

Defensive Driving

The Best Defense is a Good Plan

Summer has arrived! For many, this means a lot more traveling. With nicer weather and children out of school, there may be many more people with whom you will be sharing the road. This is all the more reason for you to be on the lookout while you are driving.

There are many situations that require extra attention. Most are circumstances that you experience everyday, but are easy to overlook. Your good judgment is extremely important in regards to the following:

- Following Distance
- Backing
- Passing
- Intersections and Turns
- Pedestrians
- Entering and Exiting Highways
- City Driving
- Weather Conditions

All of these, among others, have a continuous effect on how a good defensive driver operates. To be constantly aware of any potential hazards on the road you must always observe-not just your immediate surroundings-but also the road ahead.

A great way to prevent an accident is to plan. When observing the road, imagine any possible hazards that may occur, and decide on how you would react to that hazard. For instance, when driving down the highway in the right lane you notice another car getting on to the highway from a ramp on the right. You might imagine this car swerving into your lane too quickly, and so you decide that to plan for that, you need to be able to get over or slow down. So you check your mirrors and make sure you can do this. You also might imagine that the car does not pay attention to where you are on the road, and so you decide you may have to slow down to allow room for the car to enter the highway in front of you. If you can plan for any potential hazards, you are less likely to be involved in an accident.

There are any number of hazards that you must plan for every moment that you drive. If you already have decided on how you will react to a hazard, once it happens you won't have to take time to think (which slows your reaction time), you will already be ready to react and do your best to minimize the chance of accident or injury.

This edition of the Fleet Safety Flash will focus on a few areas that can help you improve your defensive driving skills. Drive Safe!

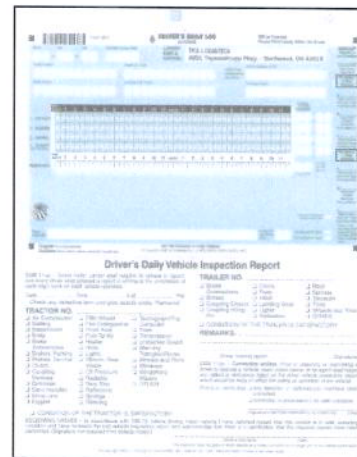
New Log on the Way

It's out with the old and in with the new! That's right, all branches currently using the standard logbook will soon be receiving long form, loose-leaf logs to be used with a 3 ring binder. (3 ring binders will also be supplied by TKX.)

The new log will have the standard log sheet on the top half of the page, and the vehicle inspection report at the bottom of the log. There will no longer be a vehicle inspection report on the back of the log. This is because vehicle inspection reports must be filed separately from the logs, and have a different retention period. Now, they can easily be filled out as two separate forms, and the new log is perforated in the middle of the page so you can easily tear the log from the inspection report.

The new log will also be carbonless. You will no longer need to put a sheet of carbon in between your original log and the copy. You will, however, need to use the cardboard divider (found in the back of the pack of logs) to keep the ink from bleeding through to the next log.

Each pack of logs contains 66 log sheets. This means that your branch will only be receiving logs once every 2 months. This should help increase efficiency and will hopefully make filling out the logs easier.



CORRECTION NOTICE

In the last Fleet Safety Flash Newsletter, James Doan was credited as working out of Copper and Brass Grand Rapids. He is actually based out of Copper and Brass Cleveland.



Toll Cards & Transponders

The toll cards and transponders that are in your truck are assigned to the truck, **NOT** to the individual driver. Please make sure that if you switch trucks you are not taking any toll cards or transponders out of the truck. If you get into a truck and there are no toll cards or transponders please call Allie Brandenburg at (419) 662-1813 and she will be sure to get you the proper toll cards and transponders.

Protective Checks Before Driving

How to Prepare for Defensive Driving

1. **Vehicle Condition** - A safe vehicle will make defensive driving much easier. Tires, brakes, and steering must always be in tip-top shape. Your life (or someone else's) may depend on them! Don't forget to do your pre-trip inspection!
2. **Driver Condition** - Much like your vehicle, you too must be in good working condition before driving. Always make sure you are well rested before getting behind the wheel. An impaired driver is more likely to make poor defensive driving decisions.

GET IN THE HABIT!

In addition to the excellent driving skills you have honed over the years, what can make you a truly great defensive driver is using good judgment to help prevent accidents. At all times you are in control of yourself and your vehicle, and you must use that control to the best of your abilities. Here are some helpful habits that you should get accustomed to doing:

Managing Following Distance – The area that has the most effect on your ability to be a good defensive driver is right in front of you. How fast you are driving dictates how much distance you should leave between you and the vehicle in front of you. To measure how many seconds a vehicle is in front of you, choose a fixed point ahead of the vehicle you are following. Once the vehicle passes that point, begin counting the seconds it takes from when the vehicle passed it until you reach that point. This will tell you how many seconds behind you are. The more seconds behind, the more time you have for good judgment. This begs the question, how far should you be?

City Driving: Under normal city driving conditions (speed of 30 mph or less) a 3 second following distance is usually sufficient. Nevertheless, there are times when you need to adjust that distance. For instance, if you are following another big rig, your visibility is lower, so you may want to add more following distance. Also, when driving behind motorcycles, keep in mind that they can stop very quickly, so this too would be a reason to add more following distance.

Highway Driving: At higher speeds you need to allow even more time to stop. Try to leave 1 second of following distance for every 10 feet of length of your vehicle. Never Tailgate! It is frightening to other drivers, and is just a terrible idea! It leaves you no reaction time, and your ability to stop in a hurry is already poor since you are driving such a large vehicle.

Visual Lead Time – Not only should you keep an eye on what's immediately in front of you, but also what's farther ahead. This can help you be aware of any situations that might develop and give you plenty of time to react. In the city, try and look ahead approximately 15 seconds, and on the highway, scan 20-30 seconds ahead of you.

Changing Circumstances – There are many situations on the road that are out of your control, so you must always be able to adapt to changing circumstances. This might include changes in weather, lighting conditions, or road conditions. Any of these such as fog, ice, snow, rain, low light, bright light (driving toward the sun,) or loose stone or gravel may have an effect on your ability to see well or your ability to stop. Always be on the lookout!

A Trucker's Guide to Healthy Eating

Here are some tips to help you eat healthier while out on the road:

- o Eat a variety of nutrient-rich foods
- o Enjoy plenty of whole grains, fruits and vegetables
- o Maintain a healthy weight
- o Eat moderate portions
- o Eat regular meals
- o Balance your food choices over time
- o Make changes gradually

