



Aggressive Driving- Fact-Tip Sheet with Talking Points

Aggressive driving is defined as a progression of unlawful driving actions such as:

Speeding– exceeding the posted limit or driving too fast for conditions;

Improper or excessive lane changing: failing to signal intent, failing to see that movement can be made safely, OR

Improper passing– failing to signal intent, using an emergency lane to pass, or passing on the shoulder.

The “*aggressive driver*” fails to consider the human element involved. The anonymity of being behind the wheel gives aggressive drivers a false sense of control and power; therefore, they seldom take into account the consequences of their actions.

- **Aggressive Driving vs. Road Rage**—there is a difference. Aggressive driving is a traffic offense; road rage is a criminal offense.
- Road rage is defined as “*an assault with a motor vehicle or other dangerous weapon by the operator or passenger(s) of another motor vehicle or an assault participated by an incident that occurred on a roadway.*”
- A national survey sponsored by NHTSA of 6,000 drivers over the age of sixteen showed that the public supports increased enforcement including photo enforcement, increasing sanction, increasing intervention by vehicle occupants and increasing public awareness of risks, as ways of reducing these types of unsafe driving practices.
- The posted speed limit is a law that applies to all traffic lanes. Technically speaking, there is no fast lane or slow lane. In at least 21 states, slower traffic is expected to keep right, except for emergency vehicles, which are permitted to exceed the posted speed limit, but only when their lights and sirens are on. In some states, laws specify “keep right except to pass.”
- According to NHTSA’s Traffic Safety Facts 1998, approximately 6,335,000 crashes occur in the United States each year. It is unknown exactly how many of those crashes are caused by aggressive driving. Estimates indicate the number to be substantial, based on the violations committed by the drivers of the vehicles involved in the crashes and reported by law enforcement agencies as the contributing factor of the crash.



Construction Zone Dangers

We’re losing lives every day in accidents in construction zones. It seems we are constantly reminded to be careful in construction zones, but are we really paying attention? We want good roads, so construction is necessary, but we get frustrated when we have to slow down, merge into one lane, and are at least somewhat inconvenienced by these construction sites.

In most cases, **speed** and **following too close** are prime causes of dangerous accidents in work zones. Be aware that you might be behind several vehicles, the first of which breaks hard and starts a chain reaction. Likewise, if you are following too close and have to stop or slow down abruptly, the vehicle behind might rear-end your vehicle. And then there’s merging into that one open lane. Watch for construction signs and start

slowing down as soon as you have an indication that construction lies ahead. Merge very cautiously and allow others to merge. If you participate in some of the aggressive driving techniques that we’ve all seen in these situations, you may eventually be involved in an accident-producing situation that you cannot control.

Construction zones are dangerous. While you cannot control the actions others, you can control your own, and that’s the most important.