

# Defensive Driving Tips

Regardless if you use Decision Driving or Smith System on your particular project, it's time to reiterate the concepts of the appropriate program. We have had an average of about 1 MOR per day and 1 auto accident every 3 days since the beginning of the year. These numbers need to be drastically reduced, so please take the time in your morning tailgate meeting each day next week and review our Defensive Driving Program.

Listed below are the key points to our Defensive Driving Programs, please use this information along with your training materials on hand and review with your teams.

## Decision Driving

### E - Expand Your Look Ahead Capacity

- TIME IS SPACE – SPACE IS TIME
- Looking Ahead (8 – 12 seconds)
- Following Distance (3 seconds)
- Clearing Intersection (3 seconds)
- Checking Mirrors (5 – 8 seconds)
- Avoid Staring (No More Than 2 seconds)
- Turning Signal Use (5-6 Clicks)

### S - Size Up the Whole Scene

- Maintain awareness of Driving Environment.
- Look in mirrors every 5-8 seconds. Left-Right-Left
- Scan intersections for approaching vehicles.
- Keep eyes moving every 2 seconds

### S - Signal Your Intentions Early

- Communicate in traffic using your... Lights, Horn & Hand signals  
Directional signals (turn signals), 5-6 clicks in advance
- Establish eye contact if possible.
- Avoid driving in others' blind spots.
- Be predictable; give other drivers time to react.

### P - Plan an Escape Route

- Maintain adequate following distance.
- Think of it as your "Decision Space".

- Be prepared to yield at any time.
- Don't become "Boxed In".
- At lights stop so as to see the tires of the car in front of you. "The Wedge"
- Time your passing moves.

### T - Take Decisive Action

- Take action necessary to drive safely and avoid crashes
- Maintain a position in traffic enabling you to take action immediately if required

## Smith System

### Key 1 – Aim High in Steering

- Look ahead a minimum of 15 seconds

### Key 2 – Get the Big Picture

- 4 second minimum following distance
- Scan mirrors every 5 to 8 seconds
- Scan intersections for approaching vehicles.

### Key 3 – Keep Your Eyes Moving

- Avoid focusing on one object for than 2 seconds

### Key 4 – Leave Yourself an Out

- Surround yourself with space
- At lights stop so as to see the tires of the car in front of you. "The Wedge"

### Key 5 – Make Sure They See You

- Seek eye contact