Distractions outside your Vehicle Meeting Kit

WHAT'S AT STAKE

"Distractions outside your vehicle" refer to external factors and stimuli that divert a driver's attention away from the task of operating a vehicle safely. These distractions originate from elements in the driver's external environment and can significantly impact the driver's ability to focus on the road, make informed decisions, and respond promptly to potential hazards.

WHAT'S THE DANGER

COMMON DISTRACTIONS OUTSIDE A VEHICLE

- Billboards and advertisements along the road can draw your attention away from driving.
- Pedestrians and Cyclists: Walking or biking near the road can be distracting.
- Accidents or roadside incidents can lead to "rubbernecking," where drivers slow down to observe the scene.
- Construction with equipment, workers, and lane closures can divert your attention if you're not careful.
- Wildlife crossing the road, such as deer or squirrels, causes you to lose focus on driving.
- Landscapes and scenic views might be visually distracting.
- Loud noises from construction, sirens, horns, or other vehicles can shift your attention from the road.
- Unusual or unique vehicles, such as classic cars or exotic vehicles, can lead to distraction.
- Watching events happening on sidewalks or at street corners can divert your attention.
- Weather Conditions, especially extreme weather conditions like heavy rain, snowfall, or thunderstorms can require

extra attention and potentially distract you from driving.
- Electronic Displays, such as digital billboards or screens on buildings, can be visually distracting.
- Restaurants and shops along the road can capture your attention.

HOW TO PROTECT YOURSELF

EFFECTIVE TECHNIQUES TO PREVENT DISTRACTIONS OUTSIDE A VEHICLE

Maintain Focus on the Road:

- Keep your primary attention on the road and the task of driving.Remind yourself of the potential risks of getting distracted by external stimuli.

Limit Visual Engagement:

- Avoid prolonged staring at billboards, advertisements, or other external attractions.

Use Peripheral Vision:

- Use your peripheral vision to monitor external activity without losing focus on the road ahead.

Minimize Gazing:

- If you’re interested in something outside the vehicle, try to glance at it briefly without losing sight of the road.

Prioritize Safe Driving Tasks:

- Concentrate on driving tasks, such as staying in your lane and observing traffic signals.

Avoid Rubbernecking:

- If you encounter an accident or incident, maintain your speed and avoid slowing down to observe the scene. Focus on driving safely past the area.

Use Defensive Driving:

- Anticipate potential hazards caused by distracted pedestrians, cyclists, or other drivers.
- Be prepared to react to sudden movements or changes in external conditions.

Stay Mindful of Traffic Flow:

- Keep track of the flow of traffic around you and adjust your driving accordingly.

Limit Distractions Inside Your Vehicle:

- Minimize internal distractions that might compound the effects of external distractions.

Maintain Situational Awareness:

- Continuously scan your environment for potential distractions, both inside and outside your vehicle.

Use Technology Responsibly:

- If using navigation systems or entertainment, ensure that you can still maintain focus on the road and traffic.

Stay Calm:

- If you encounter unexpected external distractions, remain calm and stay focused on driving.

Educate Passengers:

- Let passengers know about the importance of minimizing distractions and ask for their cooperation.

Practice Self-Discipline:

- Develop a habit of consciously refocusing your attention if you find yourself getting distracted.

Drive During Off-Peak Hours:

- Choose times to drive when traffic and potential external distractions are minimized.

Use Rest Areas for Observation:

- If you’re intrigued by a specific attraction, consider pulling over at a rest area or safe spot to observe it without endangering your driving.

FINAL WORD

By actively preventing distractions outside your vehicle, you’re taking a proactive step to prioritize safety, protect yourself and others, and contribute to a safer driving environment for everyone.