

Mechanical Issue-Related Crashes Meeting Kit

Mechanical Issue-Related Crashes Safety Talk

Mechanical failure traffic accidents are a major problem. On the road, safety is critical. While distracted driving, human error and intoxication cause a considerable number of traffic **accidents**, **mechanical failure is equally dangerous**. All drivers have a duty to maintain their vehicles as well as all mechanical parts and safety devices. A tire blowout or faulty turn signal is not an unforeseeable condition. Drivers can prevent these issues by inspecting their cars regularly and performing recommended maintenance. Commercial drivers and companies that transport goods also have a duty to maintain and inspect their trucks. Motorists who fail to keep their vehicles in good working order should be held responsible for property damage, injuries and any fatalities resulting from their negligence.

CHECK YOUR CAR FOR PROBLEMS – VEHICLE INSPECTION

Vehicles could be realistically inspected prior to every time you drive them; however, many people choose to go longer without inspecting their vehicle if at all. So many things outside of your immediate control can affect your vehicle that you do not know about. For example, any single trip can result in a nail or other object compromising your tire and causing a dangerous hazard for you the next time you drive your vehicle. A simple walk around of your car or truck prior to operation can avoid an accident.

KEEP THESE TIPS IN MIND TO CHECK YOUR CAR FOR MECHANICAL ISSUES:

- Check your tires frequently
- Look underneath for puddles
- Listen to the engine
- Check for recalls

TOP MECHANICAL FAILURES CAUSING CAR ACCIDENT

Common Contributing Factors To Brake-Related Car Accidents Include:

Faulty/worn brake lines. Leaks in brake lines may allow brake fluid to drain away, compromising brake performance.

Abs malfunctions. An Antilock Brake System (ABS) is designed to automatically prevent the wheels from locking up when drivers hit the brakes hard—preventing slipping and loss of control. ABS malfunctions can compromise braking performance.

Worn brake pads & discs. The brake pads and discs in your car wear out a little bit more with each and every use. Over time, this wear makes it harder to stop your vehicle, resulting in longer stop distances and increased accident risks.

Steering and Suspension

Steering and suspension problems can cause a loss of control over your vehicle at inopportune moments. Transmission and engine problems could keep you from being able to accelerate quickly if the need arises—leaving you stranded in an intersection with oncoming traffic.

Routine vehicle maintenance is the best way to prevent steering and suspension issues that could contribute to a car crash. If your vehicle's due for a full inspection, it's important to have that inspection done and get a report so you know if there are any issues with your steering, suspension, transmission, or engine.

Headlights/Taillights

Headlights and taillights increase visibility significantly, showing you not only more of the road, but making it so that other drivers are better able to see your vehicle too. Broken vehicle lights make your car much harder to see in the dark or in inclement weather, increasing your risk of getting rear-ended or sideswiped.

Vehicle lights are important even on a clear day. Turn signals (a.k.a. blinkers) let other drivers know when you're preparing to

change lanes or slow down for a turn. Without working blinkers, your lane changes are made unannounced.

Windshield Wipers

Worn out wiper blades are less effective at clearing rain and debris, leaving streaks that continue to block your sight. Worse yet, if the motors controlling the wipers malfunction or break, the sudden loss of vision could cause a car crash right away if you're in heavy traffic or traveling at high speed.

Check your windshield wipers once every month or so, or if you notice that they're not clearing your windshield effectively during a light rainstorm. If the blades are damaged, replace them as soon as possible.

Be sure to check your windshield wiper fluid and top it off when necessary—during your next oil change is a good time to check.

Engine Failure

Car engines are designed to operate well with very little maintenance. However, there are problems that can occur that can result in a broken-down vehicle and confusion about what went wrong.

It is important to keep an eye on your car's temperature gauge. If you notice your vehicle's temperature shifting towards the red, it may indicate that there is a serious problem with the car's liquid cooling system. Without a properly working cooling system, the combustion process can overheat the car's engine, resulting in engine failure.

A lack of oil in your car can also lead to engine failure and expensive repairs. Oil provides lubrication for your car's engines. Without it, metal parts would scrape and grind together, causing friction and overheating. Over time, oil loses its ability to lubricate and needs to be replaced. Waiting too long to change the oil can cause overheating and damage to your car's engine. An undetected oil leak can lead to low oil pressure and potential damage to your engine. Keeping up with routine maintenance for

your car will prevent damage to your engine from old oil and oil leaks, as well as reduce the chance of your vehicle suffering from engine failure on the road.

Remember, while mechanical failures are not cited as the critical reason for car accidents in most cases, they can be a major contributing factor—especially since many mechanical failures might go undetected.

The best protection is regular vehicle maintenance and to be alert whenever you're behind the wheel. However, despite your best efforts, car accidents can still happen to the best drivers in the most well-maintained vehicles.

FINAL WORD

While the majority of the time you will never experience any problems with mechanical issue-related crashes, the one time you do it could result in a serious accident. Take mechanical issues seriously and when you find one during an inspection get it fixed by a professional to ensure the vehicle is safe to operate.