

## News & Notes

### SPEED KILLS

Consider these statistics:

- \* You're six times more likely to have an accident if you're traveling at 10 or more miles per hour above the speed limit.
- \* Your chance of being seriously injured or killed doubles for every 10 mph over 50 mph that you travel.
- \* Sixty percent of speed-related crashes occur at night.
- \* Excessive speed is responsible for 24 percent of crashes on straight roads, but 48 percent of those that occur on a curving road.
- \* Forty-four percent of speed-related accidents occur on roads with a posted speed limit of 55 mph.

### WHAT IS AGGRESSIVE DRIVING?

OSHA reports that a substantial number of the 6.8 million crashes that occur each year are believed to be the result of aggressive driving. Here's what Americans identify as aggressive behavior, according to the Network of Employers for Traffic Safety's Nerves of Steel Survey:

Tailgating	95%
Making rude gestures	91%
Passing on the shoulder	90%
Pulling into parking space someone else is waiting for	88%
Failing to yield to merging traffic	85%
Flashing high beams at the car in front of you	74%
Waiting until the last second to merge with traffic on the highway	66%
Changing lanes without signaling	66%
Driving through a yellow light that is turning red	62%
Honking the horn	53%



"Dang it...I *knew* this commute would catch up to me..."

### SAFETY TIP OF THE MONTH

Never park a catalyst-equipped car, or any car, on a pile of dry leaves or other dry vegetation. Catalysts reduce emissions by accelerating the combustion of pollutants leaving the engine. In doing this job, they get extremely hot and could present a fire hazard.

# Safety Matters



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## Safe Driving Tips

### Make your daily commute a safe one

One of the biggest safety risks you face every day is not at work, but rather driving to and from work. To ensure a safer commute, follow these driving tips from the folks at Edmunds.com, known for their car-buying guide:

- ⌚ **Avoid the fast lane.** The center or right lanes on multilane roads give you more escape routes should a problem suddenly arise that requires quick lane changes or pulling onto the shoulder. Most highway accidents occur in the left or fast lane.
- ⌚ **Keep scanning the area ahead.** Smart drivers don't look only at the car ahead of them. They also watch the traffic in front of that car. This increases your chance of seeing a problem while you still have time to react to it.
- ⌚ **Beware of blind spots.** Don't rely solely on your mirrors. Look directly into the lanes beside you to avoid missing objects left undetected by the mirrors.
- ⌚ **Get racecar driver control of the wheel.** The idea here is to maintain control of the wheel by moving your seat close enough to the steering wheel (like the racecar drivers do) so that, with your arm outstretched and your back against the seat, you can rest your wrist on the top of the wheel. This puts you in the best position to manage last-minute evasive maneuvers.
- ⌚ **Place your hands at 9 and 3 o'clock.** This provides better vehicle control, especially if you are forced into quick maneuvering to avoid a potential crash.
- ⌚ **Know your vehicle.** Pay attention to how it reacts in certain situations. Become familiar with the limits of your brakes and tires.
- ⌚ **Keep your vehicle in shape.** Edmunds recommends sticking to the manufacturer's recommended maintenance schedule as a way to ensure that your vehicle will accelerate, stop, and steer when you need it to.
- ⌚ **Nighttime is not the right time.** Traveling at night is more hazardous than driving during the day. You're more likely to be tired and your field of vision is decreased. Drive extra defensively.

### CHOCOLATE MAKES YOU SAFER?

Dr. Bryan Raudenbush is a popular scientist these days. The Wheeling (West Virginia) Jesuit University researcher found that eating chocolate might boost brain function.

During Raudenbush's study, one group of volunteers consumed 85 grams of milk chocolate, dark chocolate, and carob. A control group got nothing.

Following a 15-minute digestive period, the volunteers were given a number of tests that assessed memory, attention span, reaction time, and problem-solving ability.

Results of the study show that consuming chocolate, particularly milk chocolate, improves reaction time, impulse control, and memory. All those things can help you work safer.

So maybe that chocolate bar for your work- break snack isn't such a bad idea after all!

### RIDDLE OF THE MONTH

I travel all around the world but never leave the corner. What am I?

Answer on Page 2 in "Safety Bits & Pieces."

## Safety Bits & Pieces

### LADDER SAFETY DO'S AND DON'TS

#### DO:

- ☑ Check your shoes before you climb, and wipe off wet, muddy, or greasy soles.
- ☑ Face the ladder and hold on to the side rails with both hands as you climb.
- ☑ Carry tools and materials on a belt or shoulder strap, or hoist them up once you're in place on the ladder.
- ☑ Keep a hand on the ladder as you work.
- ☑ Move slowly and cautiously and keep your body centered on the ladder as you work (a good rule of thumb is to keep your belt buckle between the rails).

