

12 & 15- Passenger Van Defensive Driver Training



NHTS-national Highway Traffic Safety Administration

Recognizes that 12-
15 passenger vans
(include driver) are
similar type vehicle
and offer the same
hazards to operate



Definition

Full-size vans are those manufacturer designed for 10 or more occupants including the driver.



Documented Certified Training

- Effective January 1, 2007 the Board Of Occupational Safety and Health will require documented certified training for all public employees who operate full-size vans.
- Certification of operators to include hands-on exercise
- Refresher training at a minimum not to exceed 3 years

Topics to be Discussed

- 12 & 15-Passenger Van Safety
- Seat Belt Use
- Drug and Alcohol Use
- Cell Phone Use
- Fatigue
- Crash/Near Hit
- Backing

12 & 15-Passenger Van Characteristics

- Substantially longer and wider than a car
- Requires more space and additional reliance on the side mirrors for changing lanes
- Does not respond as safely to abrupt steering maneuvers



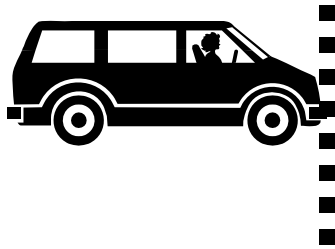
12 & 15-Passenger Van Characteristics

- Requires additional braking time
 - The more weight you have, the longer it takes to stop
 - The higher the speed you are traveling at, the longer it takes to stop

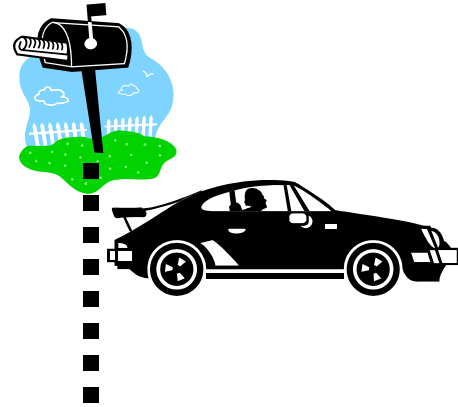


Following Distance

- Maintain a cushion of safety around the vehicle (no traffic on all sides)
- Drive in the right-hand lane whenever possible
- Recommended safe following distance is as follows:
 - When weather, road and visibility conditions are good, maintain 4 seconds behind other traffic
 - When weather, road and visibility conditions are bad, maintain at least 6 seconds behind other traffic



