

# Defensive Driving Techniques and Safety Tips

## Defensive Driving Techniques:

- Driver should require **ALL** occupants to wear seat belts as they were designed for use in your personal or leased vehicle.
- Check instruments and gauges of the vehicle before leaving.
- Scan parked cars carefully as you back up.
- Make a positive glance over your shoulder when changing lanes or backing up to avoid blind spots. Have a passenger get out and help.
- Look "**Left--Right--Left**" before proceeding through intersections.
- Do not go through intersections on a yellow light; pick a point of decision and don't get caught in the middle of the intersection.
- Check wheel-to-lane reference of vehicles next to you--anticipate their movement into your lane--next to or in front of you.
- Following time should be 3 seconds from the vehicle in front of you, depending upon the speed and whether in city or highway driving.
- Stop far enough behind the vehicle in front of you at intersections to see the tires of that vehicle touching the pavement.
- Count a 2-second delay at intersections to allow appropriate following time from the car in front of you.
- Know the stopping distance requirements for the vehicle you're driving, including effects of inclement weather conditions. As a guide, it normally takes one car length for every 10 M.P.H. of speed to stop.
- Check the road 12 - 15 seconds ahead on the highway; 4 - 6 seconds in city driving (about two blocks).
- Check mirrors every 3 - 5 seconds in the city, 5 - 8 on the highway.
- Tune out passengers, concentrate on your driving and focus on the driving of those around you.
- Avoid eating while driving; both hands should be on the wheel.
- Avoid using cell phones while driving.
- Be prepared for construction hazards, including narrow roads.
- **AVOID ROAD RAGE -- BE PATIENT, ALLOWING A CAR IN FRONT OF YOU TAKES LESS TIME THAN AN ACCIDENT.**

## Safety Tips:

### What do you do in case of an accident?

- **Call local police** immediately.
- **Obtain other driver's and/or witness** information, including name, address, phone (work and home), date of birth, insurance carrier and policy number, license number and state of issuance, make, model, color, and tag of vehicle.
- **Notify your auto insurance agent or your rental car company** as soon as practical with the make, model, and tag number of the vehicle, along with your driver's license number.

### What qualifies as a reportable accident?

- **Any collision involving your personal owned or leased vehicle needs to be reported to your insurance agent or to the rental car company, whether vehicle damage occurs or not.**
- Injuries from accidents sometimes occur leading to further investigation of the accident.
- Thus, the more timely the information, the better the investigation.
- If a parked car is involved, it is best to leave a note on the vehicle windshield with a contact phone number.

### Other safety considerations:

- **Accident:** In case of accident, follow the response procedures above.
- **Fire:** Evacuate Vehicle.
- **Flat Tire:** Try to pull vehicle to the side of the road away from traffic with the damaged tire away from traffic. Have occupants vacate the vehicle and stand away from the road. Utilize the tire changing equipment provided. If you are unable to change the tire, or would be in harm's way (i.e. bad weather conditions, heavy traffic, no shoulder) then pull your vehicle off the roadway as soon as possible and call your AAA, family member or rental car company.
- **Life Safety:** In case of serious accident with resulting injuries, notify police/emergency response.
- **Maintenance:** If the driver notices any maintenance concerns, e.g. lights, brakes, tires or horn, he/she should fix them immediately or report them immediately to their rental car company.