The Hazards of Road Rage

Safety Talk

What’s at Stake?

Road rage is defined as aggressive or violent behavior stemming from a driver’s uncontrolled anger at the actions of another motorist. Have you ever had an encounter with a driver experiencing road rage? Or have you ever experienced road rage? Ask yourself these questions and answer honestly:

- Do you regularly drive over the speed limit, or try to “beat” red lights because you are in a hurry?
- Do you tailgate or flash your headlights at a driver in front of you that you believe is driving too slowly?
- Do you honk the horn often?
- Do you ever use obscene gestures or otherwise communicate angrily at another driver?

If you answered yes to any of these questions, it is possible you are
susceptible to road rage.

http://www.safemotorist.com/articles/road_rage.aspx

What's the Danger?

Road rage is very dangerous to yourself and those around you. It can result in severe legal consequences, physical harm, or even death. Some examples of road rage include:

- Hitting their vehicle with your car.
- Running them off the road.
- Pulling over, getting out, and engaging in a physical confrontation.
- Inciting your passenger(s) to fight the other driver.
- Using any sort of weapon to inflict harm on another driver or vehicle.

If a law enforcement officer catches you engaging in road rage, you can be charged with a criminal offense and face going to court, paying legal fees, and possibly facing jail time.

In addition, you risk, damage to your vehicle, physical harm to yourself and your passengers, and death.

http://www.dmv.org/how-to-guides/road-rage.php

How to Protect Yourself

Preventative measures you can take to ensure you and/or other drivers won't be tempted into road rage include:

- Listen to soothing music.
- Don't take it personally. Get into the mentality that you are sharing the road, and nobody's perfect.
- Give yourself plenty of time so you don't feel the pressure of being rushed or late.
- Keep a good amount of space between yourself and other drivers.
- Refrain from making prolonged eye contact or obscene gestures at other drivers.

If you've upset another driver, it's important to defuse the situation as soon as possible. The best way to do this is by

showing remorse. You can do so by:

- Waving to the other driver.
- Mouthing that you’re sorry.
- Allowing plenty of room for them to pass you.

When another driver upsets you, don’t make the situation worse. Before taking matters into your own hands, you should:

- Pull over to a safe location, out of the way of traffic.
- Take deep breaths—maybe even count backwards.
- Remember you have full control over your own actions and thoughts.
- Think about the consequences of your actions, should you contemplate exacting revenge on the other driver.
- Always call the police if you believe you’re in imminent danger.

Recognize when you are driving aggressively and take time to cool down. Aggressive driving behaviors include:

- Tailgating.
- Cutting others off.
- Not using turn signals.
- Mentally or verbally cursing other drivers.
- Speeding.
- Honking.
- Flashing your headlights.
- Brake checking.

Final Word

By remaining calm and not taking other drivers’ actions personally, you can avoid legal repercussions, accidents, physical altercations and even deadly consequences.