One-Thousand-One
One-Thousand-Two
One-Thousand-Three
One-Thousand-Four

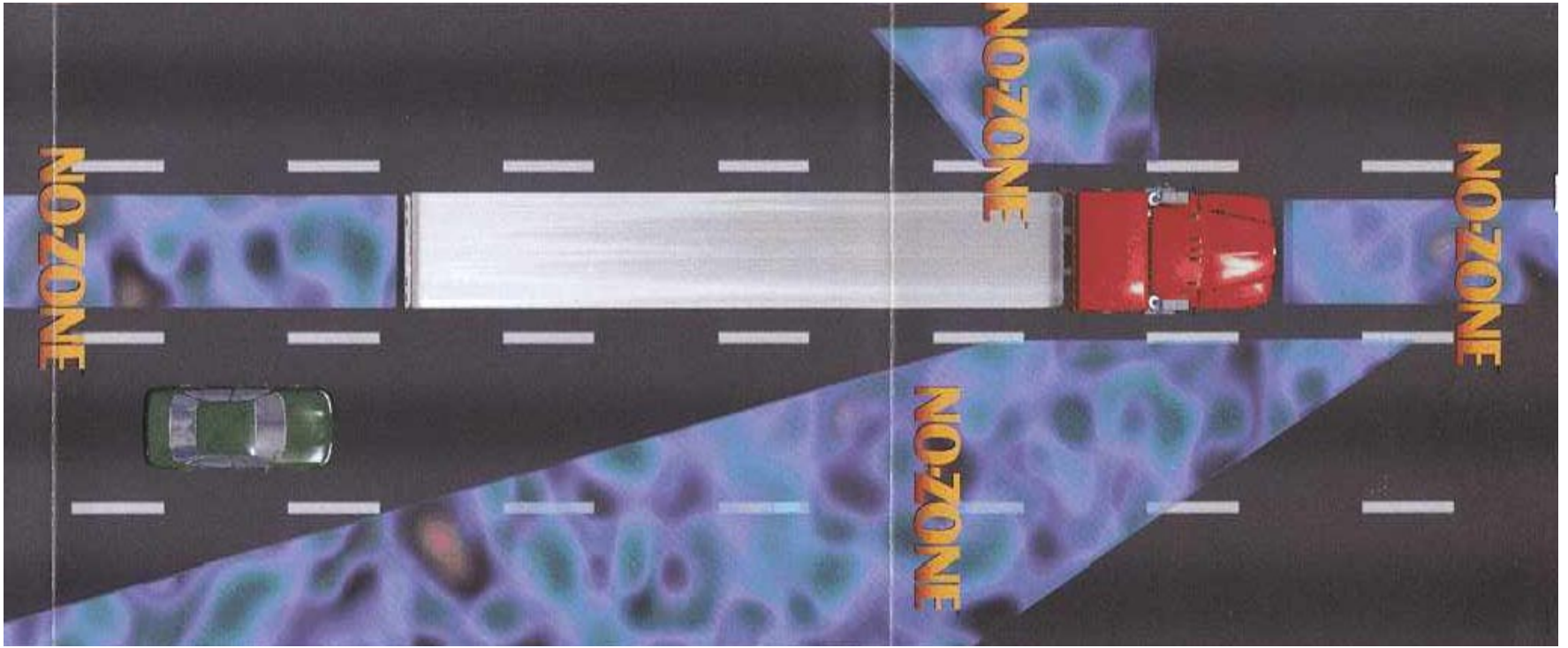


When the vehicle in front of you passes a fixed object (for example, a telephone pole or mailbox), count one-thousand-one, one-thousand-two, etc. and you should not pass that same fixed object before the designated count



Stay well behind larger commercial vehicles so you can see around them for potential hazards

When following in traffic, if you cannot see the other vehicle's mirrors, you may be in their blind spot; avoid doing so



Know the "NO-ZONES"



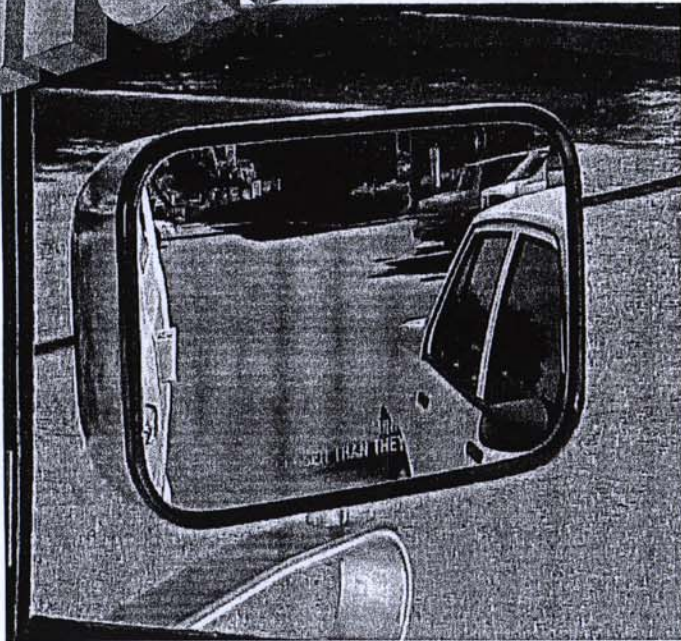
Do not get caught in wide right-hand turns!

