



A Minute for SAFETY



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Arthur J. Gallagher Risk Management Services, Inc.

Commercial Lines

Safe Driving

Working Safely When You Drive

Every time you step into a vehicle, you face a potential driving hazard. Professional drivers, who spend the majority of their workday behind the wheel, are at an even greater risk. Take a few minutes to review these basic tips for driving safely when you work. Be a safe driver, not a statistic.

Your Vehicle Is Your Tool

All workers use tools, from office equipment to industrial machinery. Your tool is your vehicle. Treat your vehicle like you would any tool—use it with respect and keep it in good condition. Check your vehicle frequently—at least once a week—to be sure that brakes, accelerator, belts, radiator, oil, battery, tires, head lamps, wipers, and brake lights are all in good working condition. If you notice anything abnormal in the way your vehicle sounds or operates, have it repaired immediately by a qualified mechanic.

Drive Defensively

You can't assume that everyone on the road is as good a driver as you are. Steer clear of drivers who swerve

in and out of lanes, respond slowly to traffic signals, or appear to be driving erratically. Pay special attention at intersections. Wait before accelerating when a red light turns green, never accelerate through a yellow signal, and always yield the right of way. Pass only in designated passing zones, and only after

you've checked blind spots for clearance. Use the four-second rule for establishing safe following distance. (When the vehicle in front of you passes a fixed object—like a signpost—begin counting "one Mississippi, two Mississippi," etc., until your vehicle reaches the same object.) If you can't count to four before passing the same object, you're too close.

Tune Into the Weather

Before you begin any trip, check for weather



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conditions along your route. If roads are in poor condition or slick from rain or ice, reduce your speed and proceed cautiously. Use low-gear on steep grades or slippery surfaces. If you should skid, do not brake. Instead, take your foot off the accelerator and turn your front wheels in the direction that the rear of the car is sliding. In dense fog or heavy rain where visibility is bad, pull to the side of the road, if possible, and wait until conditions improve. (Put your emergency flashers on so that oncoming drivers can see you.) When you start to drive again, use low-beams until fog clears.

Stay Alert

The best defense you have against potential accidents is your own ability to remain alert and aware while driving. That's why alcohol, drugs, or other medications can be lethal when you drive. They affect your ability to concentrate and impair your reaction time which can lead to injury, disability, and all too often, death—not only of the driver, but of innocent victims as well. If you're angry, distracted, or tired, don't get behind the wheel—you'll be less able to react to potentially dangerous situations. Be alert, be aware, and be safe—that's the professional way to drive.



A Minute for Safety is published by Arthur J. Gallagher Risk Management Services, Inc., in Itasca, Illinois. The information contained in this newsletter was obtained from sources that to the best of the writers' knowledge are authentic and reliable.

Advisor: Michael H. McKee

Arthur J. Gallagher Risk Management Services, Inc.
Two Pierce Place
Itasca, IL 60143-3141

Phone: 630.694.5446
Fax: 630.604.9497
Email: mike_mckee@ajg.com

 Arthur J. Gallagher Risk Management Services, Inc.