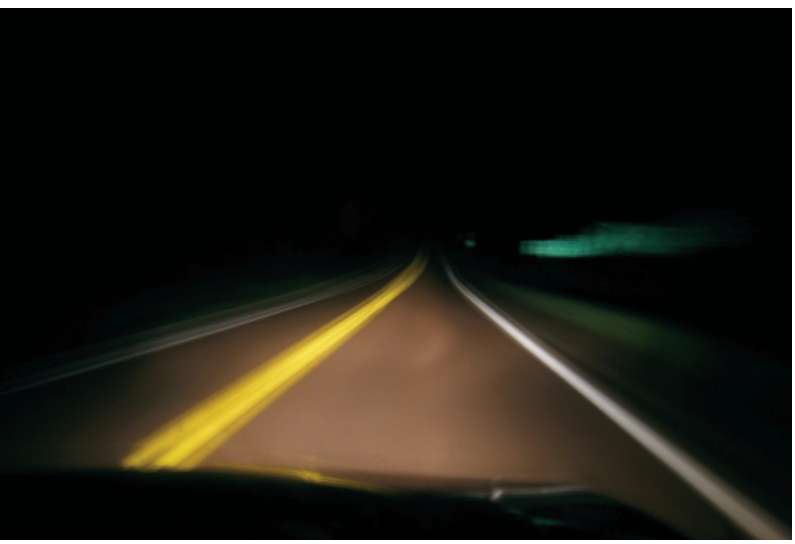
Braking Skids

Braking skids occur when wheels lock up and slide along the surface of the road. This usually happens when braking on wet or slippery surfaces. The vehicle will continue in the direction its momentum carries it and will not respond to steering inputs until rolling friction is re-established. Braking skids are particularly hazardous on curves or down grades in ice and snow. Since all four wheels are involved, braking skids can be unpredictable and more difficult to control.

Acts of Nature

Acts of nature include a wide range of conditions that affect traction, visibility and vehicle stability. Below is a description of the types of acts of nature commonly encountered by transit drivers. Emergency response protocols for the following types of hazards will be covered in the next section, **Emergency Procedures**.

- Darkness
- Rain, snow, sleet and ice
- Earthquakes
- Landslide or avalanche
- Wildfire
- Tornado
- Severe thunderstorms
- Flooding
- Hurricanes
- Strong winds
- Dust storms



Darkness

Obviously, the main concern when driving in darkness (whether at nighttime or early morning, during dust storms, fog or inclement weather) is reduced visibility. Less obvious is the fact that poor visibility can be made even more challenging by several factors:

- Visual reaction time differs among drivers depending on age, medical conditions and other factors.
- The transit driver and/or other drivers may have reduced ability and concentration because of fatigue.
- Some drivers don't turn on their headlights.
- At night, there may be an increased number of intoxicated drivers on the road.

Visual reaction time is the time it takes a driver's night vision to return to normal after being blinded by bright lights. Below are some specific causes that make visual recovery time higher for some individuals than for others:

- Age — recovery time increases as people get older
- High blood pressure
- Diabetes
- Other medical conditions

Rain, Snow, Sleet, Fog and Ice

The primary dangers associated with rain, snow, sleet, fog and ice are reduced visibility and reduced traction. Problems can include:

- Windshields that are fogged, frosted or covered with ice or snow
- Limited visibility even under good lighting conditions
- Covered or hidden lane markings that confuse your sense of position on the road
- Wet leaves and loose gravel on the road
- Compacted snow and ice
- Inability of other drivers to handle or adjust to conditions
- Traffic obstructions including stalled vehicles, accidents and reduced road clearance from plowed roads

Severe Thunderstorms

Severe thunderstorms with accompanying heavy rains and high winds can create a variety of problems including flooding, downed trees and power lines, and power outages.

Flooding

Flooding can be caused by intense rainfall, storm surge, rapid snowmelt, ice jams, dam breaks or levee failures that carry debris onto roadways and cause vehicles to become waterlogged or swept from the road.

Dust Storms

Dust storms occur when strong winds whip dirt, sand and dust into the air. Dust storms can travel for hundreds of miles and reduce visibility to near zero.

Landslide or Avalanche

Landslides, snow slides and mudflows can block roadways, bury vehicles and sweep them off of roadways. They are often associated with heavy storms and flooding in hilly or mountainous terrain. Earthquakes can also trigger landslides or avalanches.

Wildfire

Forest fires or wildfires can blaze a wide swath of destruction, reduce visibility and impair air quality.

Tornado

High winds have the potential to cause flying debris, downed trees and/or power lines, and make roadways dangerous or impassable. Tornadoes are often predicted ahead of time allowing the transit system to get vehicles and passengers to locations that can provide shelter. Adequate consideration, time and resources should also be dedicated to meeting the specific needs of passengers using mobility devices and durable medical equipment. According to the National Weather Service, the following may indicate a tornado is possible:

- Dark, sometimes greenish sky
- A large, dark, low-lying cloud
- Large hail
- Loud roar (similar to a freight train)

Hurricanes

Hurricanes are major storms with damaging winds that can cover a wide area. While the greatest wind damage occurs where the storm is located, drenching rains combined with a storm tide can produce extensive flooding far inland. This type of flooding accounts for the majority of hurricane-related deaths.

Earthquakes

Earthquakes range from minor tremors that cause little damage to catastrophic events that cause widespread destruction and casualties. A major earthquake can cause bridges and roadways to collapse, widespread power and utility outages, rock and mudslides, and tsunami waves capable of flooding low-lying areas up to two miles inland.

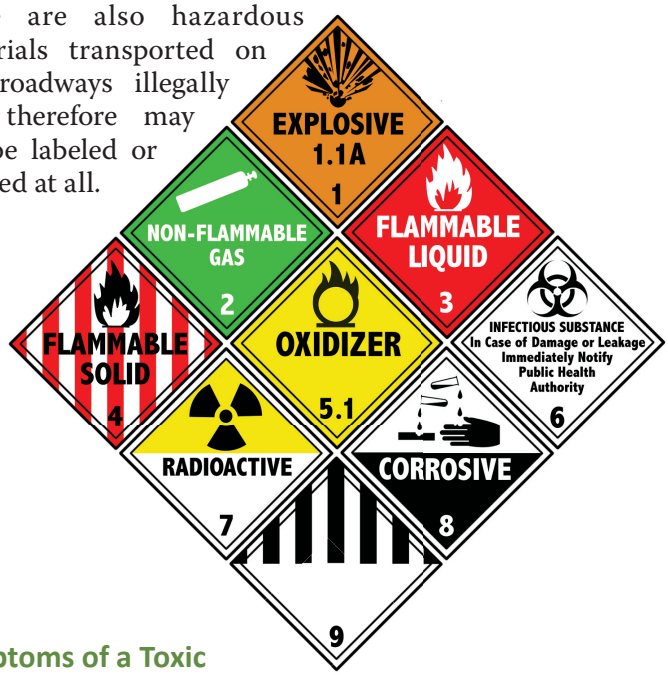
Hazardous Materials

A variety of flammable, combustible, explosive and reactive substances are commonly shipped by rail or truck. These Toxic Industrial Chemicals (TICs) are commonly manufactured, stored and transported for use in industry. TICs can be hazardous as carcinogens, corrosives and agents that affect the lungs, skin and/or blood.

The U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) requires that these chemicals be clearly marked with placards that warn about the toxicity of the substance and identify it using a standardized coded numbering system.

While you are not expected to be expert at identifying hazardous materials based on reading placards, you do need to know that chemical releases and hazmat incidents can result from truck accidents or train derailments involving transportation of TICs.

Sample hazardous materials placards are pictured below. The most dangerous materials are ***Radioactive***, followed by ***Infectious***, and then ***Oxidizer***. Naturally, there are also hazardous materials transported on our roadways illegally and therefore may not be labeled or marked at all.



Symptoms of a Toxic Chemical Release:

- Two or more people experiencing difficulty breathing, uncontrollable coughing, collapse, seizure, nausea, blurred vision or disorientation
- A cloud, mist, fog, fine powder, dust, liquid or oily residue with no explainable source
- Items emitting an unexplainable or pungent odor or vapor
- Abandoned or out-of-place aerosol or manual spray devices

Critical Infrastructure

Severe storms and natural disasters often result in damage to critical infrastructure. This may include:

- Electric power
- Landline telephone services
- Cell phone services
- Cable TV and internet connections
- Natural gas lines
- Municipal water systems
- Sewage treatment systems
- Petroleum pipelines
- Underground storage tanks (used for gasoline and diesel, lubricants, and coolants)

Loss of power and loss of communication services have the potential to impact transit service and transit drivers the most — at least initially. In a major disaster, it may take days or even weeks to get critical infrastructure and utilities restored.

Criminal Activity

Criminal activity on, in or near transit facilities can pose a threat to transit employees and customers. Common crimes include:

- Fare evasion
- Vandalism
- Disorderly conduct
- Theft of property

More serious crimes are less frequent, but can have traumatic impacts on victims and undermine confidence in the transit system for employees and customers alike. Warning signs of criminal activity in the community and indicators of escalating violence should be observed and reported as a means of crime prevention.

Serious crimes that have been perpetrated on transit systems include:

- Robbery
- Assault
- Assault with a weapon
- Commandeered vehicle
- Rape
- Homicide

All crimes and indicators of possible criminal activity should be reported to transit system management and law enforcement.

Different, Difficult and Dangerous Passengers

As a driver you will encounter a broad spectrum of people. Some of those people may have very different ideas, values and beliefs than you. This can be a positive part of the job. You are also likely to have some difficult passengers. Examples of difficult behavior include: verbal abuse, sexual advances, dementia, incontinence, fare refusal, offensive odors, and seizures and other medical conditions.

Be alert if a passenger's demeanor changes from different and difficult to dangerous. If a person will not calm down after reasonable efforts to problem-solve and communicate with respect, their behavior may escalate and become dangerous. Some warning signs include:

- Visibly increased agitation, sudden movements
- Hostile or aggressive facial expressions, intense or unbroken eye contact, and violations of personal space
- Raised voice or shouting with the inability to control escalating anger
- Threats or expletives
- Threatening posture or actions such as a clenched jaw, closed fists or heavy breathing
- Suggestion or evidence of a weapon
- Known history of violent behavior

For more information see the *Problem Passengers; Challenging Situations* training module. It is available at **www.NationalRTAP.org**.

Terrorism

Sometimes the line between criminal activity and terrorism is not clear. While it is not very common, criminals and disturbed individuals may be capable of violent crimes. Past incidents have included hostage takings and murder. The difference between a crime and a terrorist attack is rooted in the motivation of the perpetrator. Terrorism refers to violent acts that are intended to create fear and are perpetrated for an ideological goal.

Terrorist attacks may include:

- Armed attack on board a transit vehicle
- Hostage situation on board a vehicle or at a transit facility
- Bomb threat or attack
- Chemical, biological or radiological attack

Suspicious Packages: H-O-T Items

One challenge facing drivers and other transit employees is making the distinction between ordinary lost and found items and potential terrorist weapons such as improvised explosive devices or chemical, biological or radiological dispersal devices. While the odds are it's a lost and found item, how do you know for sure? Details on recognition of suspicious packages are provided in the next section, **Emergency Procedures**.

