

SAFETY TALK

➤ Defensive Driving

Driving and operating vehicles while performing business activities is a serious responsibility. Your employer expects employees to safely operate vehicles to prevent injuries and accidental loss to property. This publication does not replace your employer's policies; instead it is intended to provide additional safety information to employees.

Defensive Driving

Because vehicle accidents are a leading cause of work-related injuries and deaths, you should strive to display the following safe driving behaviors every time you are behind the wheel.

- Comply with all local, state, and federal traffic laws.
- Ensure your vehicle is maintained properly and is safe operating condition.
- Fasten seat belts at all times when operating or riding as a passenger in any vehicle.
- Continually scan the road for hazardous conditions.
- Keep your eyes and attention focused on the road at all times.
- Never program navigation systems, send or receive texts or emails, or search the Internet while driving.
- Adjust your speed and driving behaviors to changing weather and traffic conditions.
- Maintain at least a three-second following distance from the vehicle in front of you. Allow more time if driving in adverse weather conditions, while towing, or when driving a larger vehicle.
- Use your turn signal when turning or shifting lanes to alert other drivers and pedestrians of your intentions.
- Use caution when backing.
- Turn headlights on whenever your windshield wipers are activated.
- Consider driving with headlights on at all times to increase your visibility to other drivers.
- Move over when possible or slow down when approaching emergency personnel or highway workers, construction equipment and stopped traffic.



Securing Loads

Loose equipment, tools, or material in the passenger compartment or cargo bays of vehicles can be deadly in the event of an accident or sudden stop. Always ensure equipment, tools, and material in compartments and cargo bays are properly secured. Avoid using bungee cords to secure loads as they may cause load to shift and can break without warning. Drawers in moveable trucks should always be secured before the truck is driven.

Secure all tower equipment (ladder trucks, aerial buckets, etc.) prior to the movement of the vehicle. Only materials and equipment necessary to carry on City work should be transported in or on City vehicles.

Follow the City's policy on carrying passengers. Never carry standing passengers. If the vehicle is a pick-up truck, passengers are not allowed to ride in the truck bed. Attach a flag to loads that extend beyond the back end of a cargo bed.

Cell Phone Use

Employees whose job responsibilities include driving and who must use a cell phone for business use are expected to refrain from using their phone while driving.

- Allow voicemail or your passenger to handle calls when possible. Consider setting the ringer tone to silent while driving to help avoid the temptation to immediately answer a call.
- Safety must come before all other concerns. Avoid using the phone in heavy traffic, unfamiliar areas, or adverse weather conditions.
- Regardless of the circumstances, including slow or stopped traffic, employees are strongly encouraged to pull off to the side of the road and safely stop the vehicle before placing or accepting a call.
- If acceptance of a call is unavoidable and pulling over is not a safe option:
 - Always use hands-free devices
 - Use the voice-activated or "speed dial" feature
 - Keep the call brief
 - Do not take notes, text messages, send e-mail, or search the Internet while driving
 - Refrain from discussing complicated or emotional issues
 - Keep eyes and attention focused on the road and both hands free to operate the vehicle

http://www.cdc.gov/Motorvehiclesafety/Distracted_Driving/index.html