



Driver Safety

## eSafetyLine

### **Defensive Driving**

Most everyone agrees that driving aggressively and getting down and dirty in a fit of road rage is foolish, dangerous behavior. However, many defend their aggressive driving practices as simply driving “defensively”, others may not realize that what they think is defensive driving is actually at best, aggressive driving at worst, road rage. So what is the difference? National Safety Council (NSC) defines defensive driving as “not only taking responsibility for yourself and your actions but also keeping an eye on ‘the other guy’”. The aim is to reduce the risk of driving by anticipating potentially dangerous situations, despite adverse conditions or the mistakes of others. This can be achieved through adherence to a variety of general rules, as well as the practice of specific driving techniques. Many states offer defensive driving courses and some insurance companies offer a discount upon completion of such a course.

Most defensive driving tips involve what you can do in your vehicle to keep you safe. They are also mainly common sense.

- Pay Attention! Most collisions involve inattention on the part of one or both drivers. Inattention can involve many things; daydreaming, distractions of the radio or cell phone, sleepiness, or fatigue.
- Don’t trust anyone. You can never rely on what the other driver will do. Even if your driving is perfect (highly unlikely though it may be), not everyone else’s will be. The guy in the car next to you just got fired, the lady in the SUV behind you just got bad news from the doctor and the teenager at the next intersection in changing the cd in the car stereo while talking on the cell phone. You can’t leave your safety up to chance.

- Yield anyway. If you are in doubt about who has the right of way, give it away. The other guy may be wrong, but you can end up hurt or dead. We often say no one HAS the right-of-way until it is yielded to them. So better safe than sorry.
- Don't run red lights. Running a red light means your vehicle entered the intersection after the signal turned red. If you get a yellow light, stop. Running red lights is too dangerous, both for you and for others, no matter how pressured or late you are.
- Create space, use the two-second plus rule. Keep yourself safe by creating space around your vehicle, never allowing yourself to get "boxed in." Adequate space creates time and helps you avoid collisions. Maintain at LEAST two seconds of following distance, more if you can. How do you use this two-second rule? Simply watch as the vehicle ahead passes some object, marks on the road surface, or signs at the side of the road, and then count "one-thousand-one, one thousand two." If you pass that same spot before getting to "two," you're too close, slow down or change lanes. Also know that there are situations where two seconds isn't enough space between vehicles and the time should be stretched.

### **Discussion Questions**

What is the two-second rule?

Is driving defensively the same as driving aggressively?

# MEETING / TRAINING ATTENDANCE ROSTER

COMPANY: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ SAFETY MEETING

JOB/DEPT: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ SAFETY TRAINING

DATE: \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_

TIME: \_\_\_\_\_

TOPICS ADDRESSED: \_\_\_\_\_

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## EMPLOYEE'S SIGNATURES

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EMPLOYEE SUGGESTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS: \_\_\_\_\_

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ACTION TAKEN: \_\_\_\_\_

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Supervisor's Signature

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Date

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Safety Coordinator's Signature

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Date