

SCF Arizona your business partner in Workers
Compensation Insurance and workplace safety



Safe driving saves lives

SCF Arizona your Work Comp Specialist

Provided by Ed Redmond
Association Coordinator

Transportation-related accidents account for the greatest number of workplace fatalities every year, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Whether you drive a company car on a work-related trip or in your own vehicle on personal time, defensive driving tactics could be a lifesaver for you, your passengers and other drivers.

“A majority of businesses I work with omit including defensive driving training in their safety policy,” said SCF Loss Control Consultant Armando Sapien. “They make the assumption that their drivers already know driving laws. But this type of training could help them reduce accidents and help protect them from liability in certain instances.”

During the busy summer driving season, SCF recommends that all motorists, especially those who drive as part of their job, follow sensible safety suggestions to reduce the chances of being involved in a wreck. Some of these include:

Approach intersections cautiously, even when the light is green – The majority of accidents occur at intersections. Moreover, most of them occur within three to five seconds after the light changes.

“The most dangerous time of an intersection is when the light just turned green,” said Bob Morrone, safety coordinator for COMTRANS, which runs a fleet of 150 vehicles. He recommends that drivers wait a full car length behind the crosswalk in order to delay entering the intersection for a few seconds.

He also suggests covering (but not activating) the brake about 100 feet from the intersection and as you pass through it. “If you cut three-quarters of a second off your reaction time that cuts off 25 to 40 feet of stopping distance” Morrone explained.

Avoid tailgating – Drivers should maintain a four- to seven-seconds space cushion behind the vehicle in front of them, depending on speed. The higher the speed you are traveling, the further the distance should be. “The faster you go, the less reaction time you have,” Morrone said. “That’s what it’s all about. Stopping in time to avoid an accident.”

Do not talk or text on your cell phone while driving – While there continues to be legislative attempts nationally and locally to prohibit this, nothing has come of it.

“In some studies I’ve seen, talking on the phone can actually make the driver more impaired than a drunk driver,” says Sapien.

Don’t hold up traffic – Drivers can be cited for impeding traffic even if they are going the speed limit.

“People who go slower in the left lane hold up traffic,” says Morrone, who teaches his drivers to use the center lane. He notes that when you impede traffic, you could create road rage in other drivers.

*If you would like more
information on workplace
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UPCOMING SCF ARIZONA EVENTS:

Phoenix Safety Works Expo
June 24, 2010, details and
registration information at
www.regonline.com/swphoenix10



Check the vehicle's tires – Tire blowouts are a common cause of accidents. If it happens, hold the steering wheel firmly and keep the wheels pointed straight as you decelerate. Do not attempt to turn or to brake hard. After slowing down, safely pull off to the side of road.

Make safe lane changes – Properly adjust your left and right outside mirrors and rear-view mirror and use them constantly. Don't just rely on the mirrors when making a lane change. Be sure look over your shoulder to make sure another vehicle isn't in a blind spot. Use your turn blinkers to alert other drivers of your intentions.

For more safety and driving tips, go to SCF's website, www.scfaz.com to review and order informational cards: "Driving: Motor Vehicle Safety Tips," "Driving: Stay in Your Seat – Air Bags/Seat Belts," "Driving Essentials," or "Defensive Driving." Additional safe driving information is available from OSHA at

<http://www.osha.gov/SLTC/motorvehiclesafety/recognition.html>

If you would like more information on workplace safety please contact your SCF Association Coordinator.