POLICY/PURPOSE:
Accidents which are reported to the Cedar Rapids Police Department (CRPD) will be investigated and/or the appropriate report filed in the following instances whether on public or private property:

- Death or injury
- Property damage exceeding one thousand five hundred dollars ($1,500.00) total (an Accident Information Exchange Form (CRPD #617) or electronic exchange, and an Accident Packet Envelope (CRPD #279) may be sufficient)
- Hit and run
- Impairment of a driver due to alcohol or drugs
- Hazardous materials are released [61.2.2c]
- Damage to a city owned or government vehicles or property
- Accident-related charge(s) [61.1.5h]

The Watch Commander may suspend the investigation of property damage accidents when the workload/available personnel to respond dictates, such as during inclement weather. [61.2.1]

In cases involving reportable property damage accidents where the drivers have removed the vehicles from the vicinity of the accident scene, drivers wishing to report an accident will be given an Accident Information Exchange Form (CRPD #617) or electronic exchange, and an Accident Packet Envelope (Form #279), and informed to fill out and return to the Iowa Department of Transportation’s (IDOT) Iowa Accident Report Form (IDOT # 433002).

INCIDENTS ON INTERSTATE I-380 AND HWY 30:
Because Interstate I-380 and Hwy 30 are both multi-lane roadways which involve highway speeds, extensive traffic, and potential for rapidly escalating situations, both the Joint Communication Agency (JCA) and responding CRPD units will have additional steps to follow, in addition to normal duties, when responding to calls at these locations.

If providing traffic control on divided portions of I380 and Hwy 30, in order to reduce effects with oncoming traffic, officers will use only their rear emergency lighting once officers are on scene, unless there are specific reasons to alert oncoming traffic with forward-facing emergency lighting.

Joint Communication Agency (JCA): [61.4.2]
When JCA receives a call concerning an accident, traffic hazard, or emergency situation on I-380 or Hwy 30, and officers are needed, they will dispatch at least one squad car to the scene of the occurrence. As
soon as additional units become available, JCA will dispatch two additional squad cars to provide cover for the initial/investigating units and to warn approaching traffic.

Officers:
Initial officers on scene should advise JCA:
- If additional cover cars are needed (in addition to those already dispatched).
  - If conditions and traffic flow do not require any additional units.
- Which lanes of traffic are blocked from the incident.
- Approximate location(s) where cover cars should be staged and:
  - Which lane cover cars should divert traffic towards.
- Keep the cover cars advised of additional lane closures due to tow truck or other emergency vehicles blocking additional lanes.
- Notify JCA if temporarily closing or rerouting traffic is needed.
  - Refer to IDOT pre-established diversionary routes
- Advise cover cars of when the scene is clear and they can return to service.

Cover Cars: [61.2.2e]
Drivers of cover cars will:
- Initially stage according to requests of the initial units on scene unless changing locations would:
  - Provide better protection to the units at the scene.
  - Provide better warning to traffic.
- Request for additional units if needed.
- Remain in their cars as much as possible if not needed to assist with the accident scene.
  - Wear their seat belts, even if the car is stationary.
- Position themselves in-order-to maintain a line of sight with the emergency vehicle in-front-of them.
  - If traffic starts to return back into closed lanes between these vehicles, this distance may need to be reduced.
- Re-evaluate spacing and location due to ongoing weather conditions such as:
  - Deteriorating roadway conditions
  - Visibility issues

Activation of Overhead IDOT Signs: [61.4.2]
Should an incident or accident occur on Interstate I380 or Hwy 30 which would require the activation of the IDOT overhead signs, officers must make the request through JCA. Requests should include which signs should be activated, along with a general statement of what message the sign(s) should relay, and the
location of the hazard. It is the discretion of the IDOT as to what terminology is acceptable. Officers also should let JCA know when to notify IDOT to deactivate the signs. Officers should keep in mind that there may be a time lag from when the request to activate or deactivate the signs and the actual activation or deactivation is complete.