Case Studies ~20 Minutes Each

Directions:

You have 10 to 15 minutes to read and discuss your assigned case study and develop strategies for a successful resolution. Your workgroup will then have approximately five minutes to present your case study, offer your preferred solution(s), and discuss the case with your instructor and the entire group.

- Choose one member of your group to record your responses to the following case studies:
  - List the challenges and problems you would anticipate in each scenario.
  - Develop a list of "action steps" you will need to take in response to the incident. Put the steps in priority order.
  - What resources (responders) will you need at the scene to assist you? Choose one member of your group to make a simulated radio call to the dispatcher to report the incident and request assistance.

Case Study 1 — Trespassing

Today, you are assigned the earliest run scheduled to report at the yard at 5:00 AM. You arrive a few minutes early, check in, and are walking out to the area where the buses are parked. You notice two young men walking away from a row of parked buses and headed in your direction. When they see you they change directions and quickly exit the bus yard.

What concerns would you have regarding the presence of the two young men in the bus yard early in the morning?

What steps should you take to make sure your vehicle has not been vandalized or tampered with?

Should you report this incident? If yes, to whom would you report it and what would you report?

What can employees do to improve security at their agency without spending any additional agency funds?

Case Study 2 — Intruder Descriptions

You are about to see a picture of the "two young men" from the previous exercise. The picture will be displayed for ten seconds. Working individually, write down all the details you can remember about the two men. You have five minutes to complete this task.

Now, working as a team with the other members in your group, develop a single composite description of the two men. Choose one member of your group as the writer and record your descriptions on flip chart paper.

How were the descriptions from each team similar? Were there any differences?

After seeing the photo of the two men again, how accurate were the descriptions? Which team developed the most complete and accurate description?

What contributed to the most accurate descriptions?

What do you think contributed to the less accurate descriptions?

Chapter 2 Quick Quiz: Hazards & Threats

1. **True or False: Road conditions are seldom the cause of vehicle accidents. Drivers who fail to adjust to adverse conditions cause most accidents.**
   A. True
   B. False

2. **Visual recovery time refers to:**
   A. How long it takes to clean up and remove damaged equipment following an accident
   B. How long it takes from when you notice your supervisor until you revert to doing your job correctly
   C. The time it takes a driver's vision to return to normal after being blinded by a bright light, such as headlights or sunshine
   D. The fact that older adults and people with medical conditions such as high blood pressure and diabetes have a harder time driving at night

3. **When faced with adverse road conditions that reduce visibility and/or traction, you should:**
   A. Notify dispatch, unload your passengers and call it a day
   B. Ask fellow drivers what they think the optimal speed is
   C. Reduce speed, increase following distance and anticipate trouble spots
   D. Tell your passengers they are going to be late

4. **Warning signs that can indicate the difference between a difficult passenger and a dangerous passenger include:**
   A. Voiced threats or expletives
   B. Threatening body posture such as a clenched fist
   C. Suggestion or evidence of a weapon
   D. Known history of violent behavior
   E. All of the above

5. **Warning signs of a toxic release include:**
   A. Abandoned or out-of-place aerosol or manual spray devices
   B. A cloud, mist, fog, fine powder, dust, liquid or oily residue with no explainable source
   C. Items emitting an unexplainable or pungent odor or vapor
   D. Two or more people experiencing difficulty breathing, uncontrollable coughing, collapse, seizure, nausea, blurred vision or disorientation
   E. All of the above

Chapter 3 — Emergency Procedures

Now that you're familiar with the range of hazards facing transit drivers, it's time to identify specific actions to take in case of an emergency.

Whenever you encounter emergency situations, from fender-benders to terrorist attacks, there are seven steps you can take to assess the situation and determine the appropriate actions. These are the **Seven Steps of Crisis Management**:

The Seven Steps of Crisis Management

1. **Protect Yourself**
2. **Assess the Situation**
3. **Notify Dispatcher / Request Aid**
4. **Protect Others**
5. **Secure the Vehicle**
6. **Gather Incident Information**
7. **Complete Post-incident Reports**

This unit will guide you in using the **Seven Steps of Crisis Management** when encountering the types of emergencies you are likely to face as a transit driver.

Responding to Accidents and Incidents

Depending on the severity of the emergency, your response measures will change. But the steps you take should remain the same. Here are some guidelines for how to react calmly after an accident.

1. Protect Yourself

This is a simple but crucial step. In an emergency, your first thought may be to risk yourself to save others, but risking injuring yourself will only put your passengers at greater risk. Keeping yourself safe ensures that someone is on scene with the skills and training to help others. If you are in danger, take steps to remove yourself from the threat. Once you are sure you are away from immediate danger, focus on your passengers.

2. Assess the Situation

- Ensure you are not injured or in immediate danger.
- Check your location. DO NOT move your vehicle unless:
  - Instructed to do so by law enforcement
  - Leaving the vehicle where it is would expose the passengers to greater danger (for example staying in a busy traffic lane, near a forest fire, or on a blind curve)
- Assess the condition of your passengers.
- Assess the condition of your vehicle. Ensure that there is no immediate danger from fuel leaks or fire.

The first few minutes following an accident are critical. The information you gather now will guide how you, your agency and emergency personnel will respond to the situation.

3. Notify Dispatcher / Request Aid

Whenever you are involved in an emergency, contact the dispatcher as soon as possible. Be ready to provide the following information:

- Your exact location
- The type of emergency and a brief description of what occurred
- The type of help you will need from police, fire and EMS responders
- Whether or not you are blocking traffic and if the vehicle can be safely moved
- The number of passengers on board the vehicle, the number of wheelchair passengers, and the nature and severity of any injuries, including whether or not you are injured

Note: If the situation changes before responders arrive on scene (for example, a fire spreads requiring evacuation of the vehicle), notify dispatch of the changes to the situation. This will provide the latest information to responders.

4. Protect Others

If you have not already done so, secure the vehicle by disengaging the transmission, setting the brakes, turning off the engine, and turning on your four-way flashers.

If there are injuries, provide aid to the extent you are trained and able. Your goal is not to treat but rather to stabilize the injured until emergency medical personnel arrive. In a serious accident it is possible that several people may be injured, some seriously. Triage is a process of prioritizing care for passengers based on the severity of their injuries. It means taking an inventory of who needs attention immediately and who can wait. Remember, you are in charge. Passengers will look to you to provide leadership, calm and instructions.

Inform passengers of:

- The nature of the situation
- How long the delay is expected to last
- What is being done to respond to or correct the problem

Keep passengers on the vehicle unless remaining in place presents a life safety hazard. Considerations may include:

- Exposure to traffic or other dangerous conditions
- Weather conditions
- Comfort of surrounding area

Unless the vehicle is in a place where it may be hit by another vehicle or there is a danger of fire or exposure to a harmful substance, it is usually safest and most efficient to have the passengers remain on the vehicle. This provides shelter from the elements and keeps passengers in a single, safe space. It also facilitates efficient communication.

Ensure that passengers with disabilities, the elderly, children and other vulnerable people do not become chilled or overheated. Use the bus climate control as needed.

Once the immediate situation is resolved, work with the dispatcher to assist the passengers in continuing on to their destinations. If passengers must be transferred to another vehicle:

- Ensure there is a clear path between the vehicles.
- Inform your passengers that they are to change vehicles and give specific directions.
- Stand at the door to assist passengers. Offer an apology for the delay.
- Facilitate exiting and transferring for passengers with mobility devices.
- If it is dark, use a flashlight from the emergency kit or use your vehicle's headlights to light a path.

5. Secure the Vehicle

If your vehicle is disabled on a roadway, protect the passengers and vehicle from further exposure to injury and damage. Then, follow these guidelines to secure the vehicle and prevent a rollaway.

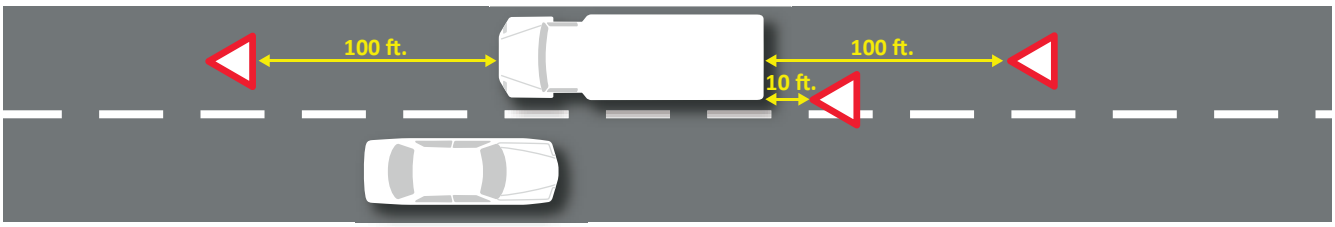
- If you decide the safest course of action is to move the vehicle off the roadway, make sure the location:
  - Is out of the way of traffic
  - Has a good line of sight for other traffic and is not obscured by a curve or the crest of a hill
  - Allows easy access for emergency response or service vehicles
  - Has sufficient room for passengers to safely get off the vehicle (including those with mobility devices)
  - Is close to support services (street lighting, stores or retail establishments)
- Turn on the four-way flashers.
- If the vehicle is on a grade, turn the front wheels against the curb to prevent a rollaway (if there is no curb, block the rear wheels against the grade).
- Put the transmission in park or neutral as dictated by the type of vehicle, set the brakes and shut the engine off.
- Set flares / triangles to warn approaching motorists as described below.

Triangles / Flares

Once the vehicle is parked, protect the vehicle with flares or triangles. The exact placement will depend on the road, traffic and visibility, but the following general guidelines apply:

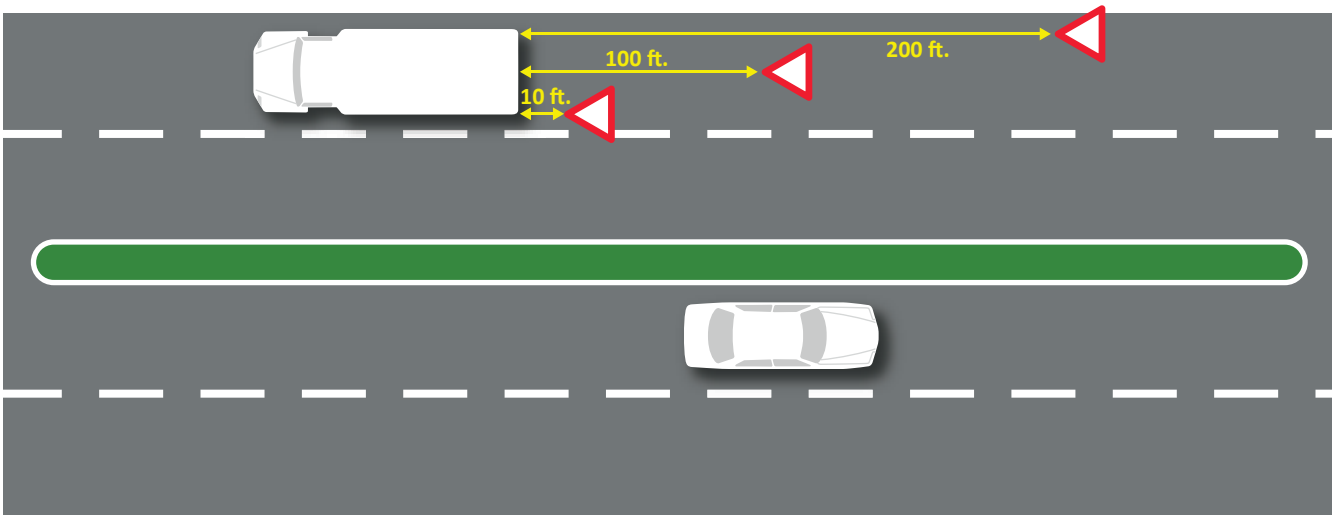
Two-lane Road:

- Place one flare/triangle 100 feet behind the vehicle in the center of the obstructed lane.
- Place the second flare/triangle 10 feet behind and to the traffic side of the vehicle.
- Place the third flare/triangle in the obstructed lane 100 feet ahead of the vehicle.



