

Safety Tip #4

Car Fires

We Rise and Shine



What to do if your car is on fire

- Pull over as quickly as it is safe to do so, be sure to use your signal as you make your way to a safe location off the road such as the breakdown lane or rest stop.
- Once you have stopped, TURN OFF the engine.
- GET everyone out of the car. Never return to a burning car for anything.
- MOVE everyone at least 100 feet from the burning car and well away from traffic.
- CALL 9-1-1.

How to prevent a car fire

- Have your car serviced regularly by a professionally trained mechanic. If you spot leaks, your car is not running properly, get it checked. A well-maintained car is less likely to have a fire.
- If you must transport gasoline, transport only a small amount in a certified gas can that is sealed. Keep a window open for ventilation.
- Gas cans and propane cylinders should never be transported in the passenger compartment.
- Never park a car where flammables, such as grass, are touching the catalytic converter.
- Drive safely to avoid an accident.

Know the danger signs

- Cracked or loose wiring or electrical problems, including a fuse that blows more than once
- Oil or fluid leaks
- Oil cap not on securely
- Rapid changes in fuel or fluid level, or engine temperature

Most car fluids are flammable. Heat and electrical sparks plus leaking fluid are all it takes to start a car fire.



FACT

Most crashes do NOT result in fire. In the event of any crash, call 9-1-1. If there is no sign of fire, wait for emergency assistance to help any injured individuals out of the car.

Comments and

Lessons Learned

If you have a vehicle fire on a roadway:

- Move up hill and up wind and off to the side to avoid toxic smoke, leaking flammable liquids, bumper assemblies, hood and hatch strut cylinders that can explode and become injuring projectiles.
- Trying to extinguish a vehicle fire can be extremely dangerous due to the toxic smoke and gases released. Various car components may explode causing a fire ball and spray of flammable liquids. A small fire in a vehicle can easily render it a total loss.
- If there are any hazardous or flammable item being transported in the vehicle, advise the responding fire unit officer of this potential hazard.
- Share this information with your family and friends.

Comments and lessons learned are from calls-for-service that retired Chief William Selzer attended or has researched.