

GENERAL HIGHWAY SAFETY

DRIVING SAFETY TIPS

- **Rain:** Always be mindful of standing water that can cause you to lose traction and control of your vehicle. You should turn on headlamps when it is raining. If your vehicle skids out of control, then steer in the direction of the skid. If you see water covering the roadway, don't try to cross it as it may be too deep and your vehicle could stall in the water.
- **Fog/Smoke:** When fog or smoke are present, turn on headlamps (daytime) and on low beam at night. High beam headlamps should not be used at night in foggy or smoky conditions because the fog can get reflected back to the source, thus making it more difficult to see. The white line on the right side of the roadway is for use as a guide during foggy conditions and can prevent you from going off the right side of the road.
- **Work Zones:** Workers building and modifying our highways and bridges must be protected while doing their work. When approaching the work zones, slow down to allow for any unforeseen circumstances such as sudden stops in traffic or workers having to enter the roadway. The heavy equipment they use is dangerous to motorists as it frequently enters the road from various points along the work zones routes.
- **Dealing with aggressive drivers:** If you encounter someone who is driving recklessly or aggressively, slow down to allow him/her to go around you and keep a safe distance. Never try to "compete" or take a stand against that person; just let them go and stay clear of them.
- **Should you have a tire blowout:** Have a good grip on the steering wheel and allow your car or motorcycle to coast to a stop and try to get off the main traveled portion of the roadway. Do not brake or speed up to get out of the way of other motorists as this may cause your vehicle to crash.

GENERAL HIGHWAY SAFETY

ADVICE FOR DRIVING ON SOUTH CAROLINA ROADS

- If you experience car trouble (proper way to get off road and call for help):
 - **Residential areas:** In residential areas, make sure your vehicle is away from intersecting roads. Your vehicle can become a traffic hazard for other motorists.
 - **Rush hour - morning/afternoon commutes:** Always try to get out of the roadway to avoid a potential collision on the rush hour commute. Pull over to the emergency lane of the controlled access highway or to a parking lot or somewhere safe outside of the main traveled roadways in urban areas.
 - **Around a collision scene:** Be aware of the dangers that exist around collision scenes. Emergency crews, along with the motorists involved in the collision, could be standing in the roadway and be struck very easily. Slow down and pull over as far as you can away from the damaged vehicles and emergency equipment. Be on the lookout for police or emergency officials to direct you around the collision scene. In poor lighting conditions, use your low beam headlamps in emergency scene areas so as to not impair the vision of the emergency workers on the scene.
- **How to avoid a collision:** Drive defensively; obey all speed limits and other regulatory signs. Make sure you have had adequate rest before venturing out on the highway, don't drink and drive, and wear your safety belt as it helps keep you in the driver seat and in control of the vehicle.
- **How to verify that you're being pulled over by a law enforcement officer:** Look for a flashing blue light and try to identify the driver and ascertain that he/she is wearing a uniform. Make sure that the vehicle is marked properly identifying it as a police vehicle. If it is not, the officer should turn on his interior light and make it known to you that he is a police officer. Pull over to the right side of the road when you feel it is safe to do so.
- **Vehicle maintenance tips:** Always make sure your vehicle has been properly serviced before taking a road trip. Tires should be inflated to the proper pressure and have good tread. Check to ensure coolant levels and other fluids are adequate, and make sure wipers make good contact with the windshield.
- **Parking and leaving your vehicle, i.e. rest stops:** Lock your car and do not go to sleep with the engine running. The carbon monoxide fumes could be fatal. Do not talk to strangers in rest areas. If your vehicle becomes inoperable in the rest area, do not leave it more than 48 hours and notify law enforcement of the problem so they can watch out for your vehicle.

