

HSSE MOMENT: Safe Driving

Critical Tips for Safer Road Travel



We spend a lot of time in the car — whether heading to a job site or commuting to the office. Due to the frequency and many uncontrollable variables that confront drivers, driving is one of the most dangerous tasks we perform. While we can't control these inherent risks, we can control how we prepare for and react to them. Our HSSE team pulled together a few tips to help guide you and your teams towards safer driving.



Slow Down

Take time to familiarize yourself with the route before plugging the destination into your vehicle's GPS. Identify potential alternate routes, construction zones, and other travel advisories. Be sure to check the local weather conditions along your route, including the weather forecast for your final destination.



Watch for Wildlife

The fall months are prime season for large animals such as deer. Remember, where there is one, there are likely more in the area. SLOW DOWN if you see an animal crossing the road. Observe your surroundings, and be on high alert at dusk and dawn.



Leave Early

Give yourself extra time to get to your destination. Getting an early start will help you avoid feeling rushed or anxious while driving. The extra cushion can help offset unanticipated traffic delays and avoid the temptation to speed.



Maintain Your Vehicle

It sounds simple, but it's easy to lose track of routine maintenance activities such as oil changes, tire rotations, etc. Keep a vehicle maintenance log and stay on top of regular maintenance. Don't ignore warning signs of vehicle issues, and your fleet (or personal vehicle) will be safer, more efficient, and more productive.



Keep Your Distance

Always follow the posted speed limit and maintain a safe following distance to react to traffic. Increase your following distances in poor weather conditions, when traveling in the dark, or when operating a heavier vehicle. Follow the 3-second rule, scanning your mirrors frequently to raise awareness of your surroundings and avoid road fatigue.



Inspect Your Vehicle

Perform a simple vehicle safety check prior to operating your vehicle. Check the condition of the tires, windshield wipers, and the vehicle's exterior. Make sure vehicle fluids such as oil, coolant, and washer fluid are filled adequately and observe the vehicle's fuel level. Many warning signs are easy to see and fix when they are caught early.



Keep Calm

Not all drivers are focused on the road, following the speed limit, and driving courteously. Keep your cool at all times. Never make eye contact or engage someone who is driving aggressively or exhibiting signs of road rage. Be the safer driver, and you'll help to prevent danger for yourself and others.



Avoid Distraction

Stay focused on your goal: arriving safely. Before putting your vehicle in drive, make necessary adjustments to your mirrors and seat, and be sure to fasten your seatbelt. Set your GPS, mobile, and other electronic devices for hands-free usage. Never attempt to view or respond to a text message while driving. Plan breaks along your route where you can safely engage in phone activity.



Contact:

Thomas Baylis, CIH
Vice President, HSSE

E. tbaylis@GESonline.com
T. 800.426.9871 ext. 3021

