



### FEBRUARY SAFETY LEADERS

#### Congratulations to this month's Safety Leaders!

Danielle Hoffmeier- Columbus, OH  
Thomas Levertton- Flatbed  
Jose Montes- North Texas  
Mike Thompson- Burlington, IA

Sadil Jugovic- Camp Hill, PA  
Richard McLaughlin- Wood River, IL  
Kevin Noble- Columbus, OH  
Mike Torrance- Burlington, IA

Keep up the great work!

## Defensive Driving

Defensive driving has been defined as driving to save lives, time, and money, in spite of the conditions around you and the actions of others. On average, there are 125,000 crashes each year involving large commercial trucks. As drivers, you can't control the actions of other drivers or the conditions of the roadway, but practicing defensive driving skills can help you avoid the dangers.

Defensive driving goes beyond mastery of the rules of the road and the basic mechanics of driving. Its aim is to reduce the risk of collision by anticipating dangerous situations, despite adverse conditions or the mistakes of others. This can be achieved by applying some general rules and practicing some specific driving techniques.

The defensive driver tries to recognize potentially hazardous situations sufficiently in advance to allow time to safely maneuver past them. It is important not only to scan enough ahead but also to scan frequently to the side and rear for passing or approaching vehicles. Scan thoroughly before changing speed or direction.

**Know your surroundings.** Check the local weather forecast, observe traffic patterns, and recognize the multiple hazards around you. Look out for signs and signals and follow their directions. Know your speed and position and the speed and positions of others.

**Have an escape route.** Leave yourself an out in case your path of travel is suddenly blocked. Think about the "what-ifs" and the action you would take to avoid a crash. In the meantime, position your vehicle where you have the best chance of seeing and being seen.

Another good tool to prevent crashes and use defensive driving is to take the time to read or review crashes involving commercial vehicles. Newspaper, magazines, online forums, and blogs often report truck accidents. Not only does this fight complacency, but it is also a great way to learn from the mistakes of others, to identify hazards, and learn of defensive driving tips.

When practicing defensive driving, stay alert and focused on driving. Cut out distractions and get rest when needed. Use defensive driving to safely get to your destination.

## Seatbelt Safety



**Always wear your seat belt.** Thousands of lives are lost each year in vehicle accidents where the driver or passenger is not wearing a seat belt. The sudden reduction in speed is what kills or injures motorists, not the speed itself: even a low-speed collision or sudden stop can throw vehicle occupants forward with enough force to cause severe injury or death.

Passengers are 25 times more likely to be ejected from the vehicle if they do not wear safety belts.

Wearing your seat belt prevents you from being tossed about the passenger compartment or ejected from the vehicle. Additionally, drivers wearing seat belts will be kept in position to attempt to regain control of the vehicle.

The majority of fatal accidents occur within 25 miles of the driver's home.

More injuries occur:

- In cities and towns.
- At low speeds.
- On short trips.

The length or distance of your trip should not dictate your seat belt use: it should be worn as long as you are in the vehicle and it is moving. If you need to adjust your seat belt, retrieve an item out of your reach, or take a break from being strapped in, pull off the road to a safe place. Just be sure to buckle back up before getting back on the road.



## March Milestones

### We appreciate your work for all these years and many best wishes on the anniversary of your service this March!

Michael Torrance, 15 years! Burlington, IA  
Scott Link, 12 years! Burlington, IA  
Chad Pence, 9 years! BRL Tank Wash Manager  
Trey Brandmeyer, 8 years! Burlington, IA  
Israel Morales, 8 years! South Texas

Gary Cochran, 13 years! Wood River, IL  
Michael Merritt, 10 years! Refrigerated Division  
Michael Walters, 9 years! Maintenance Director  
Justin Goemaat, 8 years! Burlington Tank Wash  
Ricky Downard, 7 years! Cement Division

## Following Distance



In the rush and anxiety of everyday driving, following distance is often sacrificed for getting somewhere faster. However, when you do not allow enough following distance, you not only put yourself at risk, you fail to save time and may cause further slowing of traffic

### Determining a Safe Following Distance

1. Determine an appropriate distance from the car in front of you, using one of the following methods.
  - To use the three-second rule, select a fixed object along the roadway, and assure that it takes at least three

seconds for your vehicle to pass it from the time the vehicle in front of you passes it.

- To use the car-length method, maintain a distance of at least one car-length for every 10 mph.
2. Create an additional cushion of space between your vehicle and the vehicle in front of you. The benefits of having a safety cushion include:
    - Giving drivers time to recognize and react to changes or emergencies on the road

- Allowing cars to change lanes and make turns without interrupting the flow of traffic
- Keeping traffic moving

3. In certain conditions, add additional distance:

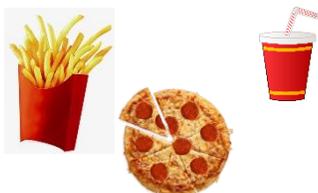
- In wet, slick, or other inclement weather conditions
- At night or in other low-visibility conditions
- When following a motorcycle
- If being followed by a bus or semi
- If pulling a trailer
- If being tailgated

## MAKE HEALTHY CHOICES

A healthy diet relies on a variety of foods:

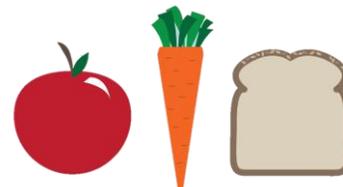
- Foods that are rich in protein, whole grains and fiber provide a balance of nutrients that are needed for optimum health.
- Choices that contain high quantities of cholesterol, sugar, salt and fats provide little nourishment and have a negative effect on the body. Foods to refrain from:

- French fries
- Processed breakfast cereals
- Soda and diet soda
- White breads
- Pizza
- Fried foods



Better choices:

- Fruits
- Vegetables
- Lean meats
- Fish
- Whole grain breads



Keep your portions moderate: Your personal calorie intake per day depends on your weight, age, and activities. Check with your physician for your recommended number of calories per day and a proper workout program.