



TOOLBOX TALKS

Guides for discussing safety.



Defensive Driving



Talk Leader: Ask the group the questions in bold.
You may read/refer to the unbolded text to facilitate discussion and understanding.

Why should you drive defensively?

The Bureau of Labor Statistics reported transportation incidents as the most frequent fatal event in 2017 with 40 percent of all occupational fatalities. Drivers on the road today will deal with hazards including poor road conditions, construction road work, drivers that are distracted, drivers under the influence, and reckless drivers. These issues can result in fender benders, minor accidents, or major accidents.

Provide an example of defensive driving:

Annie is on her way to a business meeting. She is traveling on a two-lane road with little room on the shoulder. It begins to rain heavily, so she slows down the speed of her car to 5 miles under the speed limit. A car speeds up behind her and is not backing off. The road shortly becomes filled with curves and hills. The driver behind her begins flashing their lights as if telling her to speed up. She slows down and safely pulls off onto a side street to let the other car pass. She maintains her composure and begins back on the main road. Further up the road, she experiences some traffic and observes a car that has went off the road and down the hill. The car down the hill was the one behind her from earlier. The driver appeared to be okay, but stunned. Annie is relieved that she took her time and got off the road safely, but also that the other driver is okay following the aggressive actions he took.

How do we drive defensively?

Always think about your next move and slow down when necessary for weather and other hazards. Keep alert and aware of what's going on around your vehicle (front, back, sides). Be observant of possible road work, traffic lights, or turning cars ahead. It's also important to compensate for hazards when they arise such as weather (snow/rain), debris, potholes, loose gravel, or sand.

What specific driving hazards are in your area that you should lookout for?

On the road, be alert for pedestrians, bicyclists, other vehicles, potholes, detours, road closures. On job sites, be cautious around other workers, other vehicles, heavy equipment (e.g. dozers), forklifts, parking under a suspended load, stockpiled materials, etc.

Sources:

<https://www.bls.gov/news.release/pdf/cfoi.pdf>

<https://www.safetytalkideas.com/safetytalks/defensive-driving/>

<http://www.nlcsa.com/downloads/Defensive%20Driving%20TBT%20FINAL%20May%202018.pdf>

<http://www.ogind.com/sites/default/files/toolbox/driving-safety.pdf>

