



Interlake School Division Safety First Newsletter

October 22, 2015

Drivers' Ed

SEAT BELTS, AIR BAGS, LANE SENSORS: ALL NICE,
BUT THE MOST IMPORTANT SAFETY FEATURE IS
STILL THE NUT HOLDING THE WHEEL



Many years ago, I was awarded a *Roads Scholarship*. That's not a typo, I won a radio call-in contest for two to attend the *Roads Scholar Defensive Driving Program*. Yup, just grabbed my cell and I was caller number nine.

A friend and I spent the weekend with the folks from Mission Speedway in a defensive driving boot camp. Their intro to the course has stayed with me ever since. *"In a study, tens of thousands of accident reports were analysed ... at fault or not... one thread ran through nearly the entire study. "I saw the whole thing unfolding, if I had two more seconds, I could have avoided it."*

"We're going to give you those two extra seconds."

In a mix of classroom and practical we were immersed in driving from a perspective that reinforced the few things I already knew, then took me places I hadn't experienced.

Collision avoidance on a greased up driving course, weaving through pylons; ABS on versus ABS off; "people," jumping out in front of you; instructors following you in a chase car analysing your every move. Crazy fun.

I want to share some memorable parts with you and hopefully give you those two extra seconds.



Sunday November 8th Clocks go BACK one hour
Change your Smoke Detector batteries
Change your CO Detector batteries
Change your furnace filters
Have your furnace serviced

Did you know that the symptoms of Carbon Monoxide poisoning can strongly resemble the flu? Symptoms of tiredness, nausea, achy / malaise and headache, often present in both situations.

So, we're all sitting around watching the Grey Cup at your house, and everybody feels a little "off," at the same time. Outside you feel better, back inside you feel poorly. Groups of people seldom get sick at the same time. Is some other agent at work? Try this useful link to become informed and avoid becoming another statistic:

https://www.hydro.mb.ca/safety/natural_gas/carbon_monoxide.shtml



The Collision Avoidance Formula

THOSE TWO EXTRA SECONDS

The Collision Avoidance Formula is:

Recognize the Hazard;

Mental Preparedness – how do you feel, do you know the route? (If you're talking / texting, all bets are off. You've given away your two seconds... plus)

Be alert to Weather, Road Conditions. How are your tires, wipers, fluid levels?

Practice Eye Lead Time – that really good habit of “reading the play.” Look far ahead, look around and look back regularly, in a pattern to avoid eye fatigue. There is more to driving than just dodging the tail lights in front of you. Driving is not a video game.

Understand the Defence;

Three defensive choices: Brake, Steer, Communicate

Contrary to what some want to believe, speed limits are not “designed for 1950's tires and brakes.”

ABS brakes do not shorten stopping distance, they actually lengthen it. However, what they do well is to reduce skids and permit steering whilst braking.

The majority of collisions happen at intersections within 3 seconds of the light changing. Never respond reflexively to the green light. Scan, make eye contact with other drivers, signal, nod, wave, use your horn.

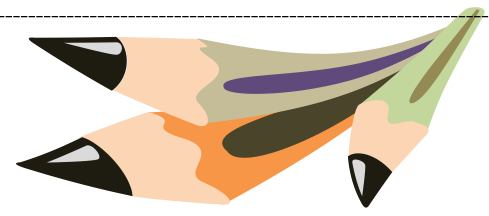
Become a predictable driver whilst being extra aware of the unpredictable driver.

Remember I said earlier, “at fault or not.” If you must, yield. No biggie, just yield. It's possible to be simultaneously legally right and legally dead.

Act in Time;

Those two extra seconds? They almost always come from doing the speed limit or even a little less. Drive to conditions. Eye Lead Time when practised, will raise your awareness of where you are in relation to everyone else and to see patterns and interpret behaviours of that driver who might cross the line to unpredictable.

Don't trust your reflexes to save you – develop correct habits now. Even Muhammed Ali who once bragged, “I'm so fast, I can turn out the lights and be in bed before the room gets dark,” would be advised to adopt best driving habits – move your seat back a bit and shift your grip to 9:00 / 3:00. Adjust your mirrors, adjust your speed. Read the play. I wouldn't actually tell him to change - I would merely advise him - I'm just saying is all.



The Correct Use of Mirrors:

I don't know what you drive, but I'll wager your mirrors aren't being used correctly. They're set up for backing up right? Sorry. To make maximum use of them to reduce blind spots for driving, do the following. Make certain you're parked, not driving:

1. Rest your cheek against the drivers' door window.
2. Adjust the mirror until you can make out the rear corner of the car.
3. Lean to the right, so you're over the console, looking straight ahead at the radio.
4. Adjust the passenger side mirror until you can make out the rear passenger side corner of the car.



5. Voila, you've just added about 30 deg. to your field of view and nearly completely eliminated your blind spots.
6. Remember those shoulder checks / head turns they taught you in driving school for lane changes and backing into parking spots? Good, because they're back in style.

THINK ON THIS:

“The Superior pilot uses their Superior judgement, to avoid situations which might require them to use their Superior skills.”

Anonymous signage posted in a flying club.

DRIVERS ED = **THOSE TWO EXTRA SECONDS**

It's about more than just having those safety features. You have to use them correctly.

Let's play Spot the Difference:



That's More Like It

OK, so you had a bit of a heads up from the captioning. Did you spot that:

Driver two shifted their grip from the traditional 10:00 / 2:00 hand positions, to the now correct 9:00 / 3:00 positions?

Driver two is sitting further back from the wheel? Let's unpack why these little things mean so much.

At 9:00 and 3:00 the arms aren't in the "line of fire," of the deploying air bag. Steering is more effective for collision avoidance.

According to the National Highway Transportation Safety Administration (NHTSA), "Distance from the air bag is the most important factor in preventing air bag injuries....the primary determinant whether an individual will be injured by a deploying air bag is the distance from which the individual is seated from the air bag."

Even before air bags, drivers were strongly advised to place some distance between their torso and the steering column.



Halloween falls on a Saturday night this year. There's a Jets game on TV. There are bound to be lots of adult Halloween parties. Sounds like an opportunity to use lots of extra caution.

Use your best judgement in keeping the little ones safe - stay together, wear something reflective or use glow sticks. Walk facing traffic, work your own neighbourhood. Better still, play host, everybody loves a party.

Don't permit children to consume any goodies until they get home. Sort carefully and toss anything that looks opened, rewrapped, discoloured or unsealed. Pace their consumption – that's a lot of sugar. You can still make it fun.



HEY YOU, FIGHT THE FLU

Wash Hands Often or use Hand Sanitizer.
Do "The Sleeve Sneeze," Get Your Shot !

<http://www.gov.mb.ca/health/flu/index.html://www.gov.mb.ca/health/flu/index.html>

Over 60? Other health factors? Talk to your doc about a pneumococcal vaccination.

Thinking of holiday travel? Strongly consider getting TwinRix vaccinations ASAP. Protect yourself from Hepatitis A & B. Start your shots.