Safe Driving Tips

Motor vehicle accidents are the major cause of occupational deaths. Most vehicle accidents are the result of driver error or poor operating practices. Drivers assume responsibility for their own safety and that of others on the roadways. To optimize your health and well being on the road, put into practice these safe driving tips.

OBEY TRAFFIC LAWS

Know and follow the rules of the road. Make sure you have a current license and have been properly trained to drive your vehicle. Wear your seatbelt. Obey the traffic signs or signals and be cautious when passing or backing. Yield the right-of-way. Drive within the speed limit but adjust your speed for the weather or road conditions. Watch for and heed flaggers, traffic controllers, and emergency vehicles.

DRIVE DEFENSIVELY

Be a courteous driver and share the road. Avoid aggressive driving behaviors and “road rage” activities. Follow at a safe distance allowing an adequate safety cushion for emergency stops. Watch for and anticipate other drivers, pedestrians, or children on or near the road. Visually scan for hazards, predicting how to avoid or reduce them, stay out of vehicle “blind spots.”

BE PREPARED

Driving requires you to be mentally and physically able to operate your vehicle. Make sure you’re rested, clear- headed, and alert. Avoid medications or substances that could negatively affect your driving abilities. Before entering, do a walk around the vehicle to ensure that tires are properly inflated with adequate tread. Check that the windshield is clean, that wiper blades are sharp, and that the lights are clear and working. Once in the vehicle, lock the doors and adjust the seat, seatbelt, and mirrors. Examine the gauges for adequate fuel and water. If the vehicle is

unfamiliar, locate the lights, wipers, horns, and emergency equipment. Consult the weather and road conditions for your planned trip; you may wish to alter your route or increase your travel time.

STAY FOCUSED

Driving demands your full attention. Don’t be distracted by conversations, phones, music, pre-occupied thoughts, or reading. Keep your eyes and your mind on the road.

Crucial response time is significantly reduced, if your concentration is not on the road. Complete activities such as trip-planning, map-consulting, note-taking, or applying makeup before you begin your drive. Keep both hands on the wheel and be prepared for the unexpected. And, don’t drive tired! If you feel drowsy, open the window, have a snack, play music or pull off the road to take a break, walk or nap.