

SAFETY AWARENESS

Brief Topic Safety Refresher Training For Associates

2024

Preventing Rear-end Crashes

Of the various causes of accidents, rear-end crashes are some of the most common and dangerous. According to the FMCSA, 400,000 trucks are involved in motor vehicle crashes each year, and 18% involve rear-end crashes. Just one collision of this kind can jeopardize your well-being and lead to severe injuries or even death.

Rear-end crashes can occur for a variety of reasons, including poor driving conditions (e.g., low visibility, slippery roads or traffic congestion) and dangerous driving behavior (e.g., speeding, tailgating, or driving distracted or impaired). To protect yourself and others on the road, it's important to practice good driving habits and avoid rear-end crashes whenever possible. The following are some strategies to consider:

- **Maintain proper following distances**—To avoid rear-end collisions, it's recommended that you maintain a minimum following distance of six seconds. To determine your following distance, observe the vehicle in front of you. Once that vehicle passes a stationary object, like a road sign, begin counting seconds until your vehicle reaches that same stationary object. While six seconds is a good minimum, you should create more distance between yourself and other drivers if road conditions are poor.
- **Drive at appropriate speeds**—Driving 2 mph to 3 mph below the posted speed limit can help you avoid rear-end crashes. This is because driving slightly slower than the flow of traffic allows you to keep your distance from other vehicles on the road. Be sure to adjust your speed if there are any hazards present, such as rainy or foggy weather.
- **Avoid distractions**—Any time you reach for an object or get distracted by outside stimuli, the chances of an accident drastically increase. In fact, studies show that simply by dialing a cellphone, the likelihood of a crash is six times greater. To remain safe on the roads, you need to be aware of and avoid common distractions that can put you and the public in danger:
 - Using electronic devices such as a GPS, MP3 player, radio, cellphone or laptop
 - Reading maps, books, texts or printed directions
 - Eating, drinking or smoking
 - Talking with passengers
 - Focusing attention on visual distractions outside the vehicle, such as collisions, police activity, street signs, pedestrians, construction or billboards
 - Multitasking
- **Anticipate hazards**—One of the best ways to avoid rear-end collisions is to anticipate hazards. While maintaining a safe distance and avoiding distractions can help with this, it's also a good idea to:
 - Look out for slowing traffic.
 - Reduce your speed in road construction areas or when similar hazards are present.
 - Know how to react to hazards and avoid slamming on your brakes whenever possible.