Mirrors

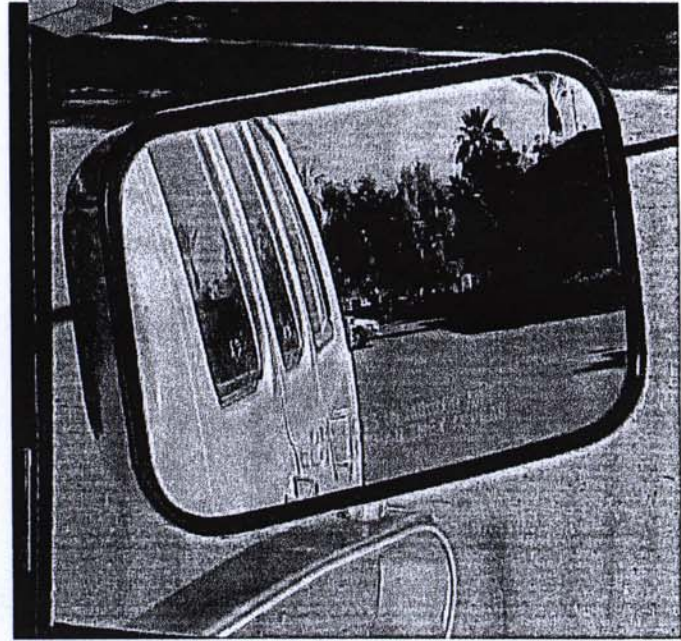


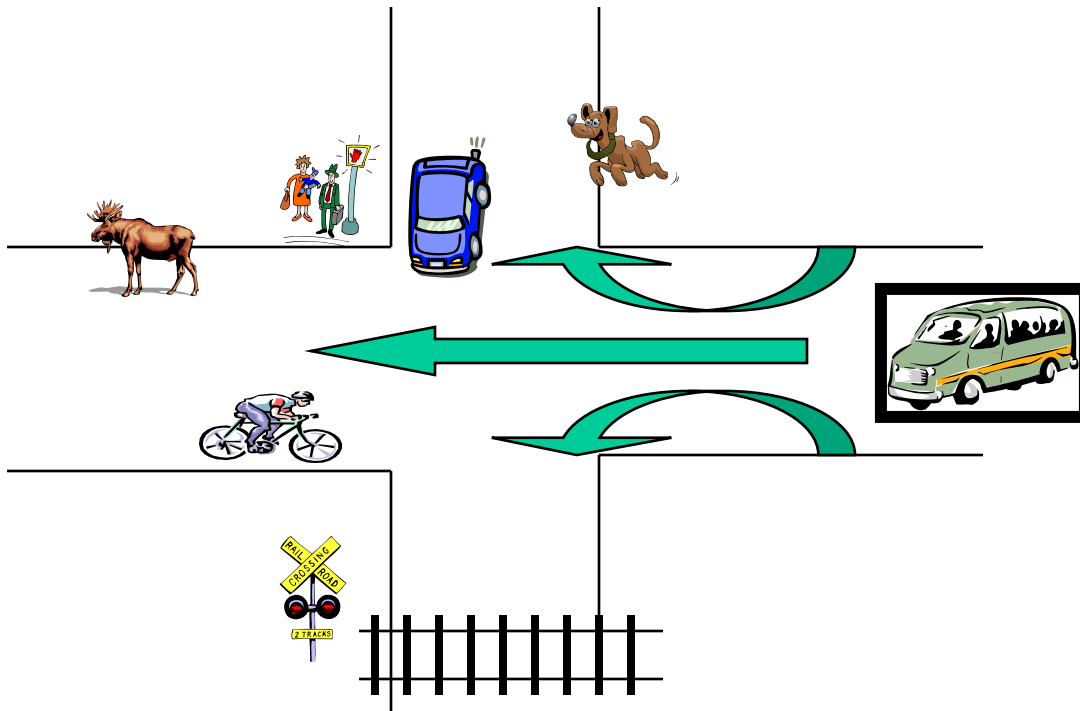
- Adjust mirrors so that the you can barely see the edge of the van in the mirror
- When changing lanes, always check for blind spots by first leaning forward in your seat to change your sight angle and then by turning your head
- Scan mirrors every 3-5 seconds
- The biggest blind spot is directly behind the vehicle. Avoid backing whenever possible

RIGHT !!



WRONG !





