



SEPTEMBER 2020

Twelve-Month Loss Prevention Program



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Lane Change Crashes

A DRIVER'S STORY

A driver arrived at the terminal twenty minutes late to pick up his load. To make up for lost time, the driver quickly logged on duty, performed a quick pre-trip inspection of his equipment, and then departed. As the driver headed west on the interstate, he came upon slower traffic. The driver checked the passenger-side mirrors in preparation to change lanes but was blinded by sun glare reflecting off the mirror. Unable to visually verify the adjacent lane was clear, the driver assumed it was safe and moved over. When he did so, the truck collided with a vehicle. Fortunately, no one was injured, but in the accident investigation that followed, the accident was deemed preventable and the truck driver found to be at fault.

TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE

Name: _____

- Which of the following would NOT be acceptable if found while inspecting the truck's mirrors?
 - Mirrors are properly adjusted
 - Mirrors are dirty
 - Mirrors are loose and not properly attached to the vehicle
 - Both B and C
- Changing lanes frequently is the best way to prevent a lane change crash.
 - True
 - False
- Which of the following steps should a driver adhere to before making a lane change?
 - Make sure it is safe and legal to do so
 - Check mirrors and blind spots for vehicles in the adjacent lane
 - Activate the turn signal well in advance
 - All of the above
- All of the following are safe driving techniques that will help a driver avoid a lane change crash EXCEPT:
 - Make quick glances to mirrors to manage the space around the truck
 - Use the "lean and look" method to check the tractor's right front blind spot
 - Make frequent lane changes to get around slower traffic
 - Inspect the mirrors at every stop to ensure they are adjusted properly
- Distracted driving improves your ability to drive safely and reduces the likelihood of being involved in a lane change crash.
 - True
 - False

Answers:
1. D
2. B
3. D
4. C
5. B

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The Essential 7 Driving Techniques

Truck drivers were asked to identify the driving skills they felt were most effective in preventing crashes. They agreed on the Essential 7 Driving Techniques. Read the information below and ask yourself how you can improve your driving style using these techniques.



AVOID DISTRACTIONS

Distracted driving involves any activity (including illness and fatigue) that diverts your attention away from driving.

BEST PRACTICES: *While driving, do not use mobile devices, eat or drink, daydream, etc. Make quick glances to mirrors. Get plenty of rest. If driving, avoid medications that can cause drowsiness.*



OBSERVE PROPER SPEED FOR CONDITIONS

Adjust your speed based on the environment, such as traffic volume, snow, rain, road construction, etc.

BEST PRACTICES: *Reduce speed by at least 2-3 mph below the flow of traffic, not to exceed the posted speed limit. If conditions are unsafe to drive in, pull over until it is safe to continue.*



MAINTAIN PROPER FOLLOWING DISTANCE

Trucks need more distance to stop than passenger vehicles need. Creating more space between the truck and vehicles ahead gives you more time to perceive and react to hazards.

BEST PRACTICES: *Keep a minimum of six seconds behind the vehicle ahead and add one second more for each additional hazard present.*



BE ATTENTIVE TO THE ROAD AHEAD

Traffic ahead can slow or stop abruptly; or a hazard, like a deer running across the road, may present itself unexpectedly, requiring you to react suddenly.

BEST PRACTICES: *Be prepared to stop suddenly. Watch for traffic slowing or stopping ahead, then get off the accelerator immediately and apply controlled braking.*



REACT PROPERLY TO HAZARDS

Each hazard you encounter is unique, and the proper reaction can range from adjusting your speed and increasing following distance to pulling over until it is safe to continue driving.

BEST PRACTICES: *A proper reaction to a hazard shouldn't put other drivers at risk. Be alert. Recognize the hazard. Know the defense.*



YIELD THE RIGHT OF WAY

Forcing your vehicle into another driver's lane, blocking oncoming traffic, or preventing merging traffic from entering are examples of failing to yield the right of way.

BEST PRACTICES: *Remember to drive defensively. Even if you have the right of way, yielding to other drivers may be necessary to prevent a crash.*



MAINTAIN ONE LANE

Avoid frequent lane changes and stay in one lane as much as possible.

BEST PRACTICES: *Before changing lanes, make sure it is safe and legal to do so. Use the mirrors and "lean and look" method to ensure the adjacent lane is clear, activate the turn signal, and then move over gradually.*

Note: These lists are not intended to be all-inclusive.

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