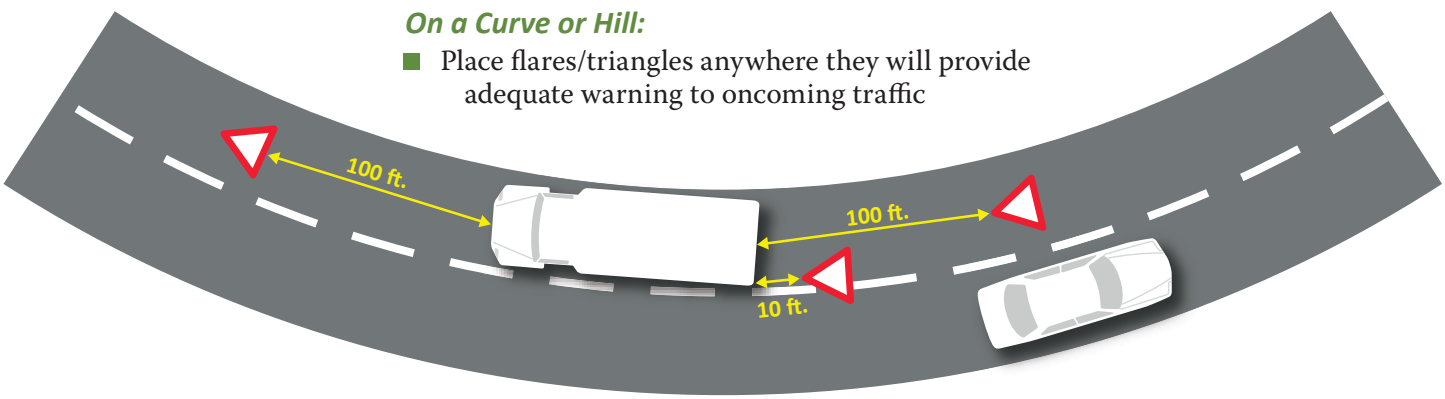
Divided Highway:

- Place one flare/triangle 200 feet behind the vehicle on the right side of the obstructed lane.
- Place the second flare/triangle 100 feet behind the vehicle in the center of the obstructed lane.
- Place a third flare/triangle 10 feet behind and to the traffic side of the vehicle.



On a Curve or Hill:

- Place flares/triangles anywhere they will provide adequate warning to oncoming traffic

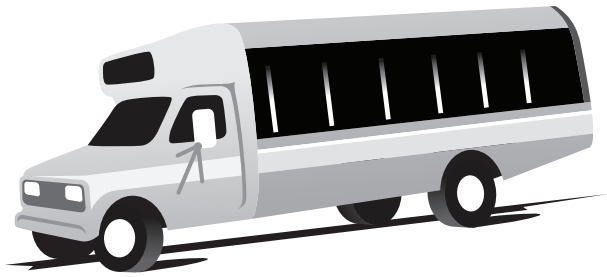


Remember: Reflective triangles are recommended over flares except in extremely adverse weather conditions. Always point flares away the from the vehicle and your body when lighting and never use them if there is any possibility of a fuel leak in the vicinity.

If you must position the vehicle on a hill, remember the following wheel positions for maximum safety:

- Uphill with curbing: front wheels to the left, secured against the curb. Chock block firmly placed behind a rear tire.
- Uphill without curbing: front wheels to right, chock block firmly placed behind a rear tire.

- Downhill with or without curbing: front wheels to the right. Chock block placed firmly in front of a rear tire.



6. Gather Incident Information

As soon as possible (while you are still on scene), start taking notes. Describe what happened, documenting all the relevant details you can. To make information gathering easier, many transit systems provide report forms or information cards in an accident kit kept inside the vehicles.

- Ask all passengers and witnesses to complete courtesy cards including their names, phone numbers, email and any other information they can provide.
- Collect courtesy cards to submit along with your written report.
- Collect information from other driver(s) including:
  - License plate number(s) of other vehicle(s) involved
  - Make, model and color of other vehicle(s) involved
  - Names, addresses, phone numbers and drivers license number(s) of those involved
  - Names, addresses and phone numbers of any other vehicle occupants
  - Insurance carrier and policy numbers of other driver(s)
- Collect information from first responders:
  - Name of the ambulance company and hospital to which injured were transported
  - Names, department and badge numbers of responding police officer(s)
  - Names, stations and badge numbers of responding fire officer(s)

To protect your personal interests and reduce potential liability for your agency, do not talk to anyone about the accident except for the appropriate authorities. Refer media inquiries to agency management or to the public information officer.

7. Complete Post-incident Reports

When the accident is over and you are safely at the transit facility, quickly and concisely capture all the data you have collected from the incident. This information is critical for identifying the events that led to the accident, your response measures, and any possible follow-up that is needed. These reports not only help the agency with possible legal follow-up, but will assist in preventing accidents in the future.

In addition to the information gathered above, document details that may be needed for a later investigation or court case, including:

- Were there any liquor or beer bottles, or signs of drugs in the other vehicle(s)?
- Did you have any other pertinent observations, including the condition and behavior of the other driver(s) or vehicle occupants?
- Did you notice anything unusual about the scene or the vehicles involved?

On-board Injury and Illness

When faced with an on-board injury or illness, follow the **Seven Steps of Crisis Management** to keep the injured passengers as comfortable as possible until medical assistance arrives.

1. ***Protect Yourself***— Ensure the vehicle is stopped in a safe location so you can lend aid without risk to yourself.

2. ***Assess the Situation*** — What is the injury or illness? How many people are involved? Do you need outside assistance? Can the victim, or those traveling with the victim, provide helpful information?
3. ***Notify Dispatcher/Request Aid*** — Inform dispatch of your exact location and the situation. Communicate your location first in case communications get cut off.
4. ***Protect Others*** — Ask healthy passengers to remain seated or to move away from an ill passenger as appropriate. If there is risk of broken bones or spinal damage, DO NOT move the victim until medical assistance arrives. If all injuries are minor, provide aid using the on-board first aid kit. Isolate bodily fluid spills following the procedures detailed on page 22.
5. ***Secure the Vehicle*** — Secure the vehicle as necessary according to steps outlined above.
6. ***Gather Incident Information*** — Gather completed passenger comment cards from passengers, injured parties and other witnesses. Take pictures if possible.
7. ***Complete Post-Incident Reports*** — Complete an incident report as soon as it is practical.

Tips Regarding On-board Illness

While there are hundreds of conditions that might cause a passenger to become ill, this section will focus on three common conditions: motion sickness and heart attacks, seizures, and strokes.

Motion Sickness & Heart Attack

Motion sickness is common among vehicle passengers but its symptoms can be confused with those of a heart attack. The following indicators can be associated with either motion sickness or heart attack:

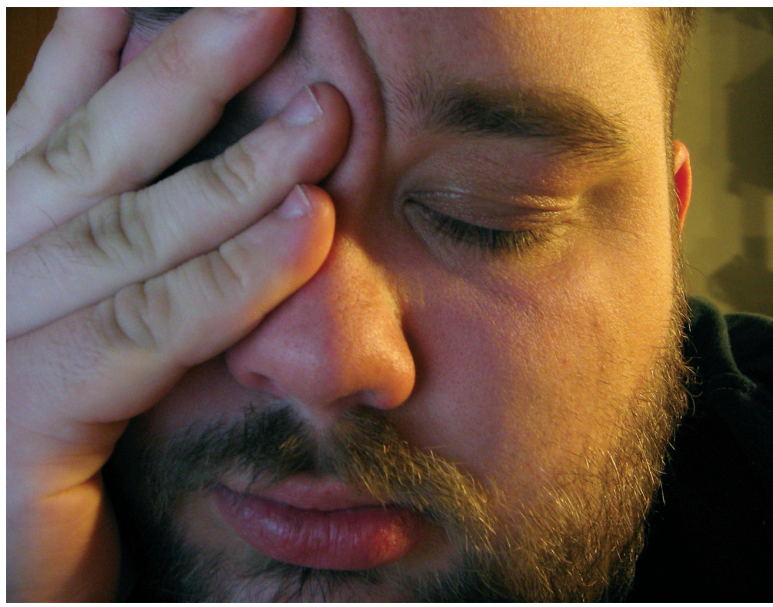
- Nausea
- Profuse sweating
- Hyperventilation (dizziness caused by rapid breathing)
- Paleness
- Claustrophobia (feeling of being closed in or unable to breathe)
- Dizziness

Additionally, heart attack victims often (but not always) complain of:

- Pain or pressure in the arms, neck, jaw or chest

Often, the person experiencing a heart attack will deny having a problem. It is best to err on the side of caution and request medical attention because of the risk of serious injury or death.

- Have the passenger sit in the first seat on the right side. This helps reduce claustrophobia and other symptoms because the passenger can easily see outside.
- Have the passenger breathe deeply and slowly. This will reduce nausea and prevent the passenger from hyperventilating.
- Consider opening a window to improve airflow near the passenger and reduce nausea and possible feelings of claustrophobia.



Seizures

A seizure rarely lasts more than two or three minutes. Advise your dispatcher and request medical aid at the first indication that a passenger is having a seizure. The driver's primary concern should be preventing the person experiencing seizures from injuring themselves or others.

Indications of seizures include:

- Loss of concentration or consciousness
- Loss of bladder control
- Foaming at the mouth
- Dazed expression
- Falling to the floor
- Spastic and convulsive motions
- Abnormal breathing patterns

What you ***should not*** do in the case of a seizure:

- Do not try to keep the individual from moving. There is no way the movement can be stopped and you are likely to be hurt yourself.

- Do not put anything in the person's mouth or try to hold his/her tongue.

What you ***should*** do:

- Keep other passengers away.
- Remove any hard objects within the passenger's reach and cushion his/her head. Remove eyeglasses as appropriate.
- Vomiting may occur during the seizure. If the vomit is not expelled there is a possibility of choking. Turn the individual's head (and body, if possible) to one side or downward so that any vomit drains away from the mouth.

Signs of Possible Stroke

- Disorientation
- Difficulty speaking or slurred speach
- Loss of movement on one side of the body
- Loss of consciousness

As with any medical emergency, follow the **Seven Steps of Crisis Management**.

