

## Toolbox Talk: Defensive Driving

### Introduction

Defensive driving is crucial for ensuring safety on the road. It involves not only following traffic laws but also anticipating and reacting to potential hazards. This talk covers key aspects of defensive driving, including vehicle maintenance, distraction management, and responsible behavior behind the wheel.



### Vehicle Maintenance and Inspections

- **Regular Maintenance:** Keep your vehicle in top condition by following the manufacturer's recommended maintenance schedule. This includes checking engine oil, brake fluid, tire pressure, and other critical components.
- **Routine Inspections:** Perform regular inspections of your vehicle. Check lights, brakes, tires, and steering for any signs of wear or malfunction. Address any issues immediately to prevent breakdowns and ensure safe operation.

### Managing Distractions

Fixed and Wireless Devices:

- **Cell Phones:** Avoid using your cell phone while driving. If you need to make a call or send a text, pull over safely first.
- **GPS Devices:** Set your GPS before starting your trip. If adjustments are necessary, do so while parked.

### **Distraction Types:**

- Cognitive Distractions: Stay focused on driving. Avoid daydreaming or letting your mind wander, as this can impair your reaction time.
- Manual Distractions: Keep your hands on the wheel and avoid engaging in activities that require you to use your hands, such as eating or adjusting controls.
- Visual Distractions: Minimize distractions that divert your eyes from the road, such as looking at in-car entertainment screens or engaging with passengers.

### **Speeding and Safe Driving Practices**

- Obey Speed Limits: Always adhere to posted speed limits. Adjust your speed according to road conditions, weather, and traffic.
- Safe Following Distance: Maintain a safe distance between your vehicle and the one in front of you to allow ample time for braking and maneuvering.

### **Drug and Alcohol Use**

- Avoid Impairment: Never drive under the influence of drugs or alcohol. Impairment severely affects your ability to operate a vehicle safely.
- Know the Risks: Be aware that even prescription medications can impair driving. Check with your healthcare provider if you're unsure about any medications.

### **Summary**

Defensive driving is essential for preventing accidents and ensuring safety on the road. Key practices include regular vehicle maintenance and inspections, managing distractions from fixed and wireless devices, adhering to speed limits, and avoiding impaired driving. By following these guidelines, you can enhance your driving safety and protect yourself and others on the road.

