

Safe Fleet Driving

Do you drive a company vehicle? It is your responsibility to continuously evaluate and recognize accident-producing situations. Your worst nightmare could be right around the corner. Recent studies have revealed that each year, more than one in three company vehicles are involved in an accident. According to the National Safety Council, two-thirds of these accidents were at least partially caused by a driver error while traveling on highways.

Here are some safe driving tips to exercise while operating your personal or company vehicle:

- Whenever possible, pre-plan your travel route by studying a map or getting directions. If you are traveling along an unfamiliar route, schedule a little extra time into the trip. Consider such things as: weather conditions; known traffic hazards; congested areas; and the type of roadway.
- Buckle-up. Always use your seat belt.
- Obey all traffic laws and don't exceed the speed limit. Your performance as an employee counts behind the wheel too! Evaluate the traffic conditions all around you. Be prepared to adjust your speed accordingly.
- Keep your eyes on the road and be attentive. Always be prepared for possible obstructions, slowing or stopping vehicles, or pedestrians who may run or step into the traffic lanes.
- Use two-way radios and cellular telephones minimally. If a lengthy or detailed conversation begins, pull over to the side of the road and stop the vehicle, or offer to return the call once you get to your destination. Remember that driving safely is the priority...not talking on the phone!
- Adjust mirrors before your trip and use them often to monitor the traffic around you. Know your vehicles blind spots, and take them into consideration when making any move.
- Don't tailgate. Allow adequate maneuvering space. Try using the "four-second" rule. This method of staying a safe distance behind the next vehicle works at any speed. The "four-second" rule leaves you enough room to react to the unexpected.
- Do not create a situation that allows yourself and other drivers to be "trapped." Be considerate and signal your turning or braking intentions early.
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- If you feel drowsy, pull to the side of the road or into a road stop, take a short nap or get out and walk around.



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