



TOLEDO FIRE & RESCUE DEPARTMENT



C-80 Preservation Of Evidence At Accident Scenes

Emergency Manual

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Policy/Procedure

In cases where a determination of cause must be decided at the scene of a vehicular accident, the following items should not be removed or disturbed, if possible.

- 1.** All vehicles involved.
- 2.** Vehicle fluids such as gasoline, oil, anti-freeze, and others, unless there is an immediate threat of fire or other serious hazard. In most cases the problem of fluid collection can be resolved by distributing sand delivered by a sand truck at the end of the on-scene investigation.
- 3.** Body fluids. Bodily fluids are very important pieces of evidence and should not be washed away, walked through, or otherwise tampered with.
- 4.** Clothing items that may have been carried, not worn, by passengers. These may indicate seating position inside a vehicle, location of pedestrians prior to impact, and in very remote cases may assist in determining the speed of vehicles involved in an accident or crime.
- 5.** Vehicle parts and or debris as they may indicate impact points or direction of travel.
- 6.** If an accident vehicle is found to have its lights off, fire personnel shall not turn on head lights, tail lights, or 4-way hazards to assist in traffic control. These actions may destroy valuable filament evidence.
- 7.** If possible, fire personnel shall not move any item near the accident scene, no matter whether it appears to be of value or not. What may look like a piece of trash may have been thrown from an accident vehicle or discarded by a pedestrian involved in the incident.

See Also:

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