Scan ahead

12-15 seconds or
1-2 city blocks

Before entering an intersection, scan all directions and cover the brake

- Traffic – changing traffic signals, vehicles running red lights or making a right turn on red
- Pedestrians, bicyclists and animals
- Trains, school buses



Maneuvers around other vehicles can be dangerous, so **ALWAYS** leave plenty of space behind the vehicle ahead

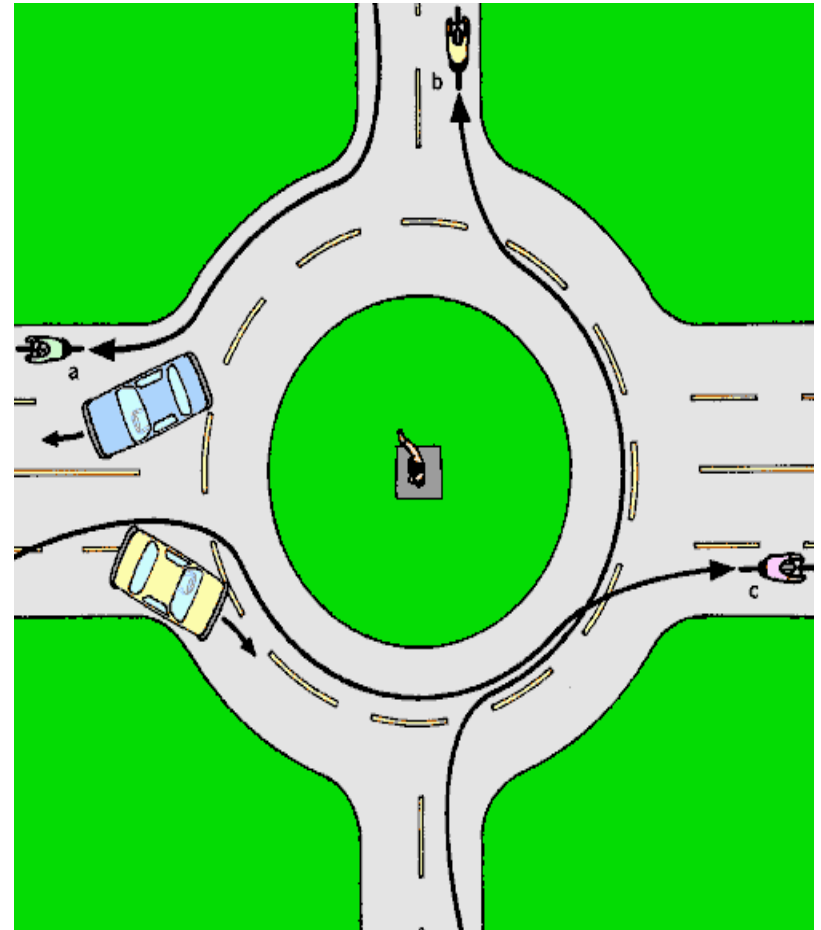
Stop far enough behind the vehicle so that you can see their rear tires and pavement behind the vehicle



Always communicate your intentions by using your turn signals

A turn signal must be given continuously during at least the last 100 feet traveled before turning

- When entering a rotary, remember you have less visibility and less maneuverability
- Maintain a cushion of safety around the vehicle



Minimizing Roll Overs



Slow down and drive cautiously, especially on rural roads. Shoulders, ditches and embankments, as well as on and off ramps, create the potential for vehicle roll over



