	<b>Abilene Police Department Operating Procedures</b>		
	Subject: <i>Vehicle Crash Investigations</i>	Issued: 08/01/2020	TBP: 7.16, 7.17

**Initial Response (7.16)**

The first unit on scene will verify the location and jurisdiction with Dispatch as well as whether additional units are needed for traffic control. The officer will determine whether medical, fire or a hazardous material response is necessary. Obtaining emergency aid for all parties involved in a collision is a priority. The first responding unit may notify Dispatch of the necessity for wreckers and the number needed to help expedite the restoration of traffic flow.

**Reflective Vests (7.17)**


All officers on crash scenes, or when directing traffic, shall wear their Department issued reflective vest. Traffic Division officers wearing the issued yellow reflective uniform shirt or jacket this shall replace the requirement for the reflective vest.

**Investigation of Motor Vehicle Crashes**

On-street motor vehicle traffic crashes are addressed as follows:

- A. Where damage is over \$1,000.00 or there are reported injuries greater than Class C, the officer should:
  - 1. Complete a Crash Report and
  - 2. Issue citations where applicable.
- B. Where damage is under \$1,000.00 and there are no reported injuries greater than Class C, the officer should:
  - 1. Complete a brief CAD entry including the following information:
    - 1. Names, addresses and phone numbers of involved drivers;
    - 2. License numbers and a brief description of the involved vehicles;
    - 3. Insurance information of the involved vehicles; and
    - 4. A brief description of the incident
  - 2. Issue citations where applicable (ie: No DL and No insurance).

Crash reporting will be completed using the C.R.A.S.H. online program.

	<b>Abilene Police Department Operating Procedures</b>		
	Subject: <i>Vehicle Crash Investigations</i>	Issued: 08/01/2020	TBP: 7.16, 7.17

### **Private Property Traffic Crashes**

Private property crashes should be investigated (complete a Crash Report) when there are injuries greater than Class C or other exceptional circumstances. In absence of either, private property crashes should be addressed as follows:

- A. Responding officer(s) should assist with the exchange of required information.
- B. If the crash does not meet the above requirements then a brief CAD entry should be completed including the following information:
  - 1. Names, addresses and phone numbers of involved drivers;
  - 2. License numbers and a brief description of the involved vehicles; and
  - 3. Insurance information of the involved vehicles; and
  - 4. A brief description of the incident.
- C. Issue citations where applicable.


### **Incidents on Paid Parking Areas**

Defined under Section 550.001(2) of the Transportation Code as private residential property or the property of a garage or parking lot for which a charge is made for storing or parking a motor vehicle. This will include:

- A. Employee-only parking or
- B. Privately owned parking areas and apartment complexes.

Where crashes occur on paid parking areas, the officer should:

- A. Advise all parties involved the incident is a civil matter and
- B. Do not work as a crash; however,
- C. If a death results, fill out a paper Crash Report that will be included as a supplement to the case report.

	<b>Abilene Police Department Operating Procedures</b>		
	Subject: <i>Vehicle Crash Investigations</i>	Issued: 08/01/2020	TBP: 7.16, 7.17

### **Hit and Run Crashes and Delayed Reports**

Hit and Run crashes on paid parking lots will not be worked.

Hit and Run crashes will be handled in accordance with the operating procedures detailed in the Investigation of Motor Vehicle Crashes and Private Property Traffic Crashes sections.


Delayed reports of crashes should be handled as follows:

- A. Any crash not originally reported at the time of its occurrence because of any agreement made by the involved parties, should not be worked.
- B. Crashes not originally discovered and reported at the time of its occurrence due to the lack of knowledge, will be investigated in accordance with Hit and Run procedures and the officer should go back to the crash scene with the reporting party or victim.
- C. Any crash, not including serious bodily injury or death that was not originally reported at the time of discovery by the reporting party, will not be investigated; however, a CAD entry will be made with the name of the victim, vehicle information, accident location, approximate date and time, etc.

Where patrol officers conduct the initial hit and run investigation, they will:

- A. Broadcast a preliminary attempt to locate as soon as possible upon arrival at the scene;
- B. Complete an in-depth investigation;
- C. Show the unit that left the scene as unit one (1) on the Crash Report;
- D. Follow through with investigation as far as possible at the time;
- E. Fill out the Hit and Run Form as completely as possible;
- F. Handle parts of vehicles or other pieces of evidence as per the Property and Evidence Manual; and
- G. Obtain a case number from the dispatcher.