Passenger Triage

Triage is a process of prioritizing care for passengers based on the severity of their condition. It is a means of taking inventory of who needs attention immediately and who can wait. Just like other emergencies, you can follow the **Seven Steps of Crisis Management** to assist in triage situations.

1. ***Protect Yourself*** — Put on rubber gloves from the first aid kit and avoid direct contact with blood and other bodily fluids. Take care to ensure that you remain safe and continue to manage emergency operations until first responders arrive on scene.
2. ***Assess the Situation*** — Focus on the big picture. Are there other imminent dangers? Can you establish immediate communications with dispatch? What is the number of casualties? Assign willing bystanders to administer aid to others. Focus on the ABC's of first aid: Airways, Breathing and Circulation. Persons whose airway is blocked or obstructed will need ***immediate*** intervention. Individuals whose heart has stopped beating or who are bleeding excessively will need intervention quickly in order to remain viable. A rapid assessment of those with injuries may help you to divide the injured into three categories following the acronym KID: K (killed), I (immediate aid required) and D (delayed treatment possible, also known as "walking wounded"). An accurate triage assessment will help you to focus activities on individuals who can be saved by immediate intervention.
3. ***Notify Dispatcher/Request Aid*** — As soon as possible, notify dispatch of your situation. It's best to immediately notify your dispatcher of your location and to provide a brief (less than 30 seconds) situation description to activate first responders. Tell the dispatcher you will follow up in a few minutes with more details. Later, contact dispatch with further information including the number and severity of injuries and all other available details.
4. ***Protect Others*** — In a multiple casualty event, you may need the aid of able-bodied passengers to save as many lives as possible. You and any volunteers should: ***1.*** Put on protective gloves from the first aid kit, ***2.*** Assist those who are having difficulty breathing, and, ***3.*** Apply direct pressure to severe wounds to reduce bleeding.

Once all of the passengers' conditions have stabilized your job will be to keep injured passengers as comfortable as possible while waiting for help. Use a blanket or coat to keep the passengers warm and to prevent shock. Loosen restrictive clothing.

- ***Do not*** give passengers food, drink or medication unless medical warning tags instruct to do so.
- ***Do not*** provide first aid, medical treatment or CPR unless you are certified, you have the appropriate equipment, and transit system policy permits it.
- Reassure the other passengers.
- Reassure the injured passengers.
- Regularly check injured or ill passengers' status, focusing on the rate and quality of their pulse and breathing. Note changes over time to relate to first responders when they arrive on scene.

5. ***Secure the Vehicle*** — Secure the vehicle as necessary according to the steps outlined under the **Responding to Accidents and Incidents** portion of this chapter.
6. ***Gather Incident Information*** — Gather all pertinent information from passengers and other witnesses. Ask other passengers to fill out courtesy cards and complete all required incident documentation. Take pictures if possible.
7. ***Complete Post-incident Reports*** — After the incident, fill out an incident report upon the completion of your shift.

If a passenger is unconscious, follow the steps above, plus:

- Ask other passengers if they know what is wrong with the passenger.
- With gloves on, check the passenger's wrists and neck for medical warning tags.
- Follow the directions on the medical warning tags.
- Administer CPR if necessary and permitted by system policy.

Bodily Fluid Spills / Blood-borne Pathogens

Bodily fluids — blood, vomit, urine, excrement and saliva — can transmit blood-borne pathogens such as Hepatitis B, HIV and others. Follow the **Seven Steps of Crisis Management** and your system's policy on handling biohazards. In some cases you may be instructed to secure the vehicle, isolate the scene and wait for assistance.

The following are some guidelines employed by many transit systems:

- Contact the dispatcher and describe the situation.
- Request that passengers move away from the spill area.
- Avoid touching, stepping in or splattering the spill.
- Locate the biohazard kit on your vehicle.
- Put on the disposable gloves found in the biohazard kit.
- Cover the spill area with the absorbent found in the biohazard kit.
- Using the scoop from the biohazard kit, place any contaminated materials in the biohazard bag provided in the kit.
- Apply disinfectant to the spill area, if available.
- If the clean up includes broken glass or other sharp objects, pick up the sharp objects with tongs or other means, never with fingers.
- Dispose of sharp, potentially contaminated items in the leak proof, puncture proof container provided in the biohazard kit.
- Carefully discard all cleaning materials and gloves in the biohazard bag.
- Immediately double bag the biohazard bag to reduce the likelihood of rupture.
- Ensure that all biohazard materials are placed in the appropriate depository.
- Thoroughly wash hands with soap and hot running water as soon as possible.
- Collect passenger comment cards.
- Complete all required incident documentation.

On-board Fire

If you smell something burning and don't see anything to account for the smell, that something might be your vehicle! Find a safe place to pull off the road as soon as possible. If the smell is accompanied by smoke or flame in or outside your vehicle, passengers should be immediately evacuated.

Remember, as a transit driver you are not expected to fight a fire. Attempt to use an extinguisher only if ***all*** of the following apply:

- Dispatch and emergency personnel have been contacted.
- The vehicle has been evacuated.
- The fire is small, contained and not spreading beyond its starting point.
- The exit is clear, there is no imminent peril, and you can extinguish the fire with your back to the exit.
- The proper extinguisher is immediately at hand.
- You can stay upwind or low and avoid smoke. Smoke inhalation must be avoided because even a small amount of toxic smoke can render you unconscious.
- You have been trained and know how to use the fire extinguisher.

Unless all of these conditions have been met, ***do not*** attempt to extinguish the fire yourself. Evacuate the bus, close the doors, but ***do not*** lock them, and disconnect the battery through the external battery shut-off access (if the bus is equipped with one and it is safe to do so).

Remember: You must report any use of a fire extinguisher. If you discharge an extinguisher or pull the pin for any reason, it must be recharged or replaced.

Evacuation Procedures

In general, passengers are safer and more secure if they remain on the vehicle. Evacuating the vehicle should be a last resort. However, you ***must*** evacuate if:

- A fire or other condition (leaking fuel) makes the vehicle unsafe.
- The position or location of the vehicle is dangerous and it cannot be moved.
- The driver is instructed to do so by system management, police or rescue personnel.

It's important that you have a clear process once a decision to evacuate is made. Speed and efficiency are vital, especially if there is the threat of fire.

- Assess the condition of escape routes and identify safe areas outside the vehicle.
- If it is necessary to evacuate through exit windows or roof hatches, identify passengers to assist both inside and outside the vehicle.
- Assess the condition of passengers to be evacuated and the amount/type of assistance required.
- Calmly inform passengers what you are going to do. Identify exits to use and a safety zone/ waiting area.
- Stress that passengers must assemble in the safety zone, well away from the vehicle and clear of traffic hazards.
- Ask for assistance from ambulatory passengers in evacuating passengers who are injured or disabled.
- Evacuate all ambulatory passengers first, except those who have agreed to assist in the evacuation of non-ambulatory passengers.

When evacuating the non-ambulatory passengers and passengers in wheelchairs:

- Use a web cutter to cut through all restraint belts.
- If the wheelchair door and the lift are operable, use the lift to evacuate non-ambulatory passengers. In an emergency, the lift may be operated manually by using a pump-handle tool.
- You can use the lift as a step for both ambulatory and non-ambulatory passengers by lowering it to an appropriate height.

If you must resort to drag-and-carry techniques to evacuate passengers:

- Use a web cutter to cut through seat belts restraining the passenger in his/her wheelchair.

Do not cut restraint belts holding the wheelchair in place; it will be left behind.

- Slide passenger out of his/her seat or wheelchair and onto a drag blanket (if available).
- Grab the corners of the blanket and drag or carry the person down the aisle and out the door or emergency exit.
- If a drag blanket is not available, grasp under the passenger's arms and gently pull him or her to safety. Alternatively, two people can work as a team, one under each arm.

When everyone is evacuated and accounted for, remain in a safe location away from the vehicle and other hazards and wait for emergency responders.

Acts of Nature

Different parts of the country experience different types and frequencies of acts of nature. Review your local emergency management plans. This will help you understand your local hazards and threats, as well as the plans in place to respond to them.

Earthquakes

Earthquakes can cause significant damage to roadways and buildings. Here are some guidelines to survive an earthquake:

- If you are on a transit vehicle when an earthquake occurs:
  - Ensure that the vehicle is not underneath any structure that could collapse onto it. Pull over and stop in a safe location and wait for tremors to end.
  - Be cautious of downed power lines and compromised buildings.
  - Afterwards, do not operate the transit vehicle over or under any structures (bridges, overpasses) as they could be in danger of collapse.
  - Avoid downed power lines.
- If indoors, drop, cover and hold on:
  - Find a location under a sturdy desk, doorway or closet that will protect you from falling objects and/or leave a void in the event of a building collapse.
  - Hold on and protect your head and neck.
  - After the shaking stops, evacuate the building and go to open ground.

After a major earthquake, transit resources and employees may be needed to support emergency response efforts. This may include facilitating evacuations, transporting casualties, transporting emergency response personnel and ferrying equipment or supplies. Check with dispatch for emergency orders.

Landslide or Avalanche

Landslides, mudslides and avalanches can engulf vehicles or sweep them from roadways.

- Never stop a transit vehicle in a known avalanche chute.
- Watch for tilted trees, telephone poles, fences or walls that could indicate an imminent mudflow or landslide.
- If a landslide or debris flow is imminent, move away from the path of the slide.

Wildfires

- Fire spreads most rapidly uphill and downwind, therefore never operate a vehicle along a roadway above an active wildfire.
- Notify dispatch if you see a wildfire. Discontinue service in impacted areas.
- Leave active wildfire areas immediately.

Tornadoes

The least desirable place to be in a tornado is in a motor vehicle. Buses are easily tossed by tornado winds. Do not try to outrun a tornado in a vehicle. If a tornado is seen:

- Exit and secure the vehicle.
- Guide passengers to the nearest substantial structure for cover.
- Avoid windows. If no structure is available, lay flat in a ditch or low-lying area. Get in the fetal position and protect your head with your arms.
- Stay away from downed or damaged utility lines. Be alert for low-hanging lines that can strike your vehicle. Assume that all downed lines are hot. Report the location of damaged utility lines to dispatch so they can notify the appropriate authorities.

Extra care is required in transit facilities or any building where a large group of people is concentrated in a small area. Inside a building:

- Move away from windows and glass doorways.
- Go to the innermost part of the building on the lowest possible floor.
- Do not use elevators because the power may fail, trapping people inside.
- Make your body as small a target as possible by crouching down or getting into the fetal position and protecting your head.

Severe Thunderstorms

In addition to making driving conditions treacherous, severe thunderstorms can create a variety of problems including flooding, downed trees and power lines, and power outages.

- If heavy rain accompanies thunderstorms, be alert for flooding situations.
- If a lightning storm is active in the vicinity, stay inside the vehicle or facility and away from windows. Avoid contact with anything that may conduct electricity.
- Stay away from downed or damaged utility lines. Be alert for low-hanging lines that can strike your vehicle. Assume all downed lines are hot. Report the location of damaged utility lines to dispatch so they can notify the appropriate authorities.
- Do not drive a vehicle through moving water that may be more than six inches deep.
- Do not drive a vehicle through standing water if near downed power lines.
- If a power line falls across the vehicle, keep passengers inside and drive away.