GENERAL HIGHWAY SAFETY

DRIVING EMERGENCIES

- **Brake failure:** Try to use the engine to slow you down by downshifting to lower gears, and try the parking brake. Honk your horn to alert others there is a problem. Your parking brake may be used to slow down.
- **Flat tire:** Slow down to a stop by coasting, and do not abruptly apply brakes. Set your parking brake before attempting to change the flat tire.
- **Meeting a car in wrong lane:** Slow down and coast on to the shoulder of the roadway. Turn on lights to alert the other driver.
- **Stalled car:** Turn on emergency flashers and get out of the car if you are still in the roadway. Stand in a safe spot out of the way of traffic.
- **Wheels run off pavement:** Grip the steering wheel firmly and coast back onto the road. Do not brake or accelerate back onto the roadway.
- **Stuck accelerator:** Turn engine off, but do not lock the steering wheel. Be prepared to brake harder than usual because the power braking system will be off as well. Honk your horn to alert other motorists of the problem so they can steer clear of your vehicle.

GENERAL HIGHWAY SAFETY

TIPS ON ROAD ASSISTANCE

- What to do when you need assistance on the road:
 - Move the vehicle to the right side of the road out of the flow of traffic if possible. Stopping on the left side of a divided highway is extremely dangerous but sometimes unavoidable. Do not leave the vehicle stopped in a traffic lane.
 - Show clear signs that there is a problem and you need assistance by raising the vehicle hood. This is an internationally recognized sign of distress.
 - In addition, turn on your emergency flashers and display any signs you have that indicate you need help (such as shade screens with distress messages).
 - If you remain with the vehicle, another motorist will likely report your disabled vehicle to the police, and it will be easier for the police or others to provide assistance.
- Be prepared for problem situations:
 - Keep items in the vehicle such as flares, flashlights, blankets and a first aid kit. Mobile phones in the vehicle also become valuable safety tools during breakdown situations. In addition, have water available in hot climates, especially for children.
 - Know where items such as your spare tire, jack and other tools are in the vehicle and how to use them. Check periodically to make sure they are in working order.
- Be familiar with the operation of your vehicle:
 - Read your owner's manual. A motorist who understands how his/her vehicle operates is better able to detect and address problems with the vehicle.
 - Conduct periodic and regular maintenance of the vehicle.
 - If you hear or sense that something is wrong with the vehicle, have it checked.

Travel Safety Tips from the South Carolina Highway Patrol:

Prepare in Advance of Travel:

- » Have your vehicle checked for the following: brakes, battery, fluid levels, tire pressure, light bulbs and any parts that need regular maintenance.
- » Plan your route. Do you have maps in case there are detours? Check traffic cameras, detours and road conditions/closures at the SC Department of Transportation's web site www.dot.state.sc.us.
- » Consult the SC Highway Patrol's web site at www.scdps.gov/schp for Real Time traffic information by county.
- » Are you prepared for roadway emergencies? Bring along a first-aid kit, flashlight, blankets, drinking water and snacks, flares, jumper cables and an ice scraper.
- » Make sure your cell phone is fully charged before you leave.
- » If your vehicle breaks down on the roadway or you have a minor collision, it is vitally important (and South Carolina law) to remove your vehicle from the flow of traffic and off the roadway, if at all possible.
- » **Never try to get out of your vehicle in the flow of traffic and push the vehicle or look under the hood.**
- » If you are changing a tire, be mindful of the traffic around you and ensure the vehicle is well off the roadway.
- » If you are traveling into other states where you are unfamiliar with the roadways, pay close attention to speed limit and other roadway signs giving you instructions.
- » Be patient. Do not tail gate. Keep a safe following distance and refuse to engage in aggressive/combative driving.

Take Care of Yourself and Your Family:

- » Make sure you get plenty of rest the night before travelling.
- » The Highway Patrol does not recommend driving all night to avoid traffic. Most people will not get the extra sleep in advance of their trip and risk extreme fatigue. Also, drunken driving collisions are greater during the nighttime and early morning hours.
- » Try to save rest room/stretching breaks for designated rest areas. If you must stop at a convenience store or other area, be especially careful of your surroundings.
- » Do not leave purses, wallets or other belongings visible in the vehicle. Lock your vehicle while you are in it and out.
- » Take the keys and lock your vehicle while pumping gas.
- » Never leave children in an unattended vehicle.
- » Double check children's car seats. Make sure the seat is attached tightly to the vehicle seat and the harness and straps are on tightly and properly.
- » Be aware of the sedating effects of a heavy meal. It is best to avoid a long trip right after a large meal. If you have to travel, try to get in a nap first.