

Situational Awareness Isn't Just for the Fireline!

Driving is part of the job and one of the most hazardous things we do. Unfortunately, it is also a time when we are most likely to let our guard down.

Seatbelts Save Lives!!



All four crew members walked away from the incident without serious injuries because they were wearing their seatbelts!!

What Happened?

On August 7, 2006 a fire crew was returning from an initial attack incident when the driver lost control a vehicle on the Umpqua National Forest. The F-450 six pack left the pavement and rolled three times.

What Would have Prevented this?

The initial findings showed the driver was driving too fast for the conditions. The conditions included darkness, thunder and lightning, slick roads, end of the day fatigue, not using bright lights, trying to keep up with the rest of their crew vehicles and vehicle weight.

Driving Conditions that shout Watch Out:

- Unfamiliar road. Check the map and anticipate road hazards.
- Changing weather conditions. Paved roads will become slick when wet. Especially during the first rain after a dry period.
- Changing road surface. Braking and steering react differently on gravel versus paved roads.
- Vehicle size and weight. Heavier vehicles require greater stopping distance.
- Fatigue and stress. Both can be distracting and can slow reaction time.
- Change in lighting. Sight distance is shorter in the dark.
- Dawn and Dusk. Anticipate animals in the road. Dirt on the windshield will make it difficult to see when the sun is low on the horizon.

Lessons Learned

Stay Engaged, Maintain Situational Awareness While Driving, and ALWAYS wear your seatbelt!!!