Flooding

- Listen to the radio or dispatch for flood information and warnings.
- Stay alert. Roads may be blocked or closed due to collapsed pavement or debris.
- Stay away from high water, storm drains, ditches, ravines and culverts.
- Do not drive across flooded roads or bridges — they may be washed out. If floodwaters are encountered, turn around and go another way.
- Be aware of any sudden increase or decrease in water level in a stream or creek that might indicate debris flow or damming that could affect nearby roads.
- Flash floods can strike with little or no warning. In mountainous or flat terrain, distant rain may be channeled into gullies and ravines becoming rampaging torrents in minutes.
- If the vehicle stalls in floodwaters, evacuate immediately and seek higher ground. Rapidly rising water may engulf the vehicle and its occupants. It takes only a foot of rapidly moving water to sweep away a vehicle.
- Stay away from downed or damaged utility lines. Report the location of damaged utility lines to your dispatcher so the appropriate authorities can be notified.

Hurricanes

Heed high wind and floodwater risks presented by hurricanes based on the Flooding guidelines.

Dust Storms

Dust storms can wreak havoc with visibility. Here are a few guidelines:

- If dense dust is observed blowing across or approaching, pull your vehicle off the road as far as possible, stop, turn off lights*, set the emergency brake and take your foot off of the brake pedal to be sure that the tail lights are not illuminated.
- If you can't pull off the roadway, proceed at a speed that visibility allows, turn on your lights and sound the horn occasionally. Use the painted centerline to help guide you. Look for a safe place to pull off the roadway.
- Do not stop on the traveled portion of the roadway.

Note:** In the past, motorists driving in dust storms have pulled off the roadway and left their lights on. Vehicles approaching from the rear and using the parked car's lights as a guide have inadvertently left the roadway and in some instances, collided with the parked vehicle. Make sure all of your lights are ***off if you park off the roadway.

Hazardous Materials

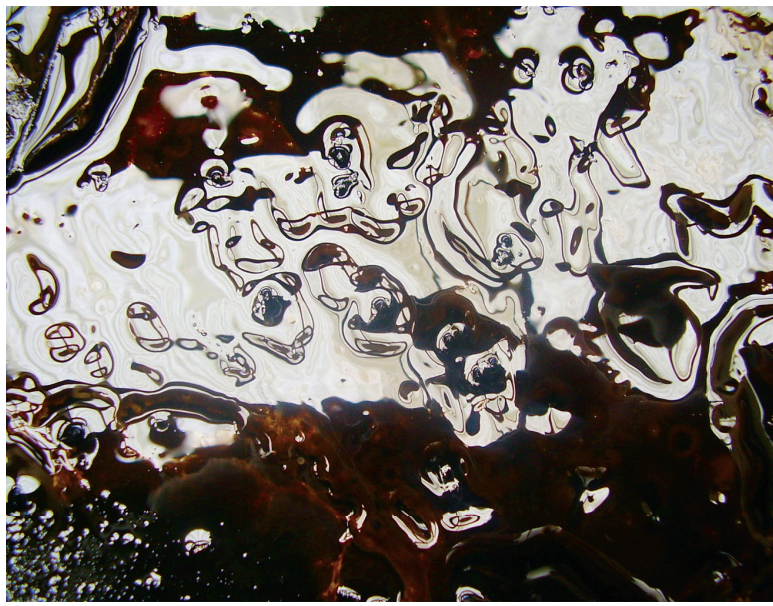
Chemical releases and Hazmat incidents can result from truck accidents or train derailments involving transportation of TICs. This section will examine the emergency response protocols for hazmat incidents including:

- Toxic Chemical Spills
- Fuel-related Events
- Natural Gas

As with all other emergencies, drivers should follow the **Seven Steps of Crisis Management** to help assess and respond to any hazardous material spills or leaks. Following are further specific actions to take as part of your response.

Decontamination

Exposure to chemical release may require decontamination of you, your passengers and your bus. First responders will advise you regarding required decontamination procedures. Individuals potentially exposed to toxic release will be kept at the scene and isolated to ensure that others are not contaminated.



Toxic Chemical Spills

Toxic chemicals can be dangerous if touched or inhaled. Different strategies should be implemented depending on where the spill occurs, and therefore situational assessment is important.

If a chemical release occurs outside your vehicle:

- Shelter in place by staying inside the vehicle.
- Shut all vehicle windows and turn off all vents and HVAC systems.
- If the vehicle can be safely moved, drive as far uphill and upwind as possible.
- Immediately report your location and all events to dispatch and the appropriate authorities.

If a chemical release occurs inside a vehicle:

- If the vehicle is in motion, immediately pull over to a safe location preferably in an area not crowded with people.

- Shut off the vehicle. Evacuate passengers to a location a minimum of 1,500 feet away from the vehicle, preferably upwind.
- Tell bystanders to stay away from the vehicle.
- When requesting or waiting for assistance, don't reenter the vehicle. Contact dispatch and emergency response and give the exact location of the vehicle. Provide all available details related to the incident.

Fuel-related Events

A petroleum-based flammable liquid fire (gasoline or diesel fuel) burns at the surface of the material as the fuel is vaporized by the fire or ambient heat. Applying water spreads the flaming liquid over a wider area where it vaporizes more rapidly and intensifies the fire.

The best way to put out this type of fire is to cut off its air supply or interrupt its chemical reaction. Common smothering agents used for petroleum fires are carbon dioxide (CO_2) and dry chemical powder extinguishers. Both are effective for flammable liquids but dry chemical powder is better for outdoor use because it is less subject to wind, has a longer range, and can extinguish burning pressurized leaks of gas and liquid.

If there is a fuel fire outside your vehicle:

- Move the vehicle a safe distance away.
- Keep the passengers inside the vehicle.
- Radio dispatch and emergency responders and inform them of the situation.

If your vehicle is leaking fuel:

- Shut off the vehicle.
- Immediately evacuate passengers and relocate them a safe distance away.
- Radio dispatch to contact emergency responders and provide your location and information on the situation.

Remember: A fuel-related fire can spread rapidly and is best handled by professionals.

Natural Gas

Natural gas has a different hazard profile than liquid fuels such as gasoline or diesel. Two properties that affect its hazard profile and subsequent emergency response are its gaseous state and its storage pressure and temperature.

In the case of a natural gas leak or release:

- Evacuate people and property from the vicinity of the release.

- Move upwind from any actual or suspected gas leaks or gas releases.
- Call 911 to alert first responders to the incident.
- Prevent ignition. If natural gas is or has been released, the scene must be surveyed for ignition sources and ignition sources must be removed or mitigated.
- Be wary of static electricity. It's a potential ignition source.
- Ventilate enclosed areas.

Critical Infrastructure

Many things can cause temporary or extended loss of power and communication services. When operating your vehicle under such circumstances:

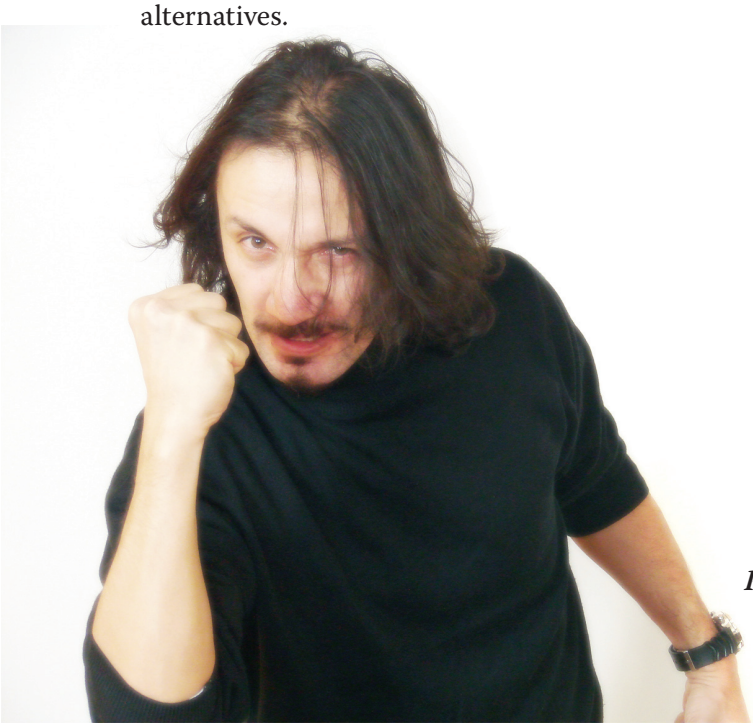
- Continue to operate your route/shift within the limits of reasonable safety.
- Treat all inoperable stoplights as four-way stops.
- If possible, get an estimate of how long power will be out and how widespread the affected area is.

Different, Difficult and Dangerous Passengers

As discussed previously, as a driver you will frequently encounter passengers who are different from you. Some passengers will prove to be difficult and a very small percentage may escalate to dangerous behavior.

Remain calm when dealing with difficult passengers. Avoid arguing and don't take the other person's remarks personally. Sensitivity and sincerity can go a long way in defusing conflicts. Some additional potentially helpful strategies include:

- Assess the passenger and consider:
  - Cognitive disabilities
  - Physical disabilities
  - Language barriers
  - Adolescence
  - Senility
  - Signs and symptoms of drug or alcohol usage
- Listen to the difficult passenger to understand the problem:
  - Focus on the problem, not the passenger.
  - Place no blame and do not make excuses.
  - Repeat your understanding of the problem to the passenger.
  - Encourage the passenger to suggest a solution to the problem.
  - If the solution is workable, consider it.
  - If the solution is unrealistic, suggest alternatives.
  - Engage your dispatcher, supervisor or system management to help resolve the problem.
  - Be friendly and fair, but firm, especially on safety-related issues.



If a passenger seems to be moving from difficult to dangerous, you will need to take extra care. Recommended tactics for dealing with dangerous passengers include:

- Stay calm and maintain control — do not overreact.
- Behave in a non-threatening manner, in body language, speech and tone of voice.
- Try to establish a relationship using empathy.
- Paraphrase the difficult person's concern to show that you understand it and are concerned about the problem.
- Discretely try to alert your dispatcher.
- Use a panic button, if available, or a predetermined radio alert codeword.
- Do not allow new passengers on board.
- If you're driving, let the dangerous person know verbally what you are going to do before you do it.
- If a weapon is suggested or evident, make no sudden, threatening movements. Do not grab at the weapon.
- If possible, park the vehicle in a well lit, public place and open the doors.
- Allow the dangerous person to leave the vehicle — do not pursue the person.
- If violence is directed toward another passenger, immediately contact dispatch or 911 and give the following information:
  - Your vehicle's location.
  - The nature of the incident. If it is a life safety issue, be clear about the threat and the need for police intervention.
  - A description of the threatening individual.
  - A description of any weapons, if suspected or evident.

Remember: In a dangerous situation, it is important that you maintain self-control. The passengers will look to you for calm leadership and to keep them safe. You are not expected to be a hero but simply a professional.

Be On the Look Out (BOLO)

As a transit driver you are the eyes and ears of the community and a first line of defense against crime and terrorism. **Be On the Look Out** (BOLO) for suspicious people, activities, vehicles, packages and substances. Since you are familiar with your operating area you are in an ideal position to recognize anything that seems out of place. Trust your instincts and report to dispatch anything suspicious or potentially dangerous.