RESPONSE AND INITIAL DUTIES OF OFFICERS: [61.2.2]
Officers will respond promptly and as quickly as traffic conditions permit using appropriate safety precautions and emergency equipment as the situation demands. During the approach to the scene and upon arrival, officers should be alert for specific conditions or factors that may have contributed to the accident, (such as visibility/view obstructions, inoperative traffic control device, roadway hazards, etc.). Upon arrival at the scene, officers should park police vehicles in such a way as to provide maximum protection to the scene, and evidence, without endangering the public. [61.2.2e; 61.4.2]

The First Officer to Arrive at the Scene Will:

- Establish scene safety.
- Use verbal and non-verbal cues to identify injured citizens. Medical triage protocol, based on first responder training, should be used to determine if people are injured and to what extent they are injured. As soon as an injury is determined officers should notify the dispatch center to start the appropriate Emergency Medical Response. [61.2.2b]
- In situations involving fatalities or impending death, serious injury, extensive property damage, or city liability the initial responding officer will notify a commander immediately. The officer will request additional resources. These should include, but are not limited to, Accident Investigation Specialists, Crime Scene Unit, and temporary traffic management devices (signs, barricades, etc.)
- If fire personnel are not already dispatched, request their assistance if officers observe, fire, smoke, fluid spills, or if extrication will be needed. Officers should do what they can to ensure the safety of those involved until fire personnel arrive. [61.2.2c]
- Establish a safe traffic pattern around the scene[61.2.2e]
- Locate witnesses and interview them. [61.2.2d]
- Interview all persons involved in the incident.
- Expedite the removal of vehicles, persons, and debris from the roadway. If an accident is serious or a fatality wait for clearance from an Accident Investigation Specialist prior to moving any objects.
  - Officers shall not manipulate vehicles that have been involved in accidents resulting in serious, life-threatening injury or death, unless such manipulation is required to provide medical/extrication assistance, or for safety purposes.
• Requesting additional officers for traffic control if needed.
• Officers on the scene will wear reflective safety vests.
• Request barricades and/or traffic control devices, if needed to ensure scene safety, and establish a safe traffic pattern around the scene. [61.2.2e]
• Collect and record any physical evidence in accordance with existing policies.
• Ensure that appropriate reports forms at completed accurately [83.2.6]

Officer in Charge at accidents: [61.2.2a]
Generally, the first officer responding to the accident scene will retain command of the scene and investigate the incident. Exceptions include:
• The subsequent arrival of supervisory personnel who advise they are assuming responsibility.
• The arrival of officers with special accident investigation skills and training who have been assigned to conduct the investigation.

Adjoining Jurisdiction Cooperation:
Officers of the CRPD will cooperate with officers of other law enforcement agencies that may have occasion to respond to the same accident scene. Responsibility for investigation or reporting of the accident is determined by the location where the initial damage or injury occurred and departmental policy.

Accident victim’s property:
In the event an officer cannot return personal property to an accident victim, at the scene, taking the items to the hospital, or their residence, the officer shall fill out a property receipt and proceed as outlined in departmental policy. [61.2.2f]

HIT AND RUN ACCIDENTS: [61.2.1; 61.2.2d]
Hit and run accidents will be investigated as any other crime. The reporting officer will conduct the investigation or as assigned by a commander.

Officers need to obtain as much information at the scene as possible to increase the solvability. This includes photos, victim/witness statements, descriptions of the suspect, collection of evidence. Hit and runs that do not have any solvability information, or the investigation runs out of leads the case will be closed in case management as leads exhausted.

Hit and run incidents that result in the crime being solved and/or charges are the result; the investigating officer will complete an electronic report as well as the normal incident reports and supplements.
DISTURBANCES BETWEEN PARTIES:
Officers should be aware that traffic collisions may result in disturbances between those involved. If a disturbance would occur, officers should separate those involved and request additional units if needed.

GOVERNMENT (CITY, STATE AND FEDERAL) VEHICLES AND PROPERTY: [61.2.1]
All accidents involving government vehicles/property will be investigated to include, but not limited to:
- Death or injury
- Property damage exceeding one thousand five hundred dollars ($1,500.00) total
- Hit and run
- Impairment of a driver due to alcohol or drugs
- Hazardous materials are released
- Accident-related charge(s)

If none of the above criteria applies, the officer must complete an electronic report as non-reportable. If applicable, officers will use State of Iowa charges only with any accident involving city vehicles and/or property.