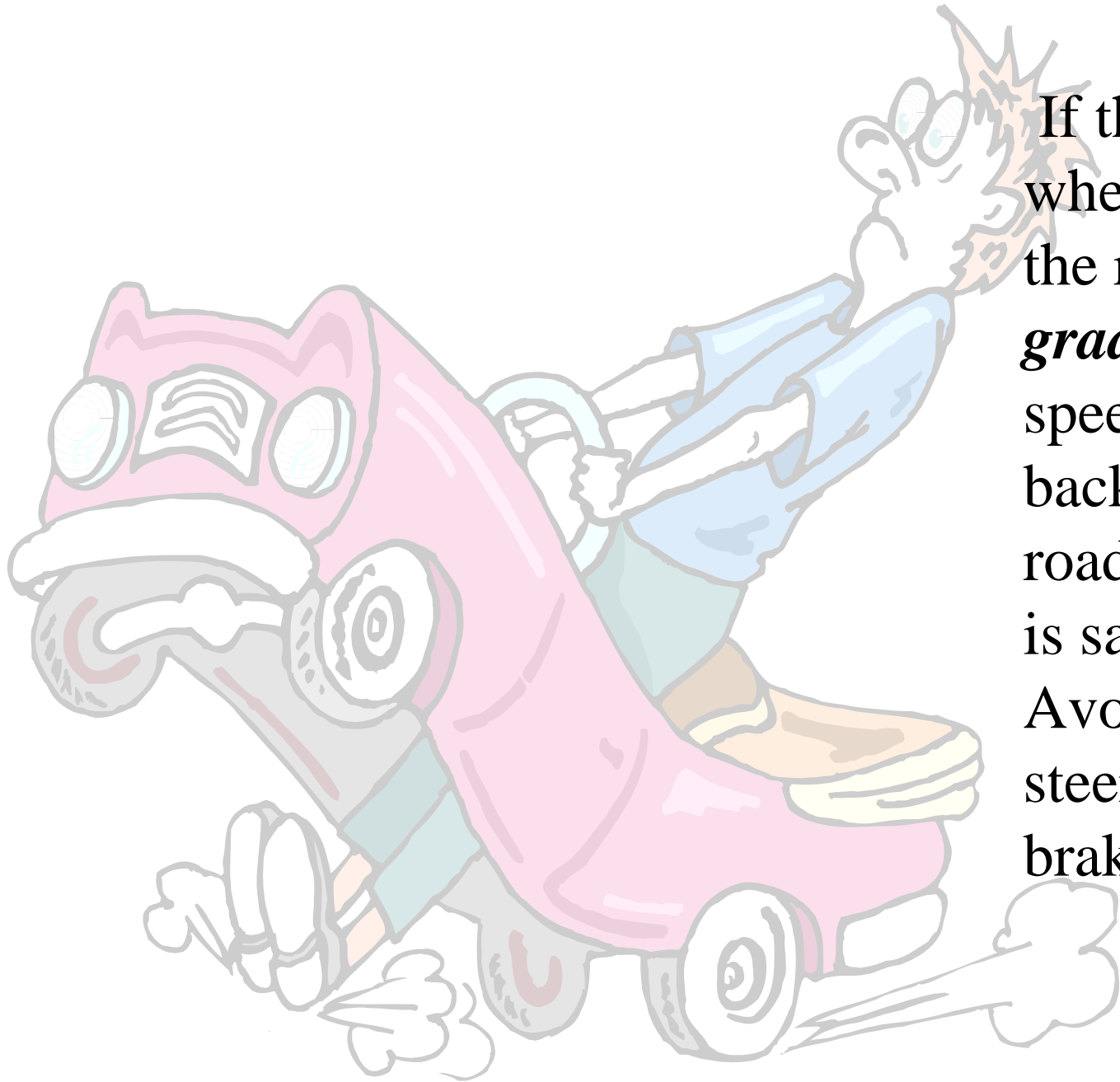
Reduce your speed
BELOW the speed
limit posted for all
turns and poor road
conditions.

**The posted speed
limit is safe for
cars, NOT 15-
passenger vans.**



Keep speeds at or below the speed limit

Do not exceed 60 mph at any time



If the van's wheels drop off the roadway, *gradually* reduce speed and steer back onto the roadway when it is safe to do so. Avoid panic-like steering and hard braking.