BOLO for suspicious people:

- On your system's property:
  - In an unauthorized or restricted area
  - Without proper ID, uniform or safety gear
  - Taking photos of equipment or facilities
  - Expressing an unusual level of interest in operations, equipment and personnel
- Out in the community or riding your bus:
  - Who are pacing, nervous or jumpy
  - Loitering, staring or watching employees and customers
  - Acting in a disorderly manner, alarming or disturbing others
  - Quickly exiting an area or vehicle after abandoning a package
  - Carrying a weapon or suspected of carrying a weapon.

Note: Laws governing concealed carried weapons vary from state to state.

Criminal Activity

As part of your transit duties it is possible that you may come into contact with a criminal or witness criminal activities. Using the **BOLO** method with the **Seven Steps of Crisis Management** will allow you to handle these situations. Some tips to help you respond to witnessing suspicious people include:

- Note their physical characteristics:
  - Head — eyes, ears, hair and facial hair, mouth, nose, forehead, cheeks, chin, complexion, jewelry, hat
  - Body — neck, arms, chest, stomach, shirt, thin, medium, or heavy set
  - Legs — slacks, skirt, belt, feet, socks, shoes
  - Appearance — height, weight, gender, neat or sloppy, packages, accessories
  - Unique characteristics — scars, tattoos, birthmarks or other identifying characteristics
- Note his or her direction of travel, description of their vehicle and license plate.
- Report your observations to the dispatcher.

Violence or Weapons on the Vehicle

- Stay calm and maintain control. Do not overreact to the situation.
- Behave in a non-threatening way through both voice and actions.
- Look for ways to defuse the situation.
- Look for ways to alert the dispatcher.
- If possible, park the vehicle in a public place.
- Open the bus's doors.
- Make every effort to allow passengers to exit the vehicle whenever possible.
- If there are no passengers on-board, look for a way to escape the vehicle.
- If the antagonist leaves the bus, do not pursue him or her.
- If a weapon is involved, do not attempt to grab it or make any sudden movements.
- If driving, let the assailant know verbally each move being made, such as turns, lane changes, stops, etc.
- Make every effort to cooperate with the assailant and make the assailant feel no resistance.
- If violence is directed toward a passenger, immediately contact the dispatcher and intervene only if safe to do so.
- Provide information to the dispatcher including the vehicle's location, the nature of the incident, description of the assailant(s), and any weapons involved.
- Complete the required forms and documentation consistent with your system's accident procedures.

Hostage Situation

Steps to avoid or deal with a vehicle being commandeered include:

- While approaching pick up/drop off points, survey the area for suspicious people/activities.
- If suspicious people/activities are present, immediately report your concerns to dispatch and drive the vehicle out of the area.
- Do not open the doors if a suspicious individual approaches your vehicle while it is stopped. Instead, communicate with the individual through a window until determining the proper action.
- If a suspicious individual is seen at a railroad crossing, do not open bus doors. Examine the tracks through a window and move on when it is safe to do so. Contact your dispatcher.
- Avoid allowing individuals suspected of carrying a weapon or a suspicious or dangerous package to board. Contact your dispatcher immediately.
- If an individual with a concealed weapon is aboard your vehicle, act as if the weapon was not noticed.
- Do not confront the individual. Stay calm and focused. If possible, notify dispatch using predetermined codes.
- If your vehicle is commandeered, follow the hijacker's instructions and avoid confrontation. Remain calm and show no signs of panic.
- In the event that the vehicle is commandeered while parked, open all the doors and keep them open to allow an opportunity for passengers to exit. If it seems appropriate, ask the perpetrator if passengers can exit.
- In the event that your vehicle is commandeered while in motion, stay on the route but do not stop at the usual stops. Waiting passengers might alert dispatch.
- Attempt to alert the authorities but take no action that would increase the risk to you and your passengers.
- Talk to the hijacker and try to create a relationship. Do not antagonize him/her. Be clear about what you can and cannot do to fulfill his/her demands. Some requests may be out of your control.
- Await emergency response, or if possible, find a way to escape.

Terroristic Threats

In today's world, terrorism dominates news coverage and raises concerns about domestic security. In reality, terrorist attacks are rare events. Nevertheless, it's important for all transit employees to be aware of the threat of terrorism and alert to possible "warning signs" of a terrorist attack.

Alert Codes

Some transit systems have a pre-established alert code using bus location, direction and time such as, "Dispatch, this bus 224. Standard location check — Southbound on 6th Street at Hopper. Time check 10:42. Copy?" If trained and practiced, this can be used to alert dispatch to on-board threats without alerting the perpetrator.

Transit Watch

Transit Watch was developed by the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) in the aftermath of the 9/11 attacks and encourages transit employees, transit riders and community members to be aware of their surroundings and alert to activities, packages or situations that seem suspicious. If you see something that seems out of the ordinary and potentially dangerous, it should be immediately reported to dispatch who will take the appropriate actions and/or notify the appropriate authorities.

Focus on Behavior

When making observations of possible criminal or terrorist activity, keep in mind that suspicion is based on behavior such as:

- Where someone is
- When or why he or she is there
- What he or she is doing

Suspicion is not based on:

- Color, ethnicity, nationality or religion

Suspicious packages: HOT Items

*The following is adapted from guidance created by the London Underground and the British Transport Police.

One challenge facing drivers and other transit employees is making the distinction between ordinary lost and found items and potential terrorist weapons such as improvised explosive devices (IEDs) and chemical, biological or radiological dispersal devices that can be disguised as ordinary items.

What to look for — The Seven Signs of Terrorism

1. Surveillance — *Someone photographing or monitoring daily activities*
2. Obtaining Information — *by mail, fax, internet, telephone or in person*
3. Running Security Tests — *attempts to enter secure or "employees only" areas*
4. Acquiring Weapons or Supplies — *purchasing or stealing weapons, explosives, chemicals, electrical components, uniforms or IDs*
5. Suspicious Persons Out of Place — *people who do not seem to belong in the area*
6. Conducting a "Dry Run" — *rehearsals or test runs of the plan*
7. Deploying Assets — *moving people, vehicles, weapons or devices into position*

While odds say it is a lost and found item, how do you know for sure? The **HOT** system is a useful analytical approach.

Is it ***H***idden?

- Has there been an apparent attempt to hide or conceal the item?
- Was the item found in an area inconvenient, out of easy reach or unusual?
- Was the item abandoned by someone who was seen leaving the area?

Is it ***O***bviously suspicious? Does it have:

- Stains, leaks, oily or powdery residue
- A strange odor
- A threatening message attached
- Visible wires, battery, tanks or bottles
- A clock, cell phone or timer attached
- A ticking, buzzing or sloshing sound

Is it ***T***ypical for the environment?

- Is it an item you would expect passengers to carry?
- Does anyone claim ownership of the item?
- Is there an identification tag on the item?
- Is it explainable for the time, place and clientele?

After using the **HOT** test do you have a bad feeling about the item? Does your instinct tell you something might be wrong? If so, you should trust your instinct and treat the item as suspicious. The recommended response to suspicious packages includes:

- Do not touch, move or cover the object.
- Do not use a radio or cell phone in the vicinity if you suspect an explosive.
- If there is immediate danger, remain calm and evacuate far away from the vehicle or the area.
- Attempt to isolate and secure the area.
- Do not reenter your vehicle once you have evacuated everyone.
- Provide notification through appropriate channels — use a cell phone if the bus radio is no longer available — and give a description of the package or device and its location.
- Await direction from your dispatcher, management or emergency responders.

Response to a toxic chemical release includes:

- Shut down HVAC systems on the vehicle or in the facility to avoid spreading contamination.
- Do not touch, move or cover the substance.
- Remain calm and evacuate everyone from the affected area.
- Attempt to isolate and secure the area.
- Do not re-enter a contaminated area once you have evacuated everyone.
- Report the situation to dispatch including your location, the number of victims, a description of the substance, and any symptoms displayed by the victims.
- Await direction from management or emergency responders.

Case Study 3 — Accident

You have three passengers on your bus. One passenger is a middle-aged war veteran who is paralyzed from the waist down. He uses a powered wheelchair. The second passenger is an elderly woman who is ambulatory but is hearing impaired. The third passenger is a young man with cognitive disabilities. You know from past experience that he gets very upset if his daily routine is interrupted.

It is 4:00 PM and the city is experiencing temperatures over 100 degrees. While stopped at a red light, you glance in your rear view mirror and see a car coming up behind you at a high speed. Before you can take action, the car slams into the rear of your bus. The impact pushes your bus into the intersection where a second car, with brakes squealing, slides into the right side of your bus. This effectively blocks the entrance door and the wheelchair lift. In the aftermath of the collision, you realize that the elderly woman and the young man have been thrown out of their seats and are apparently injured.

Elect one member of your group to write down your responses to the following:

- List the challenges and problems you would anticipate in this accident scenario.
- Develop a list of action steps you would take in response to the accident. List the steps in order of priority.
- What resources (responders) will you need at the scene to assist you? Choose one member of your group to make a simulated radio call to the dispatcher to report the accident and request assistance.

