

## HOW TO AVOID PATTERN DRIVING

A driver who integrates safety into all of his or her driving decisions, regardless of the environment, has established a pattern of behavior that reduces the risk of a crash.

Pattern driving refers to practicing unsafe behaviors, such as speeding and tailgating. Pattern driving also can occur when a driver gets too comfortable with his or her route or routines and lets his or her guard down.

This type of pattern driving is common when drivers run dedicated routes to the same customers day after day and become complacent. In this case, complacency becomes a distraction, and the driver loses focus of his or her surroundings and the potential hazards that could lead to a crash.

### DO ANY OF THESE DRIVING PATTERNS APPLY TO YOU?

- Talking on the phone
- Making frequent lane changes
- Driving under the influence of drugs or alcohol
- Tailgating
- Driving while ill or fatigued
- Gawking at passing crash scenes
- Speeding
- Blocking the path of oncoming traffic
- Daydreaming while driving
- Making U-turns
- Driving too fast for conditions
- Not wearing a seatbelt

### SAFE DRIVING BEHAVIORS



#### AVOID COMPLACENCY

Each day, change your pre-trip inspection routine. If permitted, try new routes to dedicated customers.



#### AVOID DISTRACTIONS

Do not drive if taking any medication that can cause drowsiness. To reduce fatigue, get plenty of rest, stay hydrated, and avoid heavy meals. Wear sunglasses and use the visor to reduce sun glare.



#### OBSERVE PROPER SPEED FOR CONDITIONS

Reduce speed by at least 2-3 mph below the flow of traffic, not to exceed the posted speed limit. Before entering ramps, curves, and turns, reduce speed by at least 10-15 mph below the posted speed limit, or more based on conditions.



#### REACT PROPERLY TO HAZARDS

Make quick glances to mirrors and return your focus to the road ahead. At the first sign of vehicles slowing in front of you, get off the accelerator and apply controlled braking.



#### MAINTAIN PROPER FOLLOWING DISTANCE

Keep a minimum of six seconds distance behind the vehicle in front, and add one second for each additional hazard, such as snow, freezing rain, sun glare, or black ice, as the hazard presents.



#### MAINTAIN ONE LANE

Avoid making erratic or unnecessary lane changes. Stay in one lane as much as possible.