If any government vehicle is involved in an accident, officers will take pictures of any vehicles and/or property involved in the accident, regardless of damage. Pictures will be downloaded onto a cd and turned in as evidence. [61.2.2d]

CRPD OWNED VEHICLE ACCIDENTS:
Whenever a CRPD vehicle is involved in an accident:
- The involved employee shall contact JCA immediately.
- A commander will be sent on all CRPD vehicle accidents to investigate the accident.
  - If any parties are injured, the commander on scene or the Watch Commander shall contact the injured officer’s Division Captain.
- Vehicles involved in the accident should not be moved until an investigation has been initiated unless movement is required:
  - To gain access to injured parties.
  - For scene safety or a hazard. [61.4.2]
- An employee involved in the accident shall remain at the scene until an investigation has been initiated unless:
  - Injuries or scene safety dictate otherwise.
  - A commander directs the driver to leave the area.
Exigent circumstances

- Officers will not investigate accidents they were involved in.
  - Any officer(s) directly involved in police actions prior to any accident resulting from such action (pursuits, traffic control, etc…) will not investigate the accident.

- In the event of serious injury or fatality to any parties, the Traffic Commander should request an outside agency (if available) to investigate the incident.

- Officers will take photographs of any vehicles and/or property involved in the accident, regardless of damage. [61.2.2d]
  - Photographs will be submitted as evidence.

**Reporting:**
Reporting shall be completed prior to the end of the shift and forwarded to the employee’s Division Commander. City reporting forms are located at CR@Work.

- The involved employee’s immediate commander shall complete:
  - The City of Cedar Rapids – Supervisor Vehicle Accident Investigation Report.
  - The City of Cedar Rapids – Injury/Illness Report if an officer was injured.

- The driver of the CRPD vehicle shall complete:
    - If the driver is injured, the driver’s partner (if applicable) or the investigating officer shall complete this report.
  - A Police Vehicle Damage Form (CRPD #729).
    - A copy should be placed into the Vehicle Damage book located in the command office.

- If the accident meets the requirements for investigating a government vehicle accident, the investigating office shall complete a TraCS report.

All completed forms shall be forwarded to the driver’s Division Commander.

- The Division Commander will forward to:
  - The Office of the Chief of Police
  - Administrative Operations Lieutenant
CRPD Owned Vehicle Accidents Outside of City Limits: [61.2.2d]
Accidents outside of the city limits will require the same reporting and be handled in the same manner as those that occur within the city limits. Variations may include:

- The involved employee shall contact the appropriate jurisdiction immediately.
- The accident investigation will be handled by the jurisdiction in which it occurred.
- The employee shall contact the CRPD Command Desk as soon as practical.
  - If a department employee is injured, the Watch Commander shall contact the employee’s Division Captain.
    - The Division Captain will determine if the Traffic Commander should proceed to the employee’s location.

UNDERCOVER OFFICERS INVOLVED ACCIDENTS:

- A Police Officer working in an undercover capacity who becomes involved in an accident with a department owned vehicle shall provide correct information to the investigating officer at the accident scene; unless to do so would compromise the officer’s undercover status or safety.
- Officers who respond to accidents involving undercover officers should use caution to avoid identifying or recognizing the officer as a Department member.
- The investigating officer shall follow all other rules established for investigation of accidents involving city owned vehicles.
- Undercover officers involved in accidents shall notify their commanding officer as soon as possible after the accident.
- The undercover officer's commander must then notify the Traffic Unit with any corrected or additional information the Traffic Unit may need to complete the investigative reports.

ACCIDENTS INVOLVING THE RELEASE OF HAZARDOUS MATERIALS: [61.2.2c, 61.2.2e; 61.4.2]
The on-scene commander or senior officer at the scene of an accident where hazardous material is released from the cargo area of one of the units involved should have JCA contact the Iowa Department of Transportation (IDOT) to make them aware of the situation. IDOT will relay information to Iowa State Patrol (ISP) and the Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR) if needed.

SERIOUS INJURY/FATALITY FOLLOW UP: [61.2.1; 61.2.2a]
A commander will be in command of accident scenes involving serious injury or fatality until relieved by an Accident Investigation Specialist. The accident scene will be treated the same as any other major crime scene. Accident Investigation Specialists and the Crime Scene Unit (CSU) are available on a 24-hour basis to process an accident scene. [83.1.1]
A uniformed officer at the scene will complete an electronic accident report with all available information at the time of the incident. This report will be accessible to the Accident Investigation Specialist for follow-up. [83.2.6]

The Traffic Commander will be notified when an incident requires an Accident Investigation Specialist. The Traffic Commander will insure that all resources are available to assist the Accident Investigation Specialist. The Accident Investigation Specialists will be assisted by a technical investigator (TI). The TI and Accident Investigation Specialist will determine what resources are needed. Resources may include field sketches, use of a Total Station and/or FARO 3D Scanner, off-scene data collection, formal interviews/interrogations, seeking expert and technical assistance as needed.

