



### Option 5

Remove hairpins and lock plates for approximately 100 feet on either side of the vehicle. A span of approximately 100 feet

without any posts or hairpins should allow the cables to lie on the ground.



### Option 6

Tension in the cables can also be released at the nearest upstream and downstream turnbuckles, or at one of the cable end anchors,

whichever is closest. Use hand tools to loosen the turnbuckle until the end of each threaded terminal reaches the inspection hole.

### WARNING

**The threaded terminals should always remain visible in the inspection holes. Unscrewing the turnbuckle or cable anchor ends beyond this point can be unsafe. The cables could release rapidly as the threads strip out of the connection.**

Remember that every incident is different. To ensure everyone's safety:

- 】 Never stand in the cable deflection zone
- 】 Maintain constant communication with TxDOT employees and first responders
- 】 Use extreme caution during vehicle recovery, paying particular attention to where responders stand and what they touch



*Incorporate safety into decision-making  
at all levels of operations.*

**OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY DIVISION**  
Ph 512-416-3415 | Fx 512-416-3302

# METHODS FOR SAFELY RELEASING TENSION IN MEDIAN CABLE BARRIER SYSTEMS



## OVERVIEW

High-tension cable barrier systems have either three or four cables. Each cable is held in **constant tension in the range of 3,000 to 10,000 pounds.**

Because of the tremendous amount of stored energy in the cable system, safety must be taken seriously. Safety must be planned into every phase of the operation or emergency response.

## SPECIAL SAFETY CONCERNS

**If the tension in the cable is released, it will whip back toward the point of impact. Avoid this area and work from a safe location.**

**Prior to releasing tension, notify all responders and have them retreat to safety.**



If a collision occurs on a curve, this places additional tension and pressure on the cable and may result in the cable releasing and whipping toward the inside of the curve. All personnel should be positioned outside of the curvature during the recovery of a crashed vehicle.



## HOW TO SAFELY RELEASE TENSION IN A HIGH-TENSION CABLE BARRIER



When vehicles become entangled in the cables, emergency service providers have asked:

*“What do we do if there are life-threatening injuries and we can’t get to the victims because of the cables?”*

The first instinct for emergency responders is to cut the cables to gain better access to the victims by releasing tension in the cable. There are options that allow the cables to remain intact while responders do their jobs.

**Prior to releasing tension in the cables, notify all responders and have them retreat to safety. Always remember that safety comes first for you and your coworker(s).**

## WHAT ARE SOME ALTERNATIVES TO CUTTING THE CABLE?

**Before working with high-tension cable barrier systems, always check manufacturer guidelines and recommendations.**



direction from the direction it entered the cable system.

- ▶ In some cases, the part(s) of the vehicle entangled in the cables may need to be cut off. It is already damaged, so cutting the vehicle is an option.
- ▶ If the vehicle is lying on top of the cables, it may need to be lifted.

### Option 1

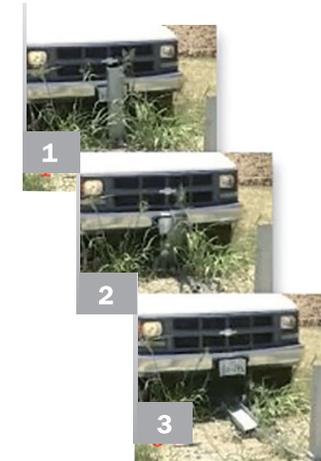
Move the cables back to their original positions by driving, pushing or pulling the vehicle in the opposite



### Option 2

Remove the posts—by knocking them over, pulling them out of the sockets or cutting them flush with the ground—for approximately 100 feet on both sides of the vehicle.

If the cables are under extreme tension, use extra caution. Secure the post with a chain or restraining device during removal.



### Option 3

Release the tension by slowly knocking over the Cable Release Post (CRP) with the vehicle bumper at the end of the cable run.

If done slowly and correctly, this method will not cause any damage to a typical truck bumper.



### Option 4

Lift the cables out of and/or off the posts for approximately 100 feet on either side of the vehicle. A span of approximately 100 feet without any posts should allow the cables to lie on the ground.