



Information Item

Date: October 25, 2011

To: Mayor and City Council
From: Barbara Stinchfield, Community and Cultural Services Director
Subject: Training Procedures for Driving on the Beach and in Parks

Introduction

This report describes the training procedures for City staff and other personnel authorized to drive on Santa Monica State Beach or in City parks.

Discussion

On [March 22, 2011](#), City Council introduced for first reading an ordinance which amended the City's existing prohibition against vehicles on public beaches or in City parks unless such vehicles are being operated in response to an emergency. The new ordinance enlarged the list of persons authorized to operate vehicles upon public beaches and/or in City parks in order to provide public safety, maintenance or other essential City services. These include City employees, City contractors, and drivers within permitted filming shoots.

As part of the discussion, the Council requested staff provide information about who is authorized to drive on the beach or in parks and the type of training personnel receive. An interdepartmental group met to identify staff positions within each department and related training practices. The following chart summarizes this information by City department or outside agency. A next step will continue the interdepartmental work to develop more standardized training across departments.

Department/Agency	Responsibility	Drive on Beach	Drive in Parks	Training
Community and Cultural Services	Beach Maintenance cleans and maintains the sand, equipment and restrooms.	X		Private contractor provides monthly driving skills and behind the wheel training twice a year. Regular tailgate meetings with supervisor and staff are held at job sites to review any accidents or problems.
	Public Landscape maintains and grooms turf areas and trees in City parks.		X	Private contractor provides bi-monthly driving skills training. Regular tailgate meetings with supervisor and staff to review any accidents or problems.
Public Works Department	Custodial Services cleans and maintains restrooms at the Annenberg Community Beach House and in City parks.	X	X	Private contractor hired by Risk Management provides training twice a year; regular safety meetings with Risk Management.
	Wastewater staff service pumps and storm drain pipes		X	Private contractor hired by Risk Management provides training bimonthly for heavy duty trucks and specialty vehicles; regular safety meetings with Risk Management.
Police Department	Beach patrol monitors activity on the beach using All Terrain Vehicles (ATVs) and trucks. Harbor Guards drive on the beach to back up Lifeguard rescues.	X		Internal Instruction on safety equipment and inspection of vehicles prior to use; demonstration of behind the wheel driving skills on sand and solid surfaces to Police Department training unit.
	Park Rangers monitor activity in City parks.		X	Driver safety is part of standard employee training and Park Ranger Training by Police Department.
Los Angeles County	Lifeguards provide rescue services. Flood Control District staff performs annual fill of storm drain outlets. Public Works staff clean and maintain the beach bike path	X		Lifeguards complete "Sand Driving Course" that includes behind the wheel training, verbal review once a year, and written reminders twice a year. Maintenance staff complete defensive driving training with behind the wheel training every two years and video reviews on the alternate years.
City Contractor: West Coast Care Foundation	Outreach services to homeless persons	X		Police Department provides training with instruction on safety equipment and inspection of vehicles prior to use; demonstration of behind the wheel driving skills on sand and solid surfaces.
Film Companies	Moving equipment or supplies	X	X	It is not feasible to require training for large number of film companies; Police Personnel are required to be present. Beach Driving Rules (Attachment A) will be included in film permits.

Prepared By: Judith Meister, Beach Administrator
Attachment A: Beach Driving Rules

Attachment A

BEACH DRIVING RULES

- Maximum speed -- 15 mph
- Drive with headlights on at all times.
- Do not drive through water.
- Avoid driving between the water and the high tide line.
- Use a course of travel that will take the vehicle furthest from people but still accomplish the task.
- Never pass between a child and his/her parents.
- Avoid weaving in and out of people in heavily congested areas.
- Pedestrians have the right of way on the beach, promenade and bike path.
- When driving through a crowd, take your foot off the accelerator and place it above the brake. This will greatly reduce braking reaction and stopping distance.
- Watch out for activities on the beach such as football, soccer, frisbee or tag. Participants are often oblivious to their surroundings.
- When pedestrians are crossing your path, stop a good distance away, let them cross and then proceed.
- When driving next to walls, trees, trashcans or buildings, drive as though someone is about to step out in front of you.
- Stop and sound horn before entering or exiting pedestrian tunnels to warn people of your presence.