
ACCESSING SAFETY KNOWLEDGE (ASK) SHEET: *GENERAL DISTRACTIONS, EVENTS, AND HAZARDS – BE AWARE AND HOW TO HANDLE*

While you drive multiple things can occur that can impact your drive and health. Here are a few to be aware of.

1. **Reckless, distracted drivers.**

Reckless drivers create a hazard for you and others. Slow down, let them pass, keep them in front of you and at a safe distance. These drivers are:

- Distracted (cell phones, talking, etc.)
- Under the influence of drugs and alcohol
- Driving recklessly and slipping between cars
- Speeding much faster than traffic
- Driving much slower than traffic

2. **Unexpected road debris.**

Tires, bumpers, a box, animals, and all sorts of things can be in the road. The guy in front of you swerves to avoid it and it is right there! Keeping a safe distance (2-3 second rule) between you and the vehicle in front of you is critical to preserve your safety.

3. **Potholes and road damage.**

Potholes can cause a distraction and damage. Sometimes you are right on it and here you go. When you see the pothole on the road, if you can avoid it without causing an accident, carefully avoid it. If you cannot, get a firm grip on the steering wheel, slow down, experience it, and be careful.

4. **Rain and hydroplaning resulting in skidding out of control.**

Take your foot off the accelerator, turn in the direction you want to go, do not hit the brake. Remember, wait for control and then slowly use it.

5. **You drive into water but do not know how deep.**

You come up to a "puddle" which might be a lake. Stop, turn around, don't drown.

6. **Car slams into you.**

When it occurs, first get your bearings. Make sure you are OK and anyone else in the car is OK.

- Safely and carefully get off the road.
- Park your vehicle and turn on your flashers.
- Check the other party to make sure all are OK.
- Assist the injured.
- Call 911 or police.
- Call your office. (It's good if someone from the office comes out to be a witness after the fact.)
- Control what you can. Get details of all parties, other drivers, and witnesses.

7. **Fog**

Drive slowly. Fog not only affects visibility but leaves the road wet and slick. If you drive at a low speed, you'll be able to stop the car quickly if you encounter something (a fallen branch, a disabled car) that the fog has obscured. Use fog lights if you have them, or low beams. Never use bright lights – the light will be reflected at you. Roll down your window and turn off the radio so you can hear what is happening on the road.

Don't drive in foggy conditions unless you absolutely must. If you encounter unexpected fog, remember to reduce your speed; your car will need three times as much distance as usual to stop on slick roads. Open your windows to listen for traffic you cannot see. Be patient: Don't switch lanes if you don't have to. Unless necessary, never stop on a busy road in a dense fog, which puts you at risk of being hit.

Provided by the ASA – Houston Chapter Safety & Health Committee and 

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