

## **Crossroads Corvettes Indiana, Group Driving**

### **General Information**

- Driver's License renewal - Driver's License Validity A driver's license is valid for: • Six years if you are younger than 75 years of age • Three years if you are aged 75 through 84 • Two years if you are at least 85 years of age
- Proof of Insurance: State law requires you maintain proof of insurance. It is recommended that you have proof of insurance along with your registration and valid driver's license available upon request.
- Radios - Telecommunications Device Prohibition Indiana Law prohibits individuals from using a telecommunications device to type, transmit, or read a text or an email message while operating a moving motor vehicle unless the device is used in conjunction with hands-free or voice-operated technology, or unless the device is used to make a 911 emergency call. Indiana law defines a telecommunications device as an electronic or digital device, such as a wireless telephone, personal digital assistant, pager, or text messaging device. This definition does not include citizen band (CB) radio equipment that is being operated by a person licensed as a CB radio operator by the Federal Communications Commission or a communications system installed in a commercial motor vehicle weighing more than 10,000 pounds. You may be assessed points on your driver record when using a telecommunication device while operating a motor vehicle.

***Walkie-Talkie* – Not actually defined in driver's manual: Law Enforcement Officer's Opinion will determine the issuance of a ticket that you can contest in court.**

- All roads being used are public roads and open to all traffic. These are not “closed course roads”. As such all public roads are governed by the laws of the state as identified by signage and painted markings on the road surface, e.g. speed limit signs defined as rectangular in shape with black lettering on a white background with the words “Speed Limit”, and yellow and/or white painted stripes defining the center and edges of the road surface. You are responsible for following all applicable laws of the state. You are also responsible for the safe operation of your vehicle. Below is a link to the Indiana Driver’s Manual which has a lot of good information and is a great refresher of the laws and requirements of the state of Indiana.
- Link to Indiana Driver’s License Manual  
<https://www.in.gov/bmv/licenses-permits-ids/files/drivers-manual.pdf>

### **Participant Etiquette during a group drive**

- Arrive on time
- If you signed up for a drive and cannot attend let organizer know
- If you have a planned departure from the group at any time, let the lead and sweep persons know in advance
- Arrive with full tank of gas
- Assure your vehicle is in good, safe operating condition (lights, signals, tires, tire pressure, etc.)
- Bring working and charged radios. It is recommended that the passenger operate the radio to transmit to avoid driver distraction. Use CH 3
- Listen carefully during participants meeting. All persons should attend – ask questions if you are uncertain of any information
- Turn headlights on while driving in the group. Turn them off upon arrival ☺

## **Etiquette-organizers**

- Same as Participant but with the additional below
- Bring waivers
- Provide address of any stops and destination(s)
- Provide maps or directions if practical
- Provide cell phone contact information
- Start meeting on time.
- Remind participants you are using public roads. They are responsible for following all traffic laws. They are responsible for the safe, legal operation of their vehicle at all times
- Make sure sweep(s) and leads know the route, stops and destination(s).
- Remind participants to use headlights and turn them off at destination
- Consider the individual group size for the drive. E.G. Using multilane roads and a mostly direct route can tolerate more vehicles per group. Twisty roads, traveling through areas with several traffic lights and little opportunities to regroup would dictate multiple smaller groups. Consider using a middle car to help with radios.
- Never turn off of one road onto another road without having the group insight.

