**Driving Safety Tips**

**Whether** **you have** **been driving for two years or twenty, here are some great “reminders” that may help you (and others) get safely to your destination.**

The Office of Risk Management yearly, sees its fair share of car accident claims. From the common fender bender to the more serious conditions where severe injuries were documented. Our goal with this tip sheet is to give our locations some great ideas to keep in mind when getting behind the wheel.

* Focus on Driving with no distractions: All your attention needs to be on driving. You should not be making any mental lists of what you have to do for the day, and certainly not using your cell phone.
* Slow Down: Increased speed gives you less time to react, which increases your chances of getting into an accident. If you want to get to your destination on time leave early.
* Drive Defensively: Be aware of the other drivers around you and what they are doing. Always expect the unexpected. Do not trust any drivers around you, but yourself.
* Keep a 2-second cushion between you and the car in front of you. Increase this cushion up to 4 seconds or more depending on weather conditions.
* Do not retrieve items off the vehicle floor while driving (this is including your precious cell phone).
* Keep the interior of your car clean. Rolling soda bottles and left-over trash can possibly become lodged under gas and brake pedals causing a very serious situation.

* When in doubt, yield: If you are not certain who has the right of way, err on the side of caution. If you know you have the right of way and the other motorist seems to disagree, it is best to be the bigger person and give in.
* Stop on red: The leading cause of intersection collisions is running a red light. Slow down before reaching an intersection and evaluate. NEVER race a yellow light.
* Use Your Blinkers: Make lane changes and turns smooth and predictable, always signal well in advance.
* Road Rage. It’s real and can get you injured or killed. Keep your emotions in check. If another motorist tries to engage in this behavior, it is best just to back away and let it go.
* Monitor your blind spots and stay out of others. Especially behind tractor-trailers. If you can not see the truck’s mirrors, he cannot see you. Do not follow large trucks closely.
* Check Weather Conditions. Get in the habit of checking the weather before you leave for your destination. This way you can be prepared in case of poor driving conditions.
* Look far ahead/Always scan your surroundings. Keep your eyes far down the road (not looking at the end of your hood). This allows you to anticipate problems. Look for erratic drivers and debris on the roadway.
* ALWAYS leave adequate room between you and another motorist in tight traffic or at a stop light. A good rule of thumb is that you should be able to see the rear tires of the car in front of you, if you can not you are too close!
* Keep your vehicle well maintained. Make sure that you have proper air pressures in your tires, windshield wipers are in good condition, and all exterior lights are working.