

The dangers of being a good samaritan



Vincent Muzzio



Vincent Muzzio
Fort Worth Automotive Examiner

September 12, 2010

One of the many dangers of driving in the Dallas/Fort Worth metroplex actually occurs when you aren't even behind the wheel. The real danger starts when you step out of your vehicle to help a stranded motorist. Good samaritans instinctively put their lives on the line to help others in need and all too often end up being a story on the 10 o'clock news after being struck by a passing car that isn't paying attention. If you are going to be a good samaritan, you need to be aware of the dangers, and some of the precautions you can take help to

protect yourself.

Your first priority if you decide to help a stranded motorist is assess the scene and call 911 if there are no emergency personnel on the scene. Having the police, fire department, or courtesy patrol on the scene to provide safety is extremely important to the safety of everyone on the side of the road.

There are several safety items that you should always have available in your vehicle in case of emergency. A bright, reflective safety vest, flares and/or warning lights, and flashlights all help you be more visible on the side of the road. A safety vest should be worn at all times in an emergency situation, day or night. If you are in an emergency situation at night, **flares** should be setup 300 feet away from the first vehicle seen by oncoming cars, and a second 10 feet away from that car. If you are over a hill, place the first flare on the top of the hill. If you are around a curve, place the first flare around the curve where most visible to oncoming traffic. The same applies for portable warning lights or safety triangles.

The majority of good samaritans killed on the road are due to not being visible to oncoming cars or trucks. Motorist can be distracted by accident scenes and may not be paying full attention. The more visible you make yourself the safer you will be. As a good samaritan you need to stay alert, think before you act, and always keep your eyes on the road for potential danger. Keep yourself safe so that you can help others get out of danger.

Did you enjoy this article and want to read more articles like this? Click the subscribe button above to have new articles sent to you automatically. If you know someone who might enjoy the article, share it with them through the Twitter and Facebook share link at the bottom of the page.