



SAFE DRIVING

DRIVING DEFENSIVELY



This talk discusses what defensive driving is and how to drive defensively in order to stay safe on the road. The information can apply to employees who drive as part of their job or to those who merely commute to and from work. It is not intended for commercial drivers.

Material to have on hand: Recent news story about a traffic accident

Items for attendees to consider during talk:

- What is defensive driving?
- How can defensive driving help you stay safe on the road?
- Have you experienced a situation where defensive driving helped you avoid an accident?

TALK

Defensive driving is the idea that although you can't control the actions of other drivers, the hazards on the road, or the weather conditions, you can reduce your risk of accidents by driving in a way that anticipates potential dangers and allows you time to avoid them.

In order to drive defensively, you must constantly monitor the conditions on the road and the other drivers around you. To do this successfully, you can't be distracted. Do not send or read text messages, talk on a handheld cell phone, or otherwise try to

manipulate electronic devices while you're behind the wheel.

Scan the road ahead of you for potential hazards, and frequently check your rearview and side mirrors for hazards approaching from behind. Hazards can range from obstacles in the road to weather conditions to drivers behaving unsafely. Remember that conditions can change very suddenly. For example, a child walking on a sidewalk could suddenly run out into the road, or a driver ahead of you may realize that he has missed a turn and may stop without warning.

Also consider potential hazards common in your surroundings. For example, in a city, you should be particularly alert for pedestrians, while in a more rural environment, you may need to watch out for wildlife crossing the road. For each potential hazard you identify, consider how you would respond. Would you have time to stop? Could you safely steer around the hazard?

Be aware of when your visibility is compromised, and adjust your speed accordingly. Your visibility can be reduced by many conditions: Darkness, rain, snow, and fog are just a few. If you can't see around a curve ahead of you or over the top of a hill, this is another situation where you should reduce your speed to prepare for any unexpected obstacles.

Do not rely solely on other drivers' turn signals to know their intentions. For example, if you are waiting

Continued on page 2

Talk Date: _____

Attendees: _____

Location: _____

Supervisor/ _____

Comments: _____

Presenter: _____

SAFE DRIVING

to turn onto a busy road, do not assume that it is safe to merge in front of an oncoming vehicle just because its turn signal is on. The driver may have left the signal on from an earlier turn, or he or she may be planning to turn at a different location than you anticipate. Similarly, people often forget to use their

turn signals, especially when changing lanes. Be alert for drivers who swerve or turn without warning.

Remember—you can't control the hazards on the road, but if you drive defensively, you'll have a better chance of coming home safely every night.

