



GOALS

This safety session teaches employees to:

- Understand risks of highway driving.
- Identify safety precautions that prevent highway traffic accidents.

Applicable Regulations: None



1. Understand the risks of highway driving.

- Motor vehicle accidents are the most common cause of death in the United States, and the most common cause of work-related fatalities.
 - Someone dies in a motor vehicle accident every 11 minutes, and someone is injured in a crash every 18 seconds, including many disabling injuries.
- Fatalities and serious injuries are particularly frequent in highway crashes because of high speeds.

2. Follow basic safe driving rules on the highway.

- Obey speed limits and maintain a safe following distance.
 - Stay at least 2 seconds behind the vehicle in front of you in good daylight conditions.
- Wear a seat belt and require passengers to wear seat belts.
- Keep your hands on the wheel, your eyes on the road, and your mind on your driving.
- Never drink or take drugs and drive—impaired driving is a major cause of highway crashes.
- Look well ahead for changes in traffic conditions and prepare to slow down.
- Adjust your speed in construction zones and in bad road or traffic conditions.
- If you have car trouble, pull off the highway or move into the breakdown lane.
 - Activate emergency flashers, stay in your vehicle, and call for help.
 - If you have to exit your vehicle, exit on the passenger side and stand well clear of the road.
 - Never change a tire on the highway unless you are clear of travel lanes and can work safely.

3. Be careful of distracted driving.

- Highway safety experts say that you make 200 decisions during every mile that you drive.
- If your full attention is not on your driving, the risk of having an accident increases.
- Experts say that distracted driving is a factor in more than 4,000 vehicle accidents a day.
- Cell phone use while driving is a major cause of distracted driving.
 - Even a hands-free conversation can distract you from focusing full attention on the road.

4. Avoid fatigued driving.

- It's been reported that drowsy driving is a factor in more than 100,000 crashes each year, causing 40,000 injuries and more than 1,500 deaths.



- A study of adult drivers indicates that 51 percent admit to driving while drowsy, and 17 percent report having fallen asleep at the wheel.
- Be especially careful when driving late at night, early in the morning, and mid-afternoon hours when drowsy driving accidents are most likely to occur.
- Pull over if you feel drowsy and take a short nap and have a caffeinated drink.
- When driving long distances, stop to stretch and refresh every couple of hours.
- Avoid taking medications that could make you drowsy if you have to drive.

5. Watch out for aggressive driving.

- Examples of aggressive driving on the highway include excessive speed, tailgating, failing to signal lane changes, and cutting close in front of other drivers.
- Pay attention to your own driving habits and don't do anything to provoke other drivers.
- If you get irritated in traffic or because someone cut you off, take a few deep breaths to relax.
- Don't challenge aggressive drivers or respond to rude gestures.

6. Take extra precautions when driving at night or in foul weather.

- Driving at night is almost twice as dangerous as driving during the day.
- Turn on lights one-half hour before sunset so that you can see and be seen.
- At night or in foul weather, slow down and increase following distance to at least 4 seconds behind the vehicle in front of you.
- Use windshield wipers, lights, and defroster to maintain visibility.
- Beware of light rains, which can make roads very slippery.
- Avoid puddles if possible; if not, slow down to prevent hydroplaning.
- In winter, watch out for icy patches, especially on bridges and overpasses.
- If you skid, take your foot off the gas, don't brake, and gently turn in the direction you want the front of the car to go.



DISCUSSION POINTS:

Ask participants to describe safety precautions they take when driving on the highway. Ask those who've had highway accidents to explain what they do now to prevent another accident.



CONCLUSION:

- When driving on the highway, your life is in your hands. Drive safely!
- Highway crashes can be prevented if you keep your hands on the wheel, your eyes on the road, your mind on your driving, and use your common sense.



TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE:

Have your employees take the highway traffic safety quiz. By testing their knowledge, you can judge their ability to drive safely on the highway and whether they need to review this important topic again soon.