

TST #145-A

Night Driving

Driving at night complicates a task that many people see as being rather routine. Many people never think twice about driving at night. However, it is wise to consider additional hazards that night driving presents to both drivers and pedestrians.

One of the key senses needed for safe driving is good vision. At night, nearly 90% of a driver's reaction time depends on his or her visual acuity. Issues such as depth perception, the ability to distinguish colors and peripheral vision are all affected at night.

Night driving also produces a greater degree of fatigue that may cause the driver to experience drowsiness, which in turn, increases reaction times. According to the National Safety Council, traffic death rates are three times greater at night than during the day. While driving at night increases the chances for an accident, there are some steps you can take to reduce these chances.

- Make sure all lights and safety devices on the vehicle are operating properly.
- Clean the windows on both the inside and out to improve visibility.
- Make sure the headlights are aimed properly. Having headlights miss-aligned may temporarily blind or cause driving difficulty for other drivers and may limit your ability to see.
- Prior to driving, never drink alcohol or use other substances that hinder your ability to drive. Not only do these things severely impair one's driving ability, but they may also act as depressants or have other effects on your body and mind.
- Talking on cell phones presents an additional distraction to driving and should be avoided. All laws pertaining to mobile phone use while driving should be followed.
- Texting while driving is extremely dangerous and should be avoided—PULL OVER!
- If there is any doubt about whether or not headlights should be illuminated, opt for safety and turn them on. Lights will not help you see better in early twilight, but they will make it easier for other drivers to see you.
- Reduce speed and increase following distances during evening and nighttime hours.
- If using high beams make sure not to flash high beams to other drivers. High beams will temporarily blind other drivers.
- If the headlights from an oncoming vehicle are blinding you, look down on the roadway and to the right edge of the road, using the edge as a steering guide. Don't look directly into a high beam.
- To avoid fatigue, take frequent breaks and stop to rest periodically. It is better to return to the shop or to home a few minutes late than not at all.
- If you experience mechanical difficulty, turn on the hazard indicator lights on your vehicle, pull your vehicle off the roadway as far as possible and place reflective triangles near your vehicle and 300 feet behind it.

Nighttime driving hazards begin to present themselves at dusk. Consider these safety tips when you must drive at night. Keep in mind that traffic death rates during nighttime hours are three times greater than in the daytime. Don't become a statistic.

Inspect your vehicle. Make sure all lights and safety equipment work properly. Be safe.

Night Driving Quiz

The following statements should be answered with "True" or "False." Answers below.

1. The number of traffic deaths at night is lower than during the day.
2. Visual acuity issues such as depth perception, ability to distinguish colors and peripheral vision are all affected at night.
3. Safety can be improved at night by increasing following distance and reducing speed.
4. It is best not to turn your lights on until it is absolutely dark.
5. Texting is safe to do while driving as long as the driver has not been drinking alcohol.

Employee Name: _____

Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Answers:

1. False
2. True
3. True
4. False
5. False