#### DON'T:

- ☒ Allow more than one person on a ladder at a time.
- ☒ Climb higher than the fourth rung from the top on a straight or extension ladder or the second step from the top on a stepladder.
- ☒ Overreach—get down and move the ladder instead.
- ☒ Move a ladder while you're on it.
- ☒ Slide down a ladder.
- ☒ Climb a ladder if you're very tired, feeling ill, on medication that affects alertness or balance, or impaired by alcohol or drugs.

### NEAR MISS OPPORTUNITIES

When something goes wrong on the job and almost results in an accident, you have a golden opportunity to improve workplace safety. Never walk away from a near miss.

Find out what happened. Report the problem. Work with your supervisor and co-workers to make sure the problem is fixed so that the next time it doesn't cause a real accident where somebody gets hurt.

### WATCH YOUR BACK

Back injuries are the most common type of injury on the job. But you can protect your back by following these simple tips:

- \* Stretch to warm up before you work.
- \* Have materials delivered close to where they will be used.
- \* Store materials at waist height so you do not have to bend as much.
- \* Use carts, dollies, forklifts, and hoists to move heavy materials.
- \* Use carrying tools with handles.
- \* Do not lift materials that weigh more than you know you can safely handle by yourself. Get help.
- \* Do not depend on back belts to prevent back injuries.

**Riddle of the Month Answer: A stamp**

# 'Tis the Season—to Fall?

## Take precautions to prevent falls

The holiday season can bring with it an increased risk of injuries from falls as people use ladders, stools and other furniture to hang lights, ornaments, and other decorations. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), in an average year, about 5,800 people (that's two to three every hour!) end up in hospital emergency rooms for fall-related injuries sustained while decorating during the holiday season.

CDC's research shows that:

- Men are more likely than women to be injured (58% vs. 42%).
- The majority of those injured in falls while decorating for the holidays (62%) were young and middle-age adults (20-49 years of age). In contrast, this age group comprises only 30% of people injured annually in falls.
- Most holiday decorating-related falls were from ladders (43%), followed by falls from roofs, furniture (including step stools), stairs, and porches.
- Fractures were the most frequent holiday decorating-related injury (34%). Just over half (51%) of the fractures were caused by falls from ladders.

Be careful when decorating this year so that you can enjoy your holiday. Never stand on a chair or climb on other furniture. Use a ladder or step stool—and use them safely.

### POSITIVE THINKING ABOUT SAFETY PREVENTS ACCIDENTS

When you take safety seriously and add a generous portion of positive thinking, you have a good formula for safety success. Positive thinking about safety involves a combination of attitude and objectives. It means first believing that your actions count in preventing accidents. Then it means knowing the difference between safe and unsafe actions and being determined to choose the safe way.

Here are several positive thinking statements about safety:

- \* I am accountable for my own safety on the job.
- \* I am responsible for looking out for the safety of my co-workers.
- \* I can help prevent accidents and keep everybody safe by working with co-workers to do our parts.
- \* I will follow all work rules designed to promote my safety and that of my co-workers. I will not take shortcuts where safety is concerned.
- \* I'm going to do every job the best - and safest - way.
- \* I will make sure there are no hazards that require special protective measures before I start any job.
- \* I will wear personal protective equipment whenever the job requires it.
- \* I will follow special procedures whenever the job requires them.

In the ongoing effort to prevent accidents and injuries, one of your most powerful weapons is thinking positively about safety -then acting positively on those thoughts.

### NEED SAFETY TRAINING?

Contact the Insurance Coverage Office at 739-3651 or via email at [inscov@state.de.us](mailto:inscov@state.de.us).

### ON THE LIGHTER SIDE...

In a country home that seldom had guests, the young son was eager to help his mother when his father appeared with two dinner guests from the office.

When the dinner was nearly over, the boy went to the kitchen and proudly carried in the first piece of apple pie, giving it to his father, who passed it to a guest.

The boy came in with a second piece of pie and gave it to his father who again gave it to a guest.

This was too much for the boy, who said, "It's no use, Dad. The pieces are all the same size."

### Notable Quotation

"Maturity begins to grow when you can sense your concern for others outweighing your concern for yourself."

John MacNaughton

### Happy Holidays! Be Safe!



What's wrong with this picture?  
Answer in January "Safety Matters."