Note: There are too many elements to planning a drive, such as planning a route, timing the arrival, pre-driving, and reservations, etc. to go into here. There are several members with experience in doing this that will be willing to help you if you know a destination that you would like to share with our club members. Don't be shy! We all had to start somewhere.☺

## **A group drive consists of the following structure**

**Lead Vehicle** – Leads a group. May plan all aspects of drive. May conduct participants meeting. **MUST** be knowledgeable of route, destination, and expected arrival times. Must have communication device(s) Should be able to improvise in the event of unforeseen situations e.g. road closures

**Middle Vehicle** – to be used at the discretion of the drive organizer – relays communications between Lead and Sweep Vehicles

**Sweep Vehicle** – Must have communication device(s) **MUST** be knowledgeable of route, destination, and expected arrival times. Keeps the Lead car advised of the group's integrity, warns of overtaking traffic, warns of approaching emergency vehicles from the rear. Acts as a Shepherd to aid in protecting the group and keeping the Lead Vehicle advised of **USEFUL** information. Stops to assess and render assistance to any participant that may drop out of drive.

## **Best Practices during a group drive**

### **Vehicle Spacing**

Always maintain a safe distance from the vehicle in front of you. **DO NOT** leave a gap that is great enough to encourage traffic entering from a side road to enter in front of you. This traffic may decide to travel at a slower speed than that of the lead vehicles thus causing a larger separation in our group. **NEVER** physically try to prevent traffic from entering on the road you are traveling on.

**Visual examples of safe following distance without large gaps.**



## **Driving-courtesy towards others, Best Practices continued**

Note: Never exceed your abilities or the abilities of your vehicle. Always stay in your lane while going through curves or over crests. Never operate your vehicle in a manner that would discredit our club. \*Assertive in this context: Maintaining the legal posted speed limit on twisty, hilly roads conditions permitting. Do not overdrive your comfort zone.

- We want to provide driving experiences that are safe and enjoyable for everyone.
- A person's "comfort zone" is not a reflection of their skill or experience. It is that feeling of comfort we all develop when driving. Some prefer to be assertive\* on twisty, hilly roads. Some prefer to be less assertive. So, with that said, we need to be aware of those around us when driving in a group. For example, if you prefer to be less assertive driving twisty, hilly roads, that is perfectly fine, however, if a gap develops between you and the vehicles ahead of you, and vehicles are closer behind you than in front of you, you should close the gap in front of you and consider moving further back in the group when it is safe to do so. Again, this is not a reflection on driving skills or experience. It is simply providing an opportunity for everyone to enjoy their drive and drive in their comfort zone.
- Place your vehicle in the group based on your personal assessment of your comfort zone for the day. E.G. Less assertive, wishing to enjoy the scenery, leisurely pace should be toward the back end of a given group. Assertive, while NOT driving in excess of legal speeds or recklessly, this requires a higher level of concentration on driving where one likes to feel the car gripping the curves.
- Never pass another participant unless they wave you around

- Maintain a safe gap between your vehicle and the vehicle in front of you. DO NOT tailgate. If you notice the gap in front of you is greater than the gap behind you consider closing up. Everyone wants to have an enjoyable drive. Causing “rubber banding” within the group by constantly leaving a gap, then closing up will lead to the loss of enjoyment for the other participants behind you and possibly the loss of friends. ☺
- When arriving at a rest break take care of business first before visiting with your friends. No one likes waiting in their vehicle to continue the drive while you suddenly decide you need a water bottle, snack, or bathroom break! ☺
- In the event a person has a problem during a drive, they should pull over, off of the road as soon as possible. The other participants should continue on if it is safe to do so, notify the lead and sweep vehicles of the situation. The sweep vehicle will stop and provide assistance and advise the lead of the situation.

Please be considerate of those that are following you. We all have different confidence levels, different abilities, and different **opinions**. If you, at any time, feel the pace of the drive or the condition of roads are making you uncomfortable you should drop out of the drive and go to the destination on your own or drop to the rear of your group and ask the sweep to lead you to the destination. Again, you are responsible for the legal and safe operation of your vehicle at all times. Do not overdrive your comfort zone.

### **In the event of an accident**

If you are involved or a direct witness you should stop in a safe location and render assistance as you are able. All other participants should continue on if safe to do so, notify the lead and sweep vehicle, and regroup at the direction of the lead vehicle. If you are a direct witness to an accident, remain at the scene and

provide a statement to the responding agency if requested. Supply only the FACTS as you witnessed them.

