

**Tempe Fire Department Policies and Procedures**  
**Polaroid Cameras on ALS Units**  
**210.11**  
**Rev 6-28-93**

**PURPOSE**

This policy outlines proper use of polaroid cameras carried on ALS units.

**POLICY**

In certain patient care situations, a snapshot of a particular aspect of the scene transported along with the patient to the receiving facility may serve to enhance emergency room treatment. This is most beneficial in motor vehicle accidents where patients are treated as level one by mechanism. For instance, a photo of major damage to a vehicle may be sent along with an apparently stable level one by mechanism patient to ensure that the receiving physicians fully understand the kinetic forces involved. For this reason, all ALS units are supplied with Polaroid instant cameras.

**PROCEDURE**

The camera should be used when those ALS personnel providing medical treatment believe that a picture accompanying the written report is necessary to convey an aspect of mechanism of injury pertinent to a confirmed or suspected injury to the patient (i.e., significant damage to passenger compartment of vehicle). In most cases, a single picture taken from an angle that will best convey the desired information is all that is necessary.

A photo sent to a receiving facility is not to be considered as a substitute for any portion of the written report. Clear and complete documentation on the patient encounter form is always required.

The camera is not to be used for any purpose other than that previously described. The only exception to this would be in rare situations at fire or hazardous materials incidents where a picture taken early on may be of assistance in the subsequent investigation of the incident (i.e., unusual color of smoke witnessed by first responding units).

Please keep in mind that film for instant cameras is expensive. Be judicious in its use.

**CARE AND STORAGE**

- A. The camera should be stored in the provided camera case and kept on the apparatus in the coolest place possible and out of direct sunlight. This type of film is particularly sensitive to light and heat. Spare rolls of film are not to be kept on the apparatus.
- B. The camera lens may be cleaned by gently wiping with dry tissue paper.
- C. Film and batteries may be obtained by contacting the Inventory Services Specialist.
- D. The directions booklet for the camera should be kept in the carrying case for easy reference.