-Recline seat back

-Move seat rearward

-Tilt steering wheel down

-10 inches away from steering wheel

-ALWAYS wear seat belts



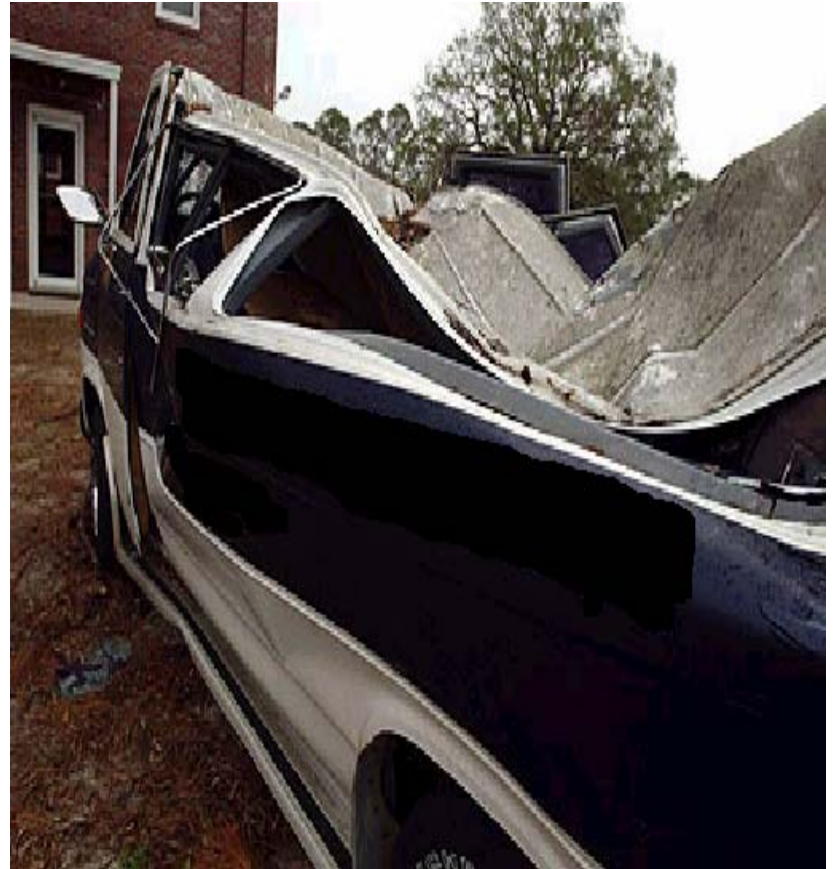
Avoid panic-like steering by positioning both hands on the steering wheel at 9:00 and 3:00 or 8:00 and 4:00

This also decreases arm fatigue and reduces injuries

Keep two hands on the steering wheel at all times

To Reduce Risk of Roll Over

- Do not load items on top of the vehicle or tow a trailer
- Do not overload the vehicle with passengers and/or equipment
- Passengers should be distributed evenly from side to side for balance and sit towards the front of the vehicle



The Vehicle

- Always drive with your headlights on to be seen by other traffic
- Perform pre-trip inspections and notify appropriate person of any vehicle defects





•Results of not removing snow and ice from top of van.

- Always clean snow, ice and frost from all windows
- Secure any loose items within the vehicle so they do not cause injuries in a crash. This includes trash that can interfere with the pedals or the operation of the vehicle
- Know the evacuation policy

Passengers

- MUST wear seat belts at ALL times
- Know the van evacuation policy
- Adhere to the terms of the Passenger Van Policy at all times
- Should NOT use interior lighting when the van is in transit
- Passengers should sit toward the front of the vehicle and be distributed evenly from side to side
- Never more than 15 people in a 15-passenger van (less than 10 recommended)

Passenger Loading/Unloading

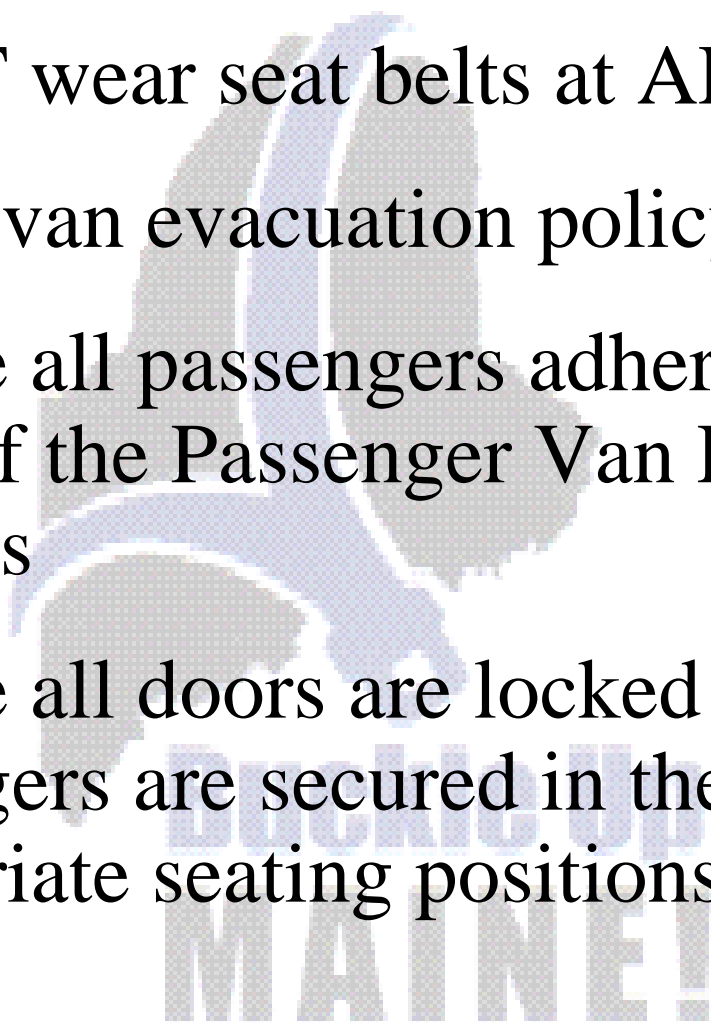
- Drivers should use good judgment to decide how, when and where to unload passengers safely
- Always pick up and drop off passengers so that they do NOT have to cross traffic to get to their destination
- Keep all passengers away from the front and rear of the vehicle when crossing