When an Accident Investigation Specialist determines a vehicle needs to be impounded for further investigation, the vehicle will be towed by the department’s contracted towing company and stored inside.

**WILDLIFE – VEHICLE ACCIDENTS:**
Wildlife, other than deer, that are injured from vehicle accidents should not be approached unless the animal needs to be euthanized. A Licensed Wildlife Rehabilitator may be contacted, if appropriate.

- Contact an Iowa Department of Natural Resources Conservation Officer or refer to the Iowa DNR website for additional information. [https://www.iowadnr.gov/About-DNR/DNR-News-Releases/ArticleID/553/Finding-Injured-Wildlife-What-to-Do](https://www.iowadnr.gov/About-DNR/DNR-News-Releases/ArticleID/553/Finding-Injured-Wildlife-What-to-Do)

**DEER – VEHICLE ACCIDENTS:**
This policy outlines procedures to be followed by employees of the CRPD when responding to deer-vehicle accidents. Officer(s) responding to a deer-vehicle accident will respond and handle these situations the same as other vehicular accidents. An electronic accident (MARS) report will be required when any of the following occur: [61.2.1]

- Personal injuries.
- Damage exceeding $1500
- Accident related charges (rare occasion for deer crashes).

The deer should be disposed of under the following circumstances:

- The deer is injured to the extent that it cannot, or will not leave the scene on its own.
- The deer causes an on-going hazard. [61.4.2]
- Such disposal can be done safely by the use of the officer’s issued weapon.
  - When the officer uses their firearm for this purpose, they must comply with departmental rules regarding discharge of firearms.
  - If using a shotgun, slugs will be the only authorized ammunition.
o Such disposal should be done in a manner that is humane and out of public view as much as possible.
  o If the officer is not able to dispose of the deer, they should advise JCA.

Disposition of Animal Carcasses:
At the scene of a vehicle/wildlife accident, officers on the scene will ensure the carcass is not a traffic obstruction and that the vehicular portion of the accident is handled completely before leaving the scene. Animal carcasses may be claimed in the following priority:
- The driver or an occupant of the striking vehicle.
- The first interested individual on the scene.
- Officers will be last option.
  o Officers will not be allowed to remove the carcass while on-duty.
    ▪ If circumstances allow, and with commander approval, officers shall take Time Coming or Flex Leave during the process.

Officers must complete an electronic deer tag form.
- Both the officer and person with the deer must sign the form.
  o If an officer is claiming the carcass, another officer will complete the deer tag.
- After signing, the officer will print a copy of the salvage tag and give it to the person claiming the deer at the scene.

The same claiming priority shall be followed for wildlife other than deer. All DNR rules and regulations shall be adhered to.
If no individual on the scene claims the carcass, the officer will notify JCA of the location of the carcass. JCA will contact the appropriate city or state department for removal.

ACCIDENT INVOLVING A TRAIN:
Accidents involving trains will be investigated in the same manner as other accidents. In addition, officers will:
- Obtain the train, engine number, engineers and conductor’s names, number of car’s in train (from conductor).
- Clear the right-of-way and tracks as soon as possible.
- Notify the railroad for law enforcement assistance if needed.
- Notify the railroad for technical assistance, or of damage to their systems.
- Notify National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) of any fatalities.
- Trains are a motor vehicle. Create a new unit for them.
  o Do not put the conductor or engineer as the driver, but put all of their information in the Narrative section of the report.
**Accident Follow-Up Investigations:** [61.2.1]

- It is the responsibility of the assigned officer to complete the accident investigation, as soon as possible. The investigating officer will also complete supplemental reports necessary to support any traffic or criminal charges arising from the accident.
- In the event the investigating officer needs assistance in completing a traffic accident report or investigation, he will contact his immediate supervisor who will determine the appropriate action to be taken to ensure prompt and proper completion of the accident investigation.
- In any case where it is determined by the Watch Commander or command staff that accident reconstruction is necessary, it will be conducted by an Accident Investigation Specialist.