



SPECIAL ORDER

SPECIAL ORDER 2015.62

Safety Message (Video Pilot)

EMERGENCY SERVICES BUREAU

Issue Date: November 30, 2015

Expiration Date:

OVERVIEW

The Safety Message is an important resource for sharing pertinent information amongst Department of Fire and Rescue Services (Department) personnel. The goal of the Safety Message is to prevent Departmental accidents and injuries and improve employee health and wellness. The Safety Message is designed to educate members on the hazards associated with all aspects of emergency service. The purpose of this order is to outline the procedures for updating the Department's Safety Message. The current daily "email and radio" Safety Message has been discontinued in favor of a bi-weekly video Safety Message. The new video message will be developed and delivered by all members of the Department (regardless of rank or Bureau). The deployment of the Safety Message will be coordinated through the Field Safety Office.

The Safety Message will be an active platform with input from all levels and bureaus. The Safety Message will connect to any Department Near Miss events and lessons learned that we encounter (i.e. significant employee injury, close calls, challenging incidents, etc.). Any member who encounters a Near Miss is encouraged to share their story in the form of a future Safety Message. The Safety Message will be accessible from multiple sources (i.e. homepage, email, virtual academy, Youtube, etc.). The messages will be maintained in a database and archived in the virtual academy, so that all past messages can be retrieved and viewed at any point in the future. All Safety Messages are considered internal use only.

DEFINITIONS

- **Sizeup**- the Howard County Department Intranet Page.
- **Safety Message**- an interactive platform in which members are informed of potential safety concerns, prevention tips and techniques to avoid dangerous situations.
- **Near Miss**- a potentially dangerous situation where an employee could have been injured or killed.
- **Safety Message Coordinator**- The BOSH Battalion Chief or designee that is responsible for the filming and editing of all Safety Messages.



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- 33 ➤ **Approved Department Editor**- Individuals identified by the Safety Message Coordinator
34 that are skilled in specific video editing software.
35
- 36 ➤ **FSO** – Field Safety Officer.

37 TOPIC DETAILS

38 The information contained in this order is intended to outline the process for the
39 implementation of the new video format Safety Message and the discontinuation of the
40 previous daily Safety Message.

41 **DISCONTINUATION:**

42 On August 1, 2015 the daily email and radio Safety message was ceased. Email and radio
43 messages will be strictly reserved for emergent information, such as weather conditions,
44 significant road closures, or anything deemed necessary for dissemination by the Field Safety
45 Office, On Duty Field Battalion Chief, or the Emergency Services Bureau Assistant Chief.
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47 **RESEARCH:**

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- 49 • All FSOs will stay informed of Department incidents, trends, events, best practices, and
50 items of interest involving the fire and EMS service. All FSOs will regularly make station
51 visits, review popular fire service websites, and multimedia sources to develop potential
52 Safety Messages. Additionally, the Emergency Services Bureau Assistant Chief or the
53 Executive Battalion Chief will contact the Safety Message Coordinator if there is
54 knowledge of a particular safety or injury trend that needs to take priority over the
55 regularly scheduled Safety Message.
 - 56 • All FSOs will solicit input from all personnel through e-mail and station visits to gather
57 material for the Safety Message and empower all members to be involved in the process
58 by encouraging participation to ensure posted messages are relevant.
 - 59 • All members are encouraged to submit ideas to their respective FSO for use as a future
60 Safety Message.

61 **CONTENT:**

- 62
- 63 • The Safety Message will consist of a video or article of the Safety Officer's choosing. It
64 should contain material that shows examples of safety issues, tactical challenges,
65 roadway hazards, review of proper technique, best practices or other items that are
66 likely to promote safety.
 - 67 • Initially, Safety Messages will be submitted on a voluntary basis from Department
68 personnel and FSO solicitation. Should Safety Message submission drop to an
69 unacceptable level, Bureau Chiefs will be notified by the Safety Message Coordinator
70 and mandatory Safety Message submissions will be required.



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- 71 • All members are encouraged to ask questions regarding specific Safety Messages to
72 further promote safety (i.e. What is the smoke telling you? Is this offensive or
73 defensive? What safety issues do you see? Is proper PPE being utilized? Is proper vehicle
74 stabilization in place? etc.). These questions can be posed on an interactive blog, which
75 will be associated with each message.
76

IMPLEMENTATION:

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- 78 • Starting on January 1, 2016, the Field Safety Office will begin disseminating the video
79 format Safety Message.
 - 80 • The Safety Message will be disseminated on the 1st and 15th of each month (regardless
81 of the day of the week).
 - 82 • The Safety message will be sent to all members by way of County e-mail. In addition, it
83 will be posted to the front page of Sizeup and the Safety Message Section of the Virtual
84 Academy.
 - 85 • The purpose of the Safety Message is to promote safety consciousness and stimulate
86 conversation amongst all members in all bureaus. All officers will review the material
87 with their respective subordinates.
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SUBMITTING AND PUBLISHING SAFETY MESSAGES:

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- 90 • All FSOs will contact each of their respective shifts company officers to discuss potential
91 future Safety Messages and encourage voluntary submission.
 - 92 • Once an idea is submitted to the Field Safety Office, the Company Officer or Staff
93 Supervisor will be contacted 2 weeks prior to their scheduled Safety Message recording
94 session. This will provide members an opportunity to review the format and content of
95 a particular Safety Message.
 - 96 • An approved Department videographer or the FSO will film all Safety Messages. FSOs
97 will carry a cache of videography equipment and will have the ability to train members
98 interested in operating it in order to capture unique footage. This will allow companies
99 to film over multiple dates without the presence of the FSO or Department
100 videographer.
 - 101 ○ Members that are interested in assisting in Safety Message video production
102 should submit a letter of intent to the BOSH Battalion Chief for consideration.
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 - 104 • All Safety Messages will be prepared by an Approved Department Editor and archived
105 for a specific release date.
 - 106 • The BOSH Battalion Chief or their designee will be assigned as the Safety Message
107 Coordinator and will be responsible for the posting and editing of all Safety Messages.
 - 108 • All Safety Messages must be approved by the Operations Deputy Chief prior to
109 dissemination.



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- 110 • Personnel are not permitted to send out videos or other interest pieces to the
111 Department on their own accord. However, the Field Safety Office encourages
112 personnel to submit photos, videos, and articles to be used in future Safety Messages in
113 accordance with General Order 100.21: Social Media.

FORMS/ATTACHMENTS/REFERENCES

115
116 Approved:

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120 John S. Butler, Fire Chief
121 Office of the Fire Chief
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124 Author:

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129 Gordon E. Wallace, Assistant Chief
130 Emergency Services Bureau
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