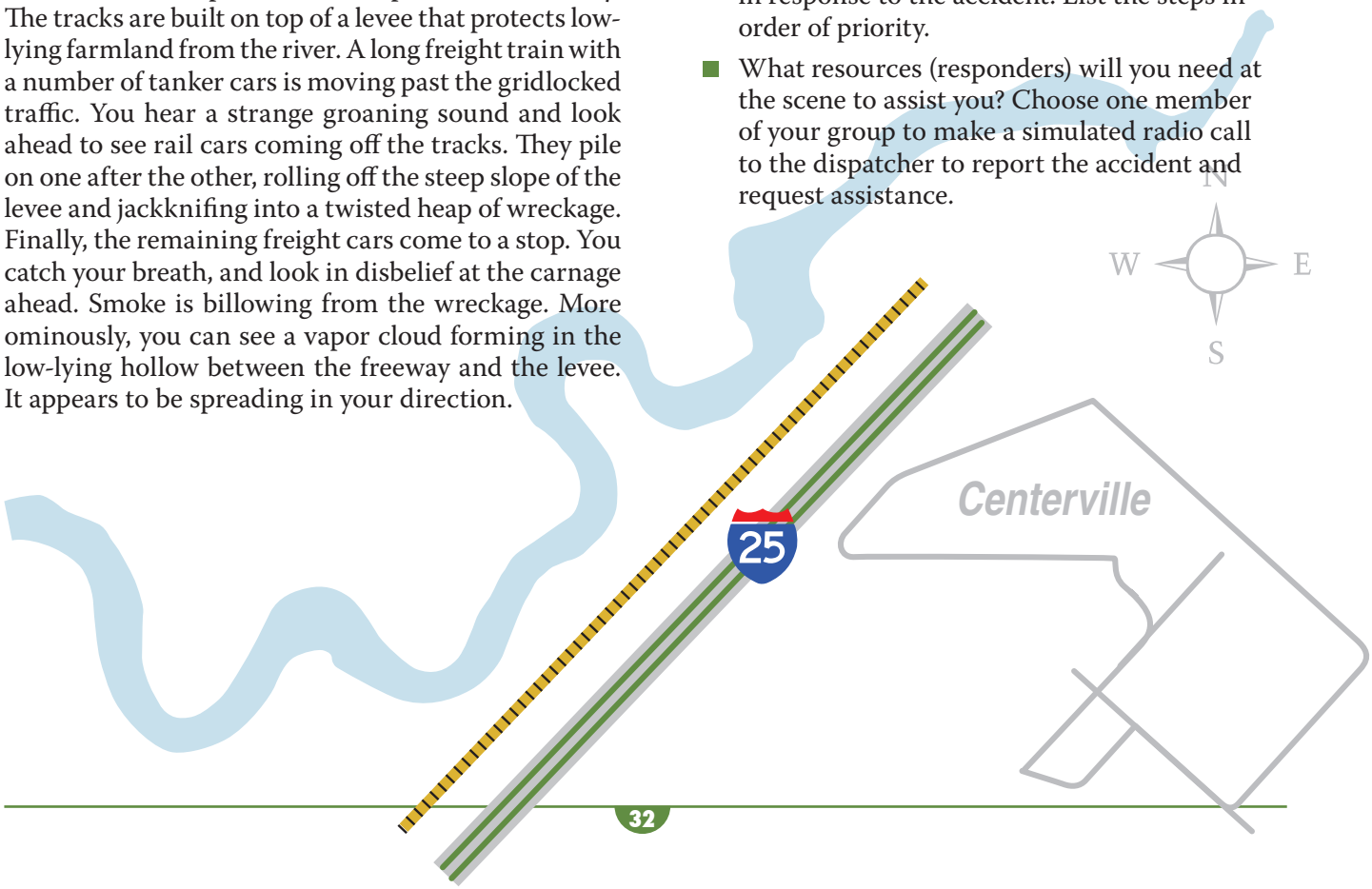
Case Study 4 — Hazmat

It's about 4:00 PM and you have 10 passengers on board. Both your wheelchair positions are occupied. You are moving along the freeway very slowly. Traffic is bumper-to-bumper due to a heavy snowstorm. The roads are very slippery.

Train tracks run parallel to this part of the freeway. The tracks are built on top of a levee that protects low-lying farmland from the river. A long freight train with a number of tanker cars is moving past the gridlocked traffic. You hear a strange groaning sound and look ahead to see rail cars coming off the tracks. They pile on one after the other, rolling off the steep slope of the levee and jackknifing into a twisted heap of wreckage. Finally, the remaining freight cars come to a stop. You catch your breath, and look in disbelief at the carnage ahead. Smoke is billowing from the wreckage. More ominously, you can see a vapor cloud forming in the low-lying hollow between the freeway and the levee. It appears to be spreading in your direction.

Elect one member of your group to write down your responses to the following:

- List the challenges and problems you would anticipate in this accident scenario
- Develop a list of action steps you would take in response to the accident. List the steps in order of priority.
- What resources (responders) will you need at the scene to assist you? Choose one member of your group to make a simulated radio call to the dispatcher to report the accident and request assistance.



Case Study 5 — Difficult/Dangerous Passenger

You are driving your regular route that serves a senior center, medical facilities and a shopping mall. From time to time you pick up a passenger at a retirement home who causes you some concern. He enters into long diatribes — to no one in particular — about the government, taxes and corruption. He sometimes uses profanities and ethnic slurs. In the past you have asked him to tone it down and be respectful of the other passengers. His response was to continue the inappropriate ramblings, but more quietly to himself.

Today, he boards and joins two other passengers, both elderly women. Soon, he starts talking loudly. You ask him politely to lower his voice to which he replies, "This is a free country. I can say whatever I want. I know my First Amendment rights!" You remind him again, politely, that if he does not comply with customer conduct rules he could be refused service. He replies by saying, "Oh yeah? Who's going to refuse me service? You? I also have Second Amendment rights, you know!" You look in the mirror and see him reach into his fanny pack and pull out an automatic pistol. He is cradling it in his lap. You are heading toward the shopping center and are scheduled to be there in about five minutes.

Elect one member of your group to record your responses to the following:

- List the challenges and problems you would anticipate in this scenario.
- Develop a list of action steps you would take in response to the scenario. Put the steps in order of priority.
- What resources (responders) will you need to assist you? How will you contact your dispatcher?

Chapter 3 Quick Quiz: Emergency Procedures

1. **If you have to clean up vomit or some other bodily fluid spill, you should:**
   A. Immediately put on the disposable gloves found in the biohazard kit
   B. Cover the spill area with the disinfectant found in the biohazard kit
   C. Carefully place contaminated materials in the biohazard bag
   D. Thoroughly wash hands with soap and hot running water as soon as possible
   E. All of the above

2. **In an emergency situation you may have to evacuate your vehicle. You should evacuate your vehicle only if:**
   A. Instructed to do so by dispatch
   B. Instructed to do so by your passengers
   C. Remaining in place presents a greater hazard than leaving the vehicle
   D. The vehicle is lying on its side

3. **When dealing with a dangerous passenger:**
   A. Remain calm and controlled
   B. Tell the passengers what you are going to do before you do it
   C. If possible, utilize the designated radio code or the panic button to notify dispatch of a potential problem
   D. If possible, park the vehicle in a well lit public area and open the doors so the dangerous passenger can exit the vehicle
   E. All of the above

4. **If you find a package that is emitting strange sounds, smells, liquids or otherwise appears suspicious, you should:**
   A. Grab the package and move it to a nearby dumpster
   B. Immediately take out your cell phone and notify dispatch
   C. Try to determine what the device is by picking it up and shaking it
   D. Calmly evacuate the area and notify dispatch with a description and the location of the package

5. **If you observe two or more people outside your vehicle experiencing difficulty breathing, uncontrollable coughing, collapse, seizure, nausea, blurred vision or disorientation, you should:**
   A. Call police to request assistance
   B. Immediately evacuate your vehicle
   C. Try to determine the source and location of the problem so you can solve it
   D. Shut down the vehicle's HVAC systems, and if possible, relocate the vehicle uphill and upwind, and report the situation to dispatch

Conclusion

Based on the guidelines in this manual and following the **Seven Steps of Crisis Management**, transit drivers can calmly and coolly manage any emergency they may face on the road. A professional transit driver is responsible for his/her own life and health, the lives of his/her passengers, the vehicle, and property belonging to the transit agency. This is a large responsibility but it is all in the good hands of the properly trained professional transit operator.

Additional Training to Consider

As a professional driver your agency may have already provided training on many of the following topics. They represent core rural transit driver training.

- Agency/system orientation
- Human resources policies
- Drug and alcohol policy
- Driver operating rules and performance measures
- Driver health and wellness
- Vehicle orientation and pre-trip inspection process
- Defensive driving
- Seatbelt use
- Railroad crossing procedures
- Vehicle rollover prevention
- Internal and external customer service
- Passenger assistance and sensitivity training
- Lift operation, wheelchair handling and securement
- Emergency procedures and evacuation
- Accident and incident reporting
- System security awareness
- Supervised route and in-service (on-the-job) training

NIMS and ICS

It is beneficial that transit employees, as a first responder resource, be certified in the Incident Command System (ICS) and the National Incident Management System (NIMS). Established by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, NIMS and ICS provide a consistent nationwide approach to managing critical incidents. The online independent study courses cover key concepts in emergency management including organizational structure, chain of command, common communication and information management systems. These interactive on-line courses, required for transit drivers, are available at:

http://www.training.fema.gov/emiweb/is/is100.asp

http://training.fema.gov/emiweb/is/is700a.asp

CPR and First Aid

Depending on your agency's policies, your system may provide CPR and first aid training to employees. CPR and first aid training can be useful skills for transit employees in case of emergency. For more information, contact your agency's human resource supervisor, your local fire protection district and/or a local community college. You can also look up Red Cross classes at: **www.redcross.org**.

Note:

Many of these standard operating and emergency procedures are included in National RTAP's ***Safety Training And Rural Transit (START)*** *training module available for free from your state RTAP or online at* **www.NationalRTAP.org**.

Pre-trip Forms — Sample from Wyoming

TRANSIT VEHICLE DAILY INSPECTION REPORT

Transit System _____Vehicle #_____
Odometer Reading: Beginning _____ Ending_____
Date _____Time _____a.m. _____p.m.

Inspect Items Listed - If Defective, Number & Describe In Remarks Section

Under Hood
( ) _____Oil level
( ) _____Coolant level (cold)
( ) _____Windshield washer fluid level
( ) _____Transmission fluid level
( ) _____Brake fluid level
( ) _____Engine/hoses/belts
( ) _____Battery cables

Exterior
( ) _____Leaks under bus
( ) _____Fresh body damage
( ) _____Cleanliness
( ) _____Headlights
( ) _____Tail/brake lights
( ) _____Turn signal lights
( ) _____Hazard flashers
( ) _____Clearance lights (if applicable)
( ) _____Signage lights (if applicable)
( ) _____Tires/Wheels
( ) _____Tail pipe
( ) _____Battery box (closed)
( ) _____Windshield
( ) _____Windshield wipers
( ) _____ Radio antenna
( ) _____Mirrors/adjustment

Interior
( ) _____Mirrors/adjustment
( ) _____Service Door(s)
( ) _____Stepwell(s)
( ) _____Floor
( ) _____ Seats
( ) _____Seat belts
( ) _____Brakes
( ) _____Steering
( ) _____Securement straps
( ) _____Passenger belts
( ) _____Transmission
( ) _____Gauges/instrument displays
( ) _____ Equipment controls
(Heater/AC/fan/lights/signs)
( ) _____Radio
( ) _____Radio check with base

Safety Equipment
( ) _____Fire Extinguisher
( ) _____First aid kit
( ) _____Bio-hazard kit
( ) _____Triangles
( ) _____Horn
( ) _____Back-up alarm
( ) _____Door open buzzer
( ) _____Emergency windows (latched)
( ) _____Emergency door
( ) _____Roof escape hatch

Wheelchair Access Equipment & Securement
( ) _____Lift door
( ) _____Lift operation (do one cycle)
( ) _____Hydraulic leaks
( ) _____Lift platform
( ) _____Front/rear safety guards
( ) _____Handrail
( ) _____Securement attachment points

Sample from Texas

Pre-Trip Inspection Checklist

Procedure	Yes	No	Comments / Technician Referral
1. Walk around inspection			
2. Under vehicle check			
3. Tires			
4. Batteries			
5. Belts & Hoses			
6. Fluids (-transmission)			
Radiator			Added_____qts.
Oil			Added_____qts.
Power Steering			Added_____qts.
Windshield Wash			Added_____qts.
7. Cycle Lift			
8. Transmission Fluid			Added_____qts.
9. Lights / Signals			
10. Inside Vehicle			
11. Documentation			
12. Fuel			Added_____gal.




PLACE AN X TO INDICATE BODY DAMAGE

Vehicle #	Completed By	Signature	Date

Texas Department of Transportation. *Maintenance Manual Information Systems (MMIS)*. 2000.