NEVER provide OPINIONS as to what may have caused or led up to the accident in any verbal or written form. Be aware that a statement given to the responding agency or an opinion made on social media, e.g. Facebook, might become part of a legal action.

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### **Additional thoughts and considerations**

Obtained from various publications

Tire carcasses found along roadways known as Road Gators

Encountering semi-trucks, during a drive: The lead vehicle should pass a semi as quickly as is reasonable and maintain that speed until all vehicles in the group have safely passed the semi.

Maintaining your passing speed will allow enough space for all vehicles to return back to the travel lane. DO NOT lollygag beside a semi.

From The Allstate Blog

These steel-reinforced “bits” can be 8 to 10 feet long and weigh 70 pounds or more, A road gator’s bite can surpass that of a its namesake, slicing open oil pans, ripping off steering components, smashing through windshields and causing panicked drivers to swerve themselves into a crash, attempting to avoid the beasts.

Low tire pressure causes more than two-thirds of tire failures, according to the NHTSA study. The other top cause is damage from smacking curbs, potholes and road hazards. 70 percent of full-sized road gators come from “virgin” truck tires, while a similar percentage of smaller rubber chunks are from retreads.



The reason summer months are prime road gator season is because heat can be a tire's biggest enemy, behind only a careless operator. Under inflation, high speeds and uneven highways can combine to increase heat in a tire. Overheating breaks down the tire's internal components—both fabric and the bonds between different layers and types of rubber. Soon, another road gator will be born.

Never lollygag alongside a big rig. This is especially true if you hear the birthing cries of a road gator. An uneven howl or continuous “whap-whap-whap” may mean a tire is soon to shed its tread. Another indicator not mentioned, easily noticed if you have the windows down or the top down, is the smell of burning rubber. As the tread readies to peel or the tire to explode it is prefaced by that burning rubber smell in 90 plus percent of the time. I have seen semi-trailer tires visibly smoking prior to birthing a gator as well.

#### Heavy Duty Trucking - Trucking Information

It's no big secret within the industry that inflation maintenance is weak. Numerous surveys have shown that maintenance of truck tires is poor, with a recent TMC (Transportation Management Center) study finding only 44% of tires to be within +/- 5 psi of target pressure. The US DOT came up with similar results in a roadside study conducted several years ago. The recent AP article notes that as part of a separate investigation involving some Michelin tires, "[NHTSA] tested trucks and surveyed over a dozen drivers in Pennsylvania, finding that more than half had overburdened tires because of heavy loads or low air pressure. Sixty percent of drivers didn't know the proper inflation pressure for the trucks they were driving."

Back in December, I wrote about inflation pressure in steer tires. I received more than the usual number of comments, indicating that readers were unaware of the elevated pressures required for some steer tires under maximum load (often as high as 120 psi). Clearly, running 100 or 105 psi on some steer tires is inadequate, but hey, who knew? Whoever reads the instructions?

BOONE COUNTY, Ind. – A semi fire closed all westbound lanes of I-74 near SR 75 in Boone County Tuesday night and left a Boone County Sheriff's deputy with minor injuries

Authorities say a sheriff's deputy was patrolling when he stopped to help extinguish the vehicle fire. The truck's brakes had caught fire. The cab was already detached. But while trying to put out the fire, a tire blew and knocked him into a ditch. He was transported to a local hospital with complaints of knee pain and metal shavings in his face and hands.

Truck tires are designed for a maximum of 75 mph sustained  
Speeds

13 States have a truck speed limit of 75 mph

4 States have a truck speed limit of 80 mph

1 state has a truck speed limit of 85 mph

This information helps explain why we see so much tire debris and road gators along the highway. Composite bodies on Corvettes will not fare well if struck by tire chunks or whole tire treads so DO NOT lollygag around semis!

**Have fun and drive safely!**