

Back to School Means Sharing The Road

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Slow Down: Back to School Means Sharing the Road

School is back in session across many (if not all) parts of the country. While many of the kids are eager to begin school, see their classmates, and get back to the routine schedule, school days always brings congestion: School buses are picking up their passengers, kids on bikes are hurrying to get to school before the bell rings, stressed parents are trying to drop their kids off before work. It's never more important for drivers to slow down and pay attention than when kids are present – especially before and after school.

No matter where you're working at across the country, odds are that you'll be experiencing an increase in school-related traffic in your area. Below are some helpful tips and company policies that will help keep you safe on the roads. If you have school-aged kids, be sure to share some of these helpful tips with them, too!



Drive Defensively

- Be aware of what other drivers around you are doing, and expect the unexpected.
- Assume other motorists will do something crazy, and always be prepared to avoid it.
- Keep a 2-second cushion between you and the car in front of you (**Make that 4 seconds if the weather is bad!**)
- Take right-handed turns, if possible.
 - **Did you know that you are 50% less likely to get in a motor vehicle accident when you turn right instead of left?** When turning left, you have the potential to get in a collision from all four directions (driver's side, passenger's side, front, and rear). When turning right, your only probable collisions are from the rear and on the driver's side (two directions).

Focus on Driving

- Keep 100% of your attention on driving at all times!
- Don't use your phone or any other electronic device while driving.
 - 24 states, Washington D.C., Puerto Rico, Guam and the U.S. Virgin Islands prohibit all drivers from using hand-held cell phones while driving. In addition, 36 states and Washington D.C. ban all cellphone use by novice or teen drivers, and 18 states and Washington D.C. prohibit any cellphone use for school bus drivers. Text messaging is banned in 48 states, Washington D.C., Puerto Rico, Guam, and the U.S. Virgin Islands for all drivers, while Missouri prohibits text messaging by drivers 21 years old and younger.

- View your state’s legislation by going to this website:
<https://www.ncsl.org/research/transportation/cellular-phone-use-and-texting-while-driving-laws.aspx>
- It’s not holding the phone up to your ear that makes you distracted...**it’s the conversation itself!**
 - 30+ studies found **NO SAFETY BENEFIT** to hands-free (e.g., Bluetooth), and indicate that driving while using a hands-free device (such as your car’s Bluetooth system or a Bluetooth earpiece) is the same as a **0.08% DUI!**
- **Multi-tasking for the brain is a myth!** Your brain cannot completely focus on two tasks at the same time; it just handles tasks sequentially and switches between the two tasks, meaning you’re distracting by simply taking a phone call.
- **Slow down!** Speeding gives you less time to react and increases the severity of a collision.
 - A typical reaction time to perceive a threat (such as a deer or a child running into the road) is about $\frac{3}{4}$ of a second, and then you add another $\frac{3}{4}$ of a second to decide to act and move your foot to the brake pedal – **that’s 1½ seconds so far.** At 55 mph, the distance traveled is 121 feet. Only then does the car begin to slow. On dry pavement, that takes 4½ seconds, traveling another 144 feet, but if it’s wet, you’ll travel 183 feet. You can do the math – it has taken about as long as a football field to stop your car at 55 mph (265 and 303 feet), and that is assuming you were alert. At 30 mph, it is about half of a football field.



Safe Driving Apps

There are several safe-driving apps that can be downloaded on your smartphone that will keep your distractions to a minimum while driving. Some recommended apps are:

- AT&T Drive Mode;
- Drive Smart;
- LifeSaver;
- Cell Control; and
- Many new iPhone versions come with apps already installed on them and ready for use.

Recommended Company Policies

- Only authorized employees should be allowed to drive a motor vehicle in the course and scope of their work or operate a Company-owned, leased, and/or rented vehicle.
- Backing shall be avoided, if possible. Where backing is required, drivers, when parking, should make every effort to park the vehicle in a manner that allows the first move when leaving the parking space to be forward.
- Drivers should immediately report any citation, warning, traffic violation, collision, vehicle damage, or close call associated with Company and/or customer vehicle operations or while driving on Company duties to their immediate supervisor and/or your Company’s EHS Dept.;
- Alcohol or illegal drugs should not be allowed to be in any Company, customer, rented, or leased vehicle at any time;

Vehicle Accidents

If you are involved in a vehicular incident, **immediately stop the vehicle!** Passengers in company vehicles should

check for any injuries first. If needed, call 911 to request emergency medical treatment.

If you are performing Company business, notify your Company's EHS Dept. immediately. For non-DOT covered employees, a drug and/or alcohol test may be needed. For DOT-covered employees, a drug and/or alcohol test is required (refer to your Company's Drug & Alcohol Policy for more specific information).

Record the name(s), address(es), and phone number(s) of any witnesses, driver(s) and their passengers (if any). Record the affected vehicle license plate number(s). Take pictures if you are able to do so.

Post-accident and/or moving violations while operating a company-owned or leased vehicles may require the driver to successfully complete a defensive driving class offered by the National Safety Council (or equivalent).

Summary

At Arrow Safety, we appreciate your hard work and dedication to your company. If you have any questions regarding safe driving tips and/or laws in your states, feel free to visit the following websites:

- Cell Phone Laws by State
 - <http://www.ncsl.org/research/transportation/cellular-phone-use-and-texting-while-driving-laws.aspx>
- Additional Driving Safety Tips
 - <https://www.nhtsa.gov/road-safety>

Thank you and have a safe week!

If you have any questions about how Arrow Safety can help your employees stay safe and keep your business headed in the right direction, contact us and we'll be glad to help! We travel nationwide and all new customers receive **10% off** their first quote, regardless of the scope or size!



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