



Today's discussion is from the Motorized Operations Category.

Parking Safely on Slopes

In 2005, three fireline fatalities related to improper parking on slopes occurred. One involved a water tender, another a fire engine and the third was a command vehicle. In wildland fire operations, we frequently exit vehicles quickly, but it is imperative that anytime a vehicle is left unattended, time is taken to assure it is parked safely and will not present a hazard to ourselves or others. Standard operating procedures for parking vehicles safely on slopes are:

- Turn the front wheels uphill or into the inside/embankment.
- Firmly set the emergency brake.
- Put the vehicle in park (if automatic transmission) or in forward gear (if manual transmission); do not leave it in neutral.
- Turn off the engine.
- Chock the wheels. When utilizing chocks, make sure they are on the correct side in reference to the slope. Assure the chocks are approved to hold the weight of the vehicle and will grip on the road surface.
- Be especially aware of safe parking on slopes on incidents when moving a vehicle frequently, as in using engines in pumping operations along a roadway -- it is very easy to get complacent with procedures or not even realize that you are on a slightly different slope which would require placing chocks differently. It is the driver's responsibility to assure not only that the vehicle is operated safely, but is positioned and parked safely.

References:

[Interagency Standards for Fire and Fire Aviation Operations](#)

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