

Safety Director's Notebook

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EMERGENCY MANEUVERS

Professional drivers all understand that an emergency can happen at any time. Decisions that can affect the rest of your life will need to be made in a split-second. It's up to the "Professional Driver" to protect their truck, themselves, and other motorists. The "Professional Driver" has an understanding of the following:

- (1). Strategies to avoid emergency situations,
- (2). What to do in an emergency situation, and
- (3). How to keep and regain control of the truck.



BASICS OF EMERGENCY MANEUVERING

- ◆ Stay alert to road and weather conditions.
- ◆ Use your mirrors to scan all sides of truck.
- ◆ Think ahead and plan an escape route.
- ◆ Be prepared by having a well-maintained vehicle.
- ◆ Wear your seatbelt and keep both hands on the steering wheel.
- ◆ Know driving techniques, such as evasive maneuvers, emergency braking, and basic skid control & recovery.
- ◆ Have a proper attitude to react quickly and correctly, no matter what the situation.

HAZARD PERCEPTION

- ◆ Stay alert and aware of your surroundings.
- ◆ Scan ahead, behind, and to the sides of your vehicle by checking your mirrors frequently.
- ◆ Manage your maneuvering space. Don't get boxed in.
- ◆ Maintain adequate following distance—use the 6 second rule.
- ◆ Scan for trouble—look 12-15 seconds ahead.
- ◆ Play "What if"? "What if the vehicle in front comes to an abrupt stop," or "What if the vehicle coming from the other side does not stop," or "What if the vehicle along side loses control".

BE PREPARED

- ◆ Pre-trip inspections need to be thorough every time and pay particular attention to wheels and tires. If they are worn or cracked, they could blowout and lead to trouble. Don't let your vehicle become the hazard that others try to avoid.
- ◆ Wear your seatbelt at all times. During an emergency maneuver, it keeps you in the seat and allows you to stay at the controls of your truck.
- ◆ Keep control of the steering wheel; always grip hands in the 9 and 3 o'clock positions.
- ◆ Do not be distracted from your driving.

ESCAPE ROUTES

- ◆ Always plan on having an escape route.
- ◆ React as soon as you see a problem developing.
- ◆ Choose the best escape route—left or right.
- ◆ Brake before turning, whenever possible.
- ◆ Don't over-steer, try to maintain control of your vehicle at all times. Keep thinking ahead for the next move.
- ◆ On multi-lane roadways—change lanes.
- ◆ If lanes are blocked—use the shoulder.
- ◆ Last option is to leave the roadway. Never steer into oncoming traffic.

"SEEING - STEERING - SAFETY"