

## **General Vehicle Safety**

Motor vehicle accidents are the leading cause of death and crippling injury in the United States. Traffic safety laws are important components of vehicle safety, but the most important aspect of vehicle safety is the driver.

**IMPORTANT:** All MiSU employees who operate a motor vehicle for university business (whether a university vehicle, rental vehicle, or personal vehicle) must possess a valid state driver's license for their vehicle's class.

To ensure driving safety, follow these driving practices:

- Never drink and drive. Driving while under the influence of alcohol or drugs is strictly prohibited.
- Obey all traffic laws, signs, and signals.
- Respond to dangerous driving conditions as appropriate.
- Maintain a safe distance between your car and any car in front of you. Allow at least one car length for each 10 MPH (e.g., three car lengths if you are driving 30 MPH).
- Keep your eyes moving to avoid fatigue, especially if you plan on driving for a long period.
- Always use your turn signal to indicate your intended action.
- Leave yourself an "out" by either driving in the lane with a shoulder, driving in the middle lane of a multi-lane road, or following other vehicles at a safe distance.

### **Defensive Driving**

By taking defensive driving courses, employees can promote driving safety and lower their insurance rates. The principles of defensive driving include the following:

- **Knowledge:** Know your vehicle and know the law.
- **Control:** Always maintain control of your vehicle. To improve your control, perform routine vehicle maintenance and respond to road conditions as appropriate.
- **Attitude:** Be willing to obey all laws and be willing to yield to all other vehicles and pedestrians.
- **Reaction:** Respond to driving conditions appropriately. Do not impede your reaction time by driving when tired or under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
- **Observation:** Be aware of potential accidents and take preventive measures. Always try to anticipate the actions of other drivers.
- **Common Sense:** Do not risk your safety to save time. Do not respond to rude or obnoxious

drivers by violating traffic laws.

## Backing Vehicles

Backing a large vehicle can be very difficult. Try to avoid backing whenever possible. If you must back a vehicle, follow these guidelines:

- Get out of the vehicle and inspect the area you want to back into.
- If possible, have someone outside help guide your vehicle into position.
- If your vehicle does not automatically sound a horn when in reverse, sound the horn once before moving backwards.
- Back slowly and check your mirrors often.

## Accidents

If you are ever involved in a vehicle accident, follow these guidelines.

- Check for injuries. If anyone is injured, immediately call the police and EMS (911).
- If there are no injuries, you are blocking traffic, and your car can be driven, move the car to a safe location nearby. (If the accident occurs on a freeway lane, ramp, shoulder, median, or busy metropolitan street, you must move your car if it is safe and possible to do so.)
- If you cannot move your car, try to warn oncoming traffic to prevent other accidents:
  1. Raise your hood.
  2. Turn on your hazard lights.
  3. Light flares.
- Exchange the following information with other drivers involved in the accident:
  1. Name, address, and phone number
  2. Vehicle identification number, license number, and description
  3. Insurance information
  4. Driver's license number

Call the police in the following circumstances:

- Someone is injured.
- A car cannot be moved.
- A driver is intoxicated.
- A driver has no insurance.
- A driver leaves the scene of the accident without exchanging information.