

TIPS FOR RESPONSIBLE & DEFENSIVE DRIVING

Always wear your seat belt!

Regardless of the duration of your trip, or the frequency of stops you may need to make, or whether you are driving for work or on personal business. Insist that all occupants of your vehicle wear their seat belts. Ensure that children in your vehicle are restrained in the correct and properly installed child safety or booster seat.

Move over for all emergency responder vehicles, including tow trucks. Never pass a stopped school bus with flashing red lights.

Always be prepared.

Always be ready to take preventative actions to avoid a collision. This will require you to sit up straight, keep both hands on the steering wheel and maintain your focus on surrounding vehicles, and road and weather conditions. If you see a hazard in or near the roadway, slow down and go around the hazard or safely change lanes.

Scan the roadway ahead of you and regularly check your mirrors for hazards or approaching emergency responder vehicles.

Keep your focus on the road and your driving – avoid distractions.

Do not hold your cell phone or any other electronic gadgets while driving. Do not use your cell phone while driving unless it is connected to your vehicle's Bluetooth media features.

If you are drowsy, pull over and take a rest.

Pay attention to the road and driving rather than what is going on inside your car.

Do not perform hygiene functions while driving (shaving, applying makeup, fixing your hair).

Do not become distracted by what you see outside your vehicle that is not related to your defensive driving.

Obey all posted traffic signs, signals, and speed limits. Properly use your turn signals, hazard lights, and high beams. Stop for pedestrians in crosswalks and obey crossing guards.

Maintain a safe following distance from the vehicle in front of you.

Follow the three-second rule, meaning you should have at least 3 seconds of driving time based on your current speed between you and the vehicle in front of you in the event you need to brake.

You will need to allow more distance than the three-second rule in severe weather conditions such as fog, snow, rain, or wind, poor road conditions such as slippery roads or roads under repair, traffic jams.

Do not tailgate.

Stay in your lane.

Be sure to always drive in the center of your lane. Do not merge into an adjacent lane if doing so will place your vehicle into another vehicle's blind spot. Some drivers may be tired, distracted, forgetful or just lazy checking their blind spot before changing lanes.

On highways with multiple lanes, the far-right lane is for travel, exiting and entering highways. The far-left lane should be used primarily for passing other vehicles. Avoid extended travel in the left lane particularly when the right lane is safe to merge into.

Do not weave in and out of lanes.

Do not travel into the breakdown lane unless you are preparing to pull over. Pull as far away as you can from the travel lanes, stop your vehicle and engage your hazard lights.

If your vehicle is equipped with advanced driver assistance systems (ADAS), be sure to understand their functionality and operation.

Be careful at intersections and watch out for drivers that might run a red light.

If you are at an intersection and the light turns green, scan the oncoming travel lanes first. Do not assume that the other drivers who have the red light will stop. Proceed with caution.

Watch out for reckless or distracted driver, or drivers that may be operating under the influence, and keep your distance from them.

If you notice a driver is drifting in and out of the lanes, driving on the center lane or lane marker, driving too fast or too slow, or tailgating, keep a good distance away from those type of drivers.

Stay away from road rage situations.

If you notice a driver is driving recklessly, honks at you or gives you a one-finger salute, do not engage with the driver in any way and avoid eye contact. Slow down and let the driver pass.

BE COURTEOUS, BE ALERT AND DRIVE SAFE!