



## DEFENSIVE DRIVING – ARE YOU?

A vehicle, whether it's a company vehicle or personal transportation, can be a deadly machine in the hands of a careless driver. A good defensive driving attitude is the key to your safety on the road. Follow these tips and become a better "defensive" driver.

- If you get tired while driving long distances, stop and rest. Get out of the car and take a break.
- Always use your seat belt. This includes your lap belt as well as your shoulder belt. Both are necessary for safety. If your vehicle is equipped with an airbag, you must still use seat belts.
- Adjust all accessories. Insure that your mirrors are adjusted as well as your seat.
- Secure loose objects in the vehicle. If you must make an evasive maneuver in order to avoid an accident, an unsecured object (e.g., tool box, brief case, etc.) may fly around in the vehicle and injure a passenger. Do not place your hard hat on the rear window shelf.
- Concentrate on your driving, rather than personal problems or your work. Be attentive to your own actions, the actions of others and the roadway environment.
- Keep a safe stopping distance behind the vehicle in front of you. You should be able to prepare to stop within 2 seconds, whatever your speed. Remember, it takes the average person about **3/4 of a second** to recognize a hazard after it is first seen and another **3/4 of a second** to switch from the accelerator to the brake pedal. At 55 mph, your vehicle covers a distance of more than 80 feet per second. You will have traveled about 120 feet before you actually began to brake.
- Be very cautious when adjusting your car radio, using your cellular phone, smoking or handling any other device that will distract you from driving defensively.
- Never drink alcohol while operating a vehicle. Assign a designated driver after social functions that include alcohol use.

- Be alert to "blind spots" when changing lanes. Look all ways and always use turn signals.
- Keep a cool head. Don't drive aggressively and don't take chances.

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