

**Schweitzer Fire Rescue District**  
7094 Schweitzer Mountain Road, Sandpoint, ID 83864  
208-265-4741

November 2008

Standard Operating Procedure  
Removal of Obstacles from the Public Rights of Way

**Purpose:** To ensure unimpeded access throughout the Schweitzer Mountain Area (SMA) via the Public Rights of Way (the roads) for emergency fire and medical vehicles in order to protect property and the safety of all who utilize the SMA.

**Situation:** During periods when the SMA experiences heavy snow fall and/or heavy traffic due to public use of the recreational facilities of the Schweitzer Mountain Resort (SMR), the roads can become impassable due to snow accumulation, improperly parked vehicles, abandoned vehicles, disabled vehicles, improperly placed construction materials, or a combination of all of these factors. Snow plowing by the Selkirk Recreation District (SRD) Contractor and SMR of the roads can be negatively impacted by this and by any obstacle which can impede emergency vehicles at anytime.

**Solution:** The Schweitzer Fire Rescue District (SFRD) as part of its commitment to property protection and to provide emergency medical response for all persons utilizing the SMA, has established a capability to facilitate removal of obstacles from the roads by acquiring a large wrecker vehicle to be operated within the Public Rights of Way at SMA in addition to the use of commercial towing services. The following procedures shall govern the use of the wrecker.

**OPERATING PROCEDURES:**

I. Notification. It is expected that notification of an obstacle will come from the following sources and be directed to SFRD:

1. Active inspection of the SMA by SFRD personnel.
2. SMR security division or other SMR personnel.
3. SRD snow plowing contractor.
4. Schweitzer Property Owner's (SPO) snow plowing coordinator.
5. Concerned property owners at SMA.
6. The general public.

II. Priority. If there is any immediate threat to life or property, the notification should be made via the "911" emergency response system. Otherwise, obstacles should be reported to SFRD at 290-5588. If the "911" system is used, then SFRD will respond per its emergency procedures as appropriate and the removal of obstacles will be incidental to that response and as outlined below.

III. Removal determination. The SFRD Fire Chief, the SFRD Fire Captain, or their designated representative will inspect the reported obstacle at the first reasonable opportunity and make the removal decision. If it is decided to remove or move the obstacle, a wrecker vehicle will be dispatched to the site for removal or movement. If a simple movement of the obstacle at the site will resolve the problem, this will be done. If removal from the site is required, the below procedures will be followed. An on scene, numbered incident report will be prepared for all moves and removals specifying location, time, complainant, situation, pre-existing damage (photos should be taken), and disposition. The Chief will prepare a simple form for this purpose and retain reports for two years. A separate log will also be maintained specifying date, time, license number, and report number in order to catch repeat offenders.

IV. Removal. Wrecker vehicles are capable of removing obstacles up to the size of a large bus as long as it can be safely lifted on to one or two sets of tow wheels.

1. Wrecker vehicle personnel will prepare the obstacle for removal. Reasonable precautions will be taken to protect the obstacle from damage and/or further damage.
2. The obstacle will be removed to the Ridge Point Parking Lot at 7094 Schweitzer Mountain Road and may be impounded at that site with appropriate restraint devices (see note below) to prevent its further movement. Each such impounded obstacle will be tagged with a document explaining how the owner may re-acquire custody of their property.
3. If the obstacle can not be moved safely by the local wrecker, a commercial towing service with the requisite capability will be summoned to remove the obstacle from SMA at the owner's expense.

V. Cost recovery. Action to keep the roads open is a public service but the owners of privately owned property which must be removed and is impounded will be expected to reimburse the removal organization a minimum \$100.00 fee for the removal of their offending property. This fee may be waived by the Chief or Captain for cooperative, first time offenders who retrieve their property within 24 hours of removal. After 24 hours a commercial towing service will be called to remove the offending obstacle from the SMA at the owner's expense.

VI. Payment. If the fee is not waived, the removal organization will accept cash or a personal check for reimbursement. If the property owner is unable to make such a payment, they will be referred to the ATM's available in Schweitzer Village.

VII. Repeat offenders. Any obstacle removed for a second time shall be turned over to a commercial towing service and removed from SMA at the owner's expense and the circumstances reported to the Bonner County Sherriff's office for appropriate action.

Note: The restraint device used will be heavy duty chain and locks with obstacles chained together and/or to an immovable object.