



CITY OF HARRISONBURG
FIRE
DEPARTMENT

101 NORTH MAIN STREET
HARRISONBURG, VA 22802
OFFICE (540) 432-7703

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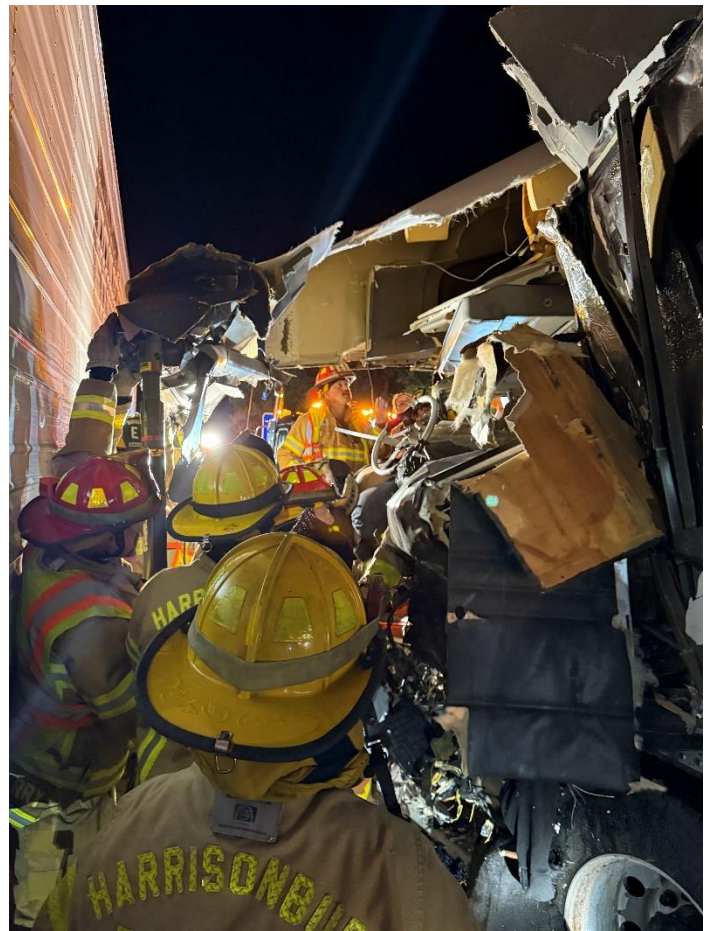
Contact: Matthew Tobia, Fire Chief
540-432-7703

Early Morning Crash on I-81 Injures 3; 1 Critical

HARRISONBURG, Va. – One individual received life-threatening injuries and two others were taken to the hospital with minor injuries after a multi-vehicle wreck closed Interstate 81 for several hours.

The Harrisonburg Fire Department and Harrisonburg Rescue Squad were dispatched to I-81 in the area of mile marker 244.1 just after 1 a.m. for a wreck involving three tractor trailers and a passenger vehicle blocking all lanes of northbound travel. Crews located the driver of one tractor trailer heavily entangled and began dismantling the severely damaged cab to extract him. A medevac helicopter was dispatched to the scene after an initial assessment found that the individual was suffering from life-threatening injuries.

After accessing the individual through the back wall of the cab, crews determined his legs were pinned. Several heavy wreckers were brought to the scene and used to drag the tractor trailers apart to facilitate access and extrication. HFD firefighter/paramedics provided stabilizing care with the assistance of the helicopter flight crew. A Harrisonburg Police Department officer was dispatched to Sentara RMH and delivered two additional units of blood to the scene to assist in treatment.



(Above) Crews assist the driver of a tractor trailer who was injured in a wreck on I-81 early Wednesday morning.

The 57-year-old driver was flown to the University of Virginia Medical Center in life-threatening condition.

“This was one of the most complicated and complex extrication efforts our department has experienced in a long time,” HFD Chief Matthew Tobia said. “The immense professionalism, dedication, perseverance and grit

displayed by the personnel involved is a reflection of their commitment to striving for perfection in every aspect of their jobs. The inter-agency cooperation exhibited by all agencies involved including fire, rescue, aeromedical, law enforcement, the tow operators and traffic management is evidenced in the successful rescue of this individual.”

I-81 was closed in both directions for nearly three hours. The Virginia State Police is handling the investigation into the cause of the crash.

The Harrisonburg Fire Department is an ISO-Class II All-Hazards agency providing essential emergency and non-emergency life safety services to the public who live, work and travel in Harrisonburg. More information about the Fire Department is available on-line at www.harrisonburgva.gov/fire or on Facebook®, Twitter® and Instagram®.

The City of Harrisonburg is centrally located in the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia. It is home to approximately 56,879 people. More information about the City of Harrisonburg is online at www.HarrisonburgVA.gov.

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