



DRIVER SAFETY LETTER



Holiday Driving

December 2021

With the holiday season in full swing, you are likely to experience some additional traffic challenges that demand your attention, patience and understanding. First, there is a chance more people who have been drinking are now sharing the roadways with you. Second, there will be more drivers rushing in and out of malls and shopping centers buying last-minute gifts and not paying attention to their driving. Third, will be those driving “over the river and through the woods,” to visit friends and relatives. On top of that, much of this extra traffic could be people who are fatigued and/or distracted. We are also approaching the shortest days of the year measured in actual sunlight. Not to mention the weather, in most parts of the country, will likely present its own set of challenges. With all those factors, it’s easy to see why holiday driving is often a headache.

What’s the best way to handle these challenges?

- Start each trip with an extra dose of patience and focus by clearing your head of distractions.
- Plan the best route and check for traffic and weather-related updates. Factor in additional travel time if driving through congested areas or inclement weather.
- Ensure your truck is in good working order by conducting a thorough pre-trip inspection. It’s important that you can be seen by other motorists, can stop on time, and don’t add to the congestion by breaking down.
- Always buckle up, even in parking lots.
- Be extra vigilant of erratic behavior.
- As a responsible driver, do your part to remove as many distractions as you can (e.g. food, phones, maps, papers, etc.)

Most of us understand the risks are high while on the roadway, but the challenge is to recognize risks remain high once you are off the roadway. Too often, many drivers drop their guard and become less attentive once they turn off the street and into a parking lot.

Remember most passenger car drivers are usually focused on seeking a parking spot. They are not on the lookout for other drivers or objects. Many of these drivers roll through stop signs, travel against the directional arrows or cut between parked cars. Vehicles can be coming from any direction—at any time.

Here are some tips to keep your guard up:

- Establish eye contact. Always watch for children and the elderly.
- As much as possible, avoid backing up. Look for a pull-through spot to negate the need to back out. When you are not sure what is around you, get out and look.
- Wear your seatbelt. Even low speed collisions can throw you around the cab of your truck.
- Obey all traffic signs and directional arrows.
- Drive slowly and use your turn signals and headlights. Make sure your vehicle is seen and watch for distracted motorists who do not see you coming.
- Slow down for speed bumps so you don’t injure yourself or damage your cargo.
- Be extra careful at entrances and exits. Motorists can stop suddenly and for no apparent reason.
- Be especially careful in parking lots of post offices, package stores and other locations where people are prone to dart in and out hastily in a hurry to be on their way.

Keep these driving tips in mind to make sure you have a Happy Holiday season!