Sample From Minnesota

Bus/Vehicle # _____ Date:_____
Driver 1 _____ Driver 2 _____

Miles (Start Yard) _____ Miles (Start Yard) _____
_____
Miles (Start Route) _____ Miles (Start Route) _____
_____
Miles (End Route) _____ Miles (End Route) _____
_____
Miles (End Yard) _____ Miles (End Yard) _____
_____

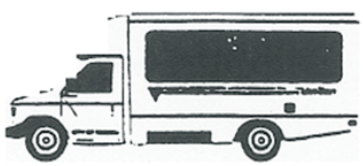
Daily Check List	Check (√)	If Defective, Mark X	All defects must be described on bottom of DRB		
Items to Check	Driver 1	Driver 2	Items to Check	Driver 1	Driver 2
Belts/Hoses			A/C Heater/Defroster		
Power Steering Fluid			Passenger Door		
Oil Level			Emergency Exits/Lights		
Water Coolant Level			Fire Extinguisher		
Water/Oil Leaks			Emergency Reflectors		
Tires/Lug Nuts			First Aid/Accident Kit		
Head Lamps			Wheel Chair Restraints		
Turn Signals			W/C Interlock System		
Hazard Lights			W/C Lift		
Clearance Lights			Hand Rails		
Brake Lights			Seatbelts		
Backup Lights			Modesty Panels		
Glass (All) & Mirror			Registration		
Clean Exterior			Insurance Information		
Proper Decals			Radio		
Brake Pedal			Horn		
Emergency Brake			Clean Interior		
Backup Beeper			Farebox		
Gauge: Oil Pressure			Drivers Seat		
Gauges: Volt, Fuel, Temp			Passenger Seats		
Wipers/Washers			Other:		

Body Damage Description:

_____

_____



Defect and brief explanation or other comments:

Sample from Utah DOT

DAILY PRE-TRIP INSPECTION

V.I.N. # (Last 4 digits)_____ AM____ PM____ Mileage_____

I have personally inspected this vehicle and do hereby certify that all items are safe, repaired or replaced and meet safety standards

Signed: _____ Date:_____

CHECKLIST	PASS	FAIL	PROBLEM / ACTION TAKEN
WALK AROUND INSPECTION: (Set parking brake)			
Observe under vehicle for any leaks or obstructions			
Note any dents, scratches or other damage (tampering)			
Muffler condition and securement			
***Check tire pressures**			
***Check tire treads - 2/32" rear - 4/32" front** (including spare)			
Wheels – bent, loose or missing lug nuts & mud flaps			
***LIGHTS – head – turn signals – tail - brake – hazard – reverse**			
Clearance, marker, boarding, license, interior lights & reflectors			
Doors – driver and entrance			
Adjust mirrors (ability to view rear tires as well as traffic essential)			
OPEN HOOD:			
***Check/fill with correct motor oil**			
***Radiator overflow container level**			
***Fluids at proper level: □ Brake □ Steering**			
***Windshield washer fluid**			
Battery housing and connections			
Visible drive belts, wires and hoses			
Windshield – condition and cleanliness			
START ENGINE:			
***Transmission fluid level**			
***Gauges working**			
***Windshield wipers and blades**			
***Horn**			
***Defroster**			
□ Heater □ Air conditioner			
Steering wheel (no more than 2" of play in a 20" wheel)			
***Emergency brake stops free rolling vehicle**			
***Wheelchair lift /cycle & locate bar for manual operation**			
***Back up beeper**			
***Fire extinguisher – correctly charged, dated & secured**			
***First aid kit – proper items & replenished**			
***Blood pathogen kit – required items**			
***3 reflectors: complete and in red box**			
Seats & handrails, condition and secure			
***Seat belts – functioning**			
***Seat belt cutter – preferably in reach of driver**			
***Exit windows, roof hatch functioning (open min. every 90 days)**			
Current insurance I.D.			
Current registration & safety inspection sticker			
Vehicle free of loose objects.			
Overall cleanliness of vehicle			

All bolded / asterisked * items must pass or vehicle should not be driven – report pre-trip daily to supervisor. Vehicle should be kept in a secure location and locked every day.

Sample from Utah

VEHICLE PRE-TRIP INSPECTION

V.I.N. (Last four digits)_____ Date_____Time_____am pm

Inspector Signature_____Job Title_____

Before starting engine--observe and correct as necessary:

Component Cond./Operation				
Good	Needs Repair/ Replcmnt	N/A		
•	•	•	1.	All lights operable (headlamps, park and marker, brake, turn signal, tail, hazard, interior).
•	•	•	2.	Body and bumper damage - loose or protruding parts.
•	•	•	3.	Wheels - bent, loose, or missing lug nuts.
•	•	•	4.	Tires - inflation, damage, and tread depth (incl. spare).
•	•	•	5.	Jack, jack handle, and lug wrench.
•	•	•	6.	Flares, fire extinguisher, and first aid kit.
•	•	•	7.	Windows and mirrors (clean and properly adjusted).
•	•	•	8.	Doors' operation (include emergency exit).
•	•	•	9.	Clean (steps, step wells, floor, seats, and handrails).
•	•	•	10.	Seats and wheelchair locks' condition, proper operation, securely anchored.
•	•	•	11.	Fluid levels (radiator, engine oil, power steering, battery electrolyte and windshield washer solution.
•	•	•	12.	Drive belts condition and tension.
•	•	•	13.	Visible wiring condition.
•	•	•	14.	Wiper blades and arms condition.

Start engine and observe for proper operation--correct as necessary:

•	•	•	1.	Instruments/warning lights (amperage/voltage, temp., fuel, oil, brakes, signal, emergency flasher).
•	•	•	2.	Abnormal drive-train noise.
•	•	•	3.	Windshield wiper and washer.
•	•	•	4.	Heater, defrosting, ventilator, and air conditioner.
•	•	•	5.	Wheelchair lift/ramp.
•	•	•	6.	Radio and public address systems.
•	•	•	7.	Service and parking brakes.
•	•	•	8.	Fuel level gauge.
•	•	•	9.	Observe under-carriage and ground surface under vehicle for visible fluid leakage.
•	•	•	10.	Steering (loose, binding).
•	•	•	11.	Mirror adjustment.
•	•	•	12.	Transmission shift lever.
•	•	•	13.	Transmission shift points.
•	•	•	14.	Clutch (standard transmission).

(OVER)

Sample from Utah, continued

OCCURRENCES IN/ABOUT VEHICLE

TIME (Hour, Min.)	DESCRIBE

Sample from North Carolina

PRE-TRIP INSPECTION SHEET

Driver:_____Date:_____

Vehicle #:_____Route #:_____Odometer:_____

1. ENGINE COMPARTMENT

Oil level	____OK	____N/Attn.	Coolant level	____OK	____N/Attn.
Power steering fluid	____OK	____N/Attn.	Brake fluid	____OK	____N/Attn.
Battery fluid	____OK	____N/Attn.	Transmission fluid	____OK	____N/Attn.
Windshield washer fluid	____OK	____N/Attn.	Fan belts	____OK	____N/Attn.
Radiator hoses	____OK	____N/Attn.	Power steering hoses	____OK	____N/Attn.
Air conditioning hoses	____OK	____N/Attn.	Wiring insulation	____OK	____N/Attn.

2. DRIVER'S AREA – ENGINE RUNNING

Engine noise	____OK	____N/Attn.	Instrument gauges	____OK	____N/Attn.
Steering wheel "play"	____OK	____N/Attn.	Accelerator	____OK	____N/Attn.
Shift lever	____OK	____N/Attn.	Horn	____OK	____N/Attn.
Windshield wiper/Washer	____OK	____N/Attn.	Light switches	____OK	____N/Attn.
Air conditioning/Heater	____OK	____N/Attn.	Emergency equipment -	____OK	____N/Attn.
Front	____OK	____N/Attn.	spare fuses, first aid kit,		
Rear	____OK	____N/Attn.	fire extinguisher, reflective		
Fire suppression/CNG detection test	____OK	____N/Attn.	triangles		

3. LIGHTS – OPERATION AND CLEANING

Low beam	____OK	____N/Attn.	Four-way flashers	____OK	____N/Attn.
High beam	____OK	____N/Attn.	Instrument panel	____OK	____N/Attn.
Front turn signal	____OK	____N/Attn.	Dome/Courtesy	____OK	____N/Attn.
Rear turn signal	____OK	____N/Attn.	Parking/Clearance lights	____OK	____N/Attn.
Destination signal	____OK	____N/Attn.	Brake lights	____OK	____N/Attn.
Front	____OK	____N/Attn.	Passenger door	____OK	____N/Attn.
Side	____OK	____N/Attn.	Back-up lights	____OK	____N/Attn.
Keypad	____OK	____N/Attn.	License plate	____OK	____N/Attn.

4. GENERAL WALK-AROUND

Overall body condition	____OK	____N/Attn.	Cleanliness – inside/outside	____OK	____N/Attn.
Windshield clean	____OK	____N/Attn.	Rear wheels/lug nuts	____OK	____N/Attn.
Leaks – oil, water, fuel	____OK	____N/Attn.	Rear tires – proper pressure	____OK	____N/Attn.
Rear view mirrors	____OK	____N/Attn.	Front tires/lug nuts	____OK	____N/Attn.
Exhaust system – no leaks	____OK	____N/Attn.	Front tires – proper pressure	____OK	____N/Attn.
Wood trim (trolley)	____OK	____N/Attn.			

5. BRAKES AND SUSPENSION

Parking brake	____OK	____N/Attn.	Springs – front/rear	____OK	____N/Attn.
Service brake – leaks,	____OK	____N/Attn.	Shocks – front/rear	____OK	____N/Attn.
unequal pulling, needs			Front end alignment	____OK	____N/Attn.
adjustment			Air brake test	____OK	____N/Attn.

6. PASSENGER AREA

Entry steps secure	____OK	____N/Attn.	Handrails secure	____OK	____N/Attn.
Seats secure	____OK	____N/Attn.	Seat belts	____OK	____N/Attn.
Emergency exits	____OK	____N/Attn.	Roof hatches	____OK	____N/Attn.
Cargo secure	____OK	____N/Attn.			

7. WHEELCHAIR LIFT

Access door	____OK	____N/Attn.	Lift operation switch	____OK	____N/Attn.
Hydraulic fluid levels	____OK	____N/Attn.	Tie-down straps	____OK	____N/Attn.
Electrical controls	____OK	____N/Attn.	Manual controls	____OK	____N/Attn.

Additional Resources

Your state department of transportation, state RTAP programs and our national partners have additional programs and services to assist with safety training and development:

AASHTO
www.transportation.org

Community Transportation Association of America
www.ctaa.org

National Rural Transit Assistance Program
www.NationalRTAP.org

National Safety Council
www.nsc.org

National Transit Institute
www.NTIonline.com

Project Action
http://ProjectAction.easterseals.com

State DOTs
www.fhwa.dot.gov/webstate.htm

Transportation Safety Institute
www.tsi.dot.gov

West Virginia Spider Project
www.transportation.wv.gov/publictransit/safety/Pages/default.aspx

Supplementary Reading:

Safety Training and Rural Transit (START) Module from National RTAP

START Learner's Guide:
http://portal.nationalrtap.org/iframe/getfile.aspx?id=184

START Instructor's Guide:
http://portal.nationalrtap.org/iframe/getfile.aspx?id=171

Notes