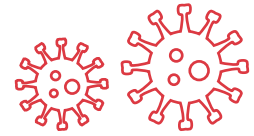


# DEFENSIVE DRIVING REINFORCED PRIOR TO REOPENING THE COUNTRY



## Issue:

Your fleet is an essential part of your business. Employees out delivering goods and services, making sales calls, providing installation and repairs or carrying on other aspects of your business may be experiencing a lower traffic volume. Some drivers who have remained out on the road have become accustomed to less traffic and higher speeds, often driving faster than the posted/recommended speed limits. Construction zones may have been unattended for days or weeks.

Many are anxiously anticipating states reopening. When this does happen, this may significantly increase the traffic volume with most drivers getting back on the road experiencing heavy traffic for the first time in a long time. This poses a number of concerns for drivers similar to a “weather event” which often results in an increase in the frequency and severity of motor vehicle collisions.

## Preparing Your Drivers:

According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, Traffic Safety Facts, nearly 95% of all traffic collisions each year are caused by driver error. These errors most frequently stem from poor vision, habits, aggressive attitudes, inattention, fatigue and failure to use proven defensive driving techniques. These errors will be exacerbated by the fact that many drivers on the road have not been behind the wheel for some time.

Employers would be prudent to take advantage of this down time and to conduct refresher defensive driver training for all employees. Remind drivers to take these key actions to be defensive:

## Be Farsighted While Driving

- City block/Country mile. In the city look ahead one block. In the country or on the interstate look ahead a mile, next hill or curve in the roadway.
- Continuously look far ahead to determine traffic conditions in order to make educated decisions regarding your course of action.

## Keep Your Eyes Moving

- Scan the roadway looking for potential hazards and the actions of other drivers.
- Always check your rearview mirrors.
- Be sure to observe and obey road signs.
- Look twice for motorcycles, bicyclists and pedestrians especially at intersections and when changing lanes.
- Never let a distraction or hazard occupy your attention for very long. Don't talk or text on a smartphone while driving. Driving requires your total attention and involvement.

## Take In The Whole Picture

- Determine what's happening down side streets or alleyways.
- Vehicles approaching the intersection at a high speed or parked vehicles alongside the road are hazards you should recognize.
- Watch for brake lights, vehicular movement and pedestrians.

## Maintain An Adequate Space Cushion

- Slow down and maintain an adequate space cushion (following distance).
- While driving a vehicle, you should have at least a three second space cushion between your vehicle and the vehicle directly ahead of you. Add an additional second if you're traveling over 40 mph.
- For a straight truck, you should have at least a four second space cushion. Add an additional second if you're traveling over 40 mph. Larger vehicles should add at least another second.
- Be sure to add at least one second for adverse driving conditions.
- When stopped, be far enough back so you can see the tires of the vehicle in front of you.

## Communicate Your Every Move

- If you're making turns or changing lanes, advise the other drivers of your intentions by using turn signals.
- If you see a red light ahead, put your foot on the brake pedal early to communicate via your brake lights that you'll be coming to a stop.

[Click here for additional tips and articles](#) that can help you navigate some of the risks that your business is facing with COVID-19. Customers of The Hartford have access to additional fleet resources, including on-demand webinars. Please visit [TheHartford.com/riskengineering](https://www.thehartford.com/riskengineering)



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