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## ACCESSING SAFETY KNOWLEDGE (ASK) SHEET: *TOP FIVE BEHAVIORS THAT RESULT IN ACCIDENTS*

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We are all responsible for the way we drive and for our habits. As we gain control of poor driving habits, we lessen the possibility of accidents. Listed below are behaviors that, if eliminated, would significantly lessen our possibility of having an auto accident. We each need to examine our behaviors.

### 1. Tailgating and failure to maintain safe distance

The amount of distance you maintain between yourself and the vehicle in front of you has a direct relation to rear end accidents. Every safety professional recommends maintaining 2-3 seconds of drive distance between you and the vehicle in front. The faster you drive or the larger your vehicle, you should lean toward the "3" seconds. This is critical to give yourself time to react to changing conditions. Failure on your part will result in an accident if the vehicle in front stops unexpectedly. Keep your distance!

### 2. Distractions – Devote your attention to driving and what is going on around you

When driving a vehicle your attention must be on that which you are doing – 100% on driving. Any variance or distraction can lead to catastrophic consequences.

When driving, your full attention must be on the road ahead, other vehicles, events that could happen in an instant. Any distraction prevents you from seeing the next hazard. Distractions that cause the most danger are:

- Cell phones – calls/texts
- Objects in the vehicle – radio, papers, etc.
- People in the vehicle – passengers
- Events and scenes outside the vehicle
- Fatigue or daydreaming

All can cause accidents and you need to actively avoid them. Devote your attention to driving.

### 3. Intersections and failure to take extra care -

Whenever you come to an intersection, you are arriving at a place which offers multiple areas where danger can come from.

- The person who will turn in front of you from the left or right.
- Pedestrians who are talking, oblivious to your even being there.
- Persons stopped at stop signs, not waiting for you.
- Vehicle at light now red but soon to turn green, and they are off to the races.
- Kids, animals, homeless, etc., etc., all looking to appear out of nowhere!

Remember, their eyes may see you but unless their minds are engaged, the visual never registers.

### 4. Reaction to outside events

When we drive, the events around us are ever changing. We need to learn to expect the unexpected. An ever-changing world is a regular occurrence.

- Weather
- Road conditions
- Other drivers
- Emergency vehicles
- Kids and animals

### 5. YOU! What is your behavior like? Are you really ready to drive?

- Attitude alert, enough sleep, mind engaged?
- No emotional stimulus? No anger, rage, etc.?
- Do you know your route? Have you thought it through?
- Is your vehicle safe? Have you checked it?
- Are there chemicals in your body (legal or illegal) that could affect your ability to drive?
- Have you considered every possibility?

#### Remember:

- Expect the unexpected
- Give yourself time to react
- Be prepared . . . the drive needs to end with you safely at your destination.

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