Current law allows officers to file Class B misdemeanor charges for leaving the scene of a crash where damages result in pecuniary loss of \$200.00 or more to all parties striking unattended motor vehicles, fixtures or landscaping upon highway. However, the policy of the Department will be to investigate and file the above as a Class C misdemeanor unless extenuating circumstances exist. A summary of the extenuating circumstances will be written on the back of the Hit and Run Form. Traffic Division personnel will make a decision on each case based on the officer's report and circumstances. A Traffic Division officer assigned follow-up responsibility will initiate a case report if Class B misdemeanor charges are to be filed and will assume related investigative responsibilities.

	<b>Abilene Police Department Operating Procedures</b>		
	Subject: <i>Vehicle Crash Investigations</i>	Issued: <b>08/01/2020</b>	TBP: <b>7.16, 7.17</b>

If the Hit and Run crash is cleared during the initial investigation, the officer will complete the Crash Report Form and forward a copy to a Hit and Run investigator. No Hit and Run Form will be needed. The victim should be notified of the results of the investigation by the investigating officer.

### **Fatality Crashes**


Fatality crashes and crashes with the potential of becoming fatalities will be handled as follows:

- A. The patrol officer originally assigned to the crash will complete the original case report as to the facts and circumstances that occurred prior to the traffic investigator's arrival.
- B. Traffic Division special investigators will be notified and will complete a supplemental report.
- C. The investigating officer of a crash involving a fatality or one which has the potential of becoming a fatality will investigate the crash fully and file the appropriate charges.

### **City Fleet Crashes**

Crashes involving city vehicles or property will be investigated as follows:

- A. Notify Risk Management and appropriate city department of vehicle or property involved in a vehicle crash.
- B. Notify field supervisor and shift commander if police unit is involved.
- C. Determine if a department supervisor is coming to the scene; if not, and there is sufficient damage or injuries to investigate:
  1. Complete a Crash Report,
  2. Obtain information for the departmental report if a police unit is involved.
  3. Take photographs of Department vehicles in all crashes involving injury and/or damage.
- D. When a crash involving a city owned vehicle occurs and either driver is to be cited for a traffic violation relative to the crash, the violator is to be filed on through the Justice of the Peace Court. In these cases, the following steps will be taken:
  1. The officer will apprise the violator of the charge and it is to be filed in the Justice of the Peace Court.
  2. The officer will contact the judge or clerk of the court and sign the appropriate formal complaint. No city citation will be issued.
  3. It is the responsibility of the investigating officer to re-contact and advise the violator they must contact the JP Court within 10 days of the date charges are filed.

	<b>Abilene Police Department Operating Procedures</b>		
	Subject: <i>Vehicle Crash Investigations</i>	Issued: 08/01/2020	TBP: 7.16, 7.17

### **Police Fleet Crashes**

All police vehicle operators, upon becoming involved in a crash, must:

- A. Notify a supervisor immediately.
- B. Remain at the scene of the crash until released by supervisor.
- C. Obtain names and addresses of other parties and witnesses as well as the license numbers on the other vehicle(s) involved or if it is damage to property, obtain address and owner's name if possible.
- D. Make no admission of fault or negligence to other drivers or witnesses or sign statements or releases for anyone.
- E. Assist supervisor in completion of the Crash Reports.

Supervisors will:

- A. Notify the shift commander of the injuries and amount of damage.
- B. Notify the Risk manager (primary) or the City Safety coordinator (alternate).
- C. Investigate the crash or assign it to a traffic investigator when required. A Crash Report will be completed if required by law or necessary to properly document the crash.
- D. Complete and submit to Police Administration by 5:00 p.m. the following workday one copy of the City of Abilene Supervisor's Vehicle/Property Damage/Injury Accident Report.
- E. Make an appropriate entry in the Guardian Tracking System

### **Inclement Weather Crash Investigation**

During situations of high call load due to weather related crashes, police supervisors may authorize officers to utilize a CAD-entry-only response to crashes that do not reasonably require a full investigation and Crash Report. Examples of the kind of scenarios that would require this response are:

- A. A one (1) vehicle crash with no notable injury and minor property damage to another's property; or
- B. A two (2) vehicle crash with the same elements as #1 and no clear violator.

This response may be applied to any similar situation supervisors feel is necessary for the Department to be capable of handling higher priority calls during such weather events.

CAD-entry-only responses will be documented similar to the private property traffic crashes response in this policy.