

## Snapshot Size-Up #123



### Safe Work Zones (Highway Incidents)

Approximately one-sixth of all annual fire responses are vehicle fires on Highways, causing more than 2,000 civilian injuries and deaths and nearly 1,100 firefighter injuries each year. Vehicle accidents on highways threaten the lives of first responders. When arriving on the scene of an incident on a highway, traffic control and the establishment of a safe work zone are paramount. Firefighters should begin by approaching with caution and sizing up the area. They should lookout for spills, victims, downed wires and other hazards that may have resulted from or caused the incident. Beware of curious drivers. Never assume traffic has ceased . Respect the reaction delays and stopping distances outlined below.

Speed	Stopping distance	Reaction delay	Total stopping distance
20 mph	20 feet	22 feet	42 feet
40 mph	80 feet	44 feet	124 feet
60 mph	180 feet	66 feet	246 feet

When establishing a Safe Zone, take the following actions:

1. Dress in reflective gear and use warning devices such as cones, reflectors, hand lights, apparatus lights and/or flares (If flares, be aware of flammable liquid runoff).
2. Use apparatus to block the lane closest to the vehicle fire.
3. Position your Command Vehicle to alert oncoming traffic and protect firefighters.
4. Position apparatus defensively, in between moving vehicles & firefighters. (block traffic with at least two apparatus).
5. The first Engine should be used as a blocker.
6. The Second apparatus should be used as a shadow vehicle for additional protection.
7. Position pump panels away from traffic
8. Conduct operations from the shoulder, keep firefighters away from moving traffic.



Deputy Chief Frank Viscuso is a twenty-year veteran of the fire service. He is a regular contributor to Fire Engineering Magazine & FireOpsOnline.com. He is also co-author of the book Fireground Operational Guides (PennWell 2011). The book features universal tactical worksheets and operational guides for more than 70 incidents that range from water, gas and electrical emergencies to multiple-alarm structure fires.