

SAFE DRIVING TIPS

Even the most well-trained, safety-conscious driver is at risk of engaging in driving behaviors that could lead to a crash on streets and highways. Weather conditions and road conditions change and suddenly driving too fast for conditions becomes a risk factor. Failing to look or looking and not seeing, impaired performance because of fatigue, inattention or daydreaming or an unexpected external distraction can all lead to a vehicle crash.

REDUCE YOUR DRIVING SPEED IN ADVERSE ROAD AND/OR WEATHER CONDITIONS



Adjust your speed to safely match weather conditions, road conditions, visibility, and traffic. Excessive driving speed is a major cause of fatal crashes, and higher speeds may cause more severe crashes. The NHTSA recently reported that 25 percent of speeding-related fatalities occurred during adverse or bad weather conditions.

You should reduce your speed by 1/3 on wet roads and by 1/2 or more on snow packed roads. If you would normally be traveling at a speed of 60 mph on dry pavement, then on a wet road you should reduce your speed to 40 mph, and on a snow-packed road you should reduce your speed to 30 mph. When you come upon slick, icy roads you should drive slowly and cautiously and pull off the road if you can no longer safely control the vehicle.

When it first starts to rain, water mixes with oil on the road making it particularly slippery.

ENTER A CURVE SLOWLY

Speed limits posted on curve warning signs are intended for passenger vehicles, not large trucks. Large trucks should reduce their speed even further. Studies have shown that large trucks entering a curve, even at the posted speed limit, have lost control and rolled over due to their high center of gravity.



40 percent of speeding-related fatalities occur on curves. Braking in a curve can cause the wheels to lock up and the vehicle to skid.

PLAN YOUR ROUTE BEFORE DRIVING

Be sure to plan your driving route before getting behind the wheel so you can prevent distractions that may occur while trying to read a map or try to look at directions. You can use electronic devices, such as a navigation system, to aid you when you are unfamiliar with the route. However, remember to use technology appropriately. Stop in a safe location off the roadway (not the shoulder), otherwise it can be a source of distraction.



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DO NOT SUDDENLY CHANGE YOUR DIRECTION OF TRAVEL

If you miss a turn or an exit, pass the turn and find a safe way to change direction. Do not take shortcuts. Trying to suddenly correct a missed turn or exit may result in performing an illegal or unsafe maneuver which may threaten your safety and the safety of the vehicles around you. From 2011 to 2012 almost 50,000 moving violations were classified as an improper turn or an improper lane change.



SIGNAL YOUR INTENTIONS

Use turn signals first to indicate your intent to change lanes, next visually scan for adjacent traffic and road hazards, and then execute a safe lane change. By signaling your intentions well in advance, you will be in a safer position to communicate with the surrounding drivers and you will be able to safely execute the desired driving maneuver. Recommended signaling distances are 300 feet on the highway and half the length of a block when in town. A recent study reported that there are approximately 630,000 lane-change crashes annually.

BE AWARE OF YOUR “NO-ZONE”

Be vigilant in watching for vehicles in the **No-Zone**. Drivers around you may not be aware of the size of your vehicle’s blind spots. As a driver you must be aware that some of your blind spots can virtually disappear from your view. The **No-Zone** represents the areas around your vehicle where crashes are more likely to occur. One-third of all crashes between large trucks and cars take place in the **No-Zone**

LOOK FAR ENOUGH AHEAD

Looking ahead will allow you to respond early and smoothly to changing conditions ahead and to avoid dangerous, abrupt braking situations.

It takes approximately one second from the moment your brain sends the signal to your foot to move from the accelerator to when your foot actually applies the brake. In this short period of time, while traveling 60 miles per hour, you will cover a distance of 88 feet. Focusing on the Speed of vehicles ahead of you will help you react in a safe and timely manner.

**AS A DRIVER OF A COUNTY VEHICLE, YOUR NUMBER ONE RESPONSIBILITY IS
DRIVING SAFELY!**