The use of a responsible spotter when loading, unloading, backing or parking is recommended to ensure no person or object is in harm's way

D R I V E R

- **MUST** wear seat belts at **ALL** times
- Know van evacuation policy
- Ensure all passengers adhere to the terms of the Passenger Van Policy at all times
- Ensure all doors are locked and passengers are secured in the appropriate seating positions and seat belts

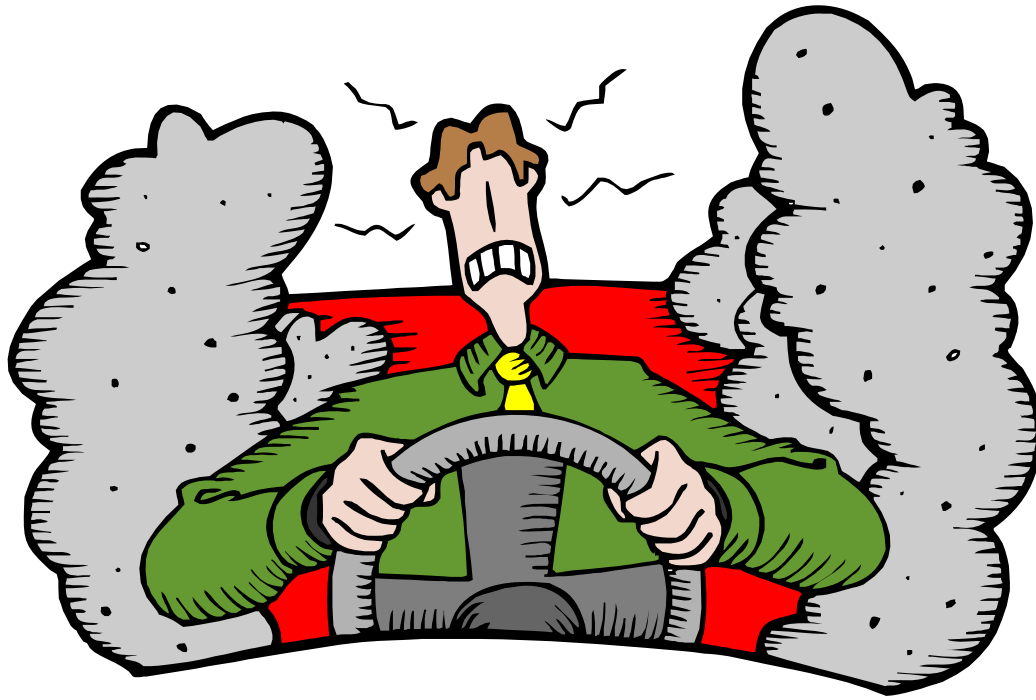


DRIVER



- Cell phones are for emergencies only, and are to be used only when the van is safely parked
- No food, drinks or smoking allowed
- Reading while driving is prohibited
- Read maps only when the van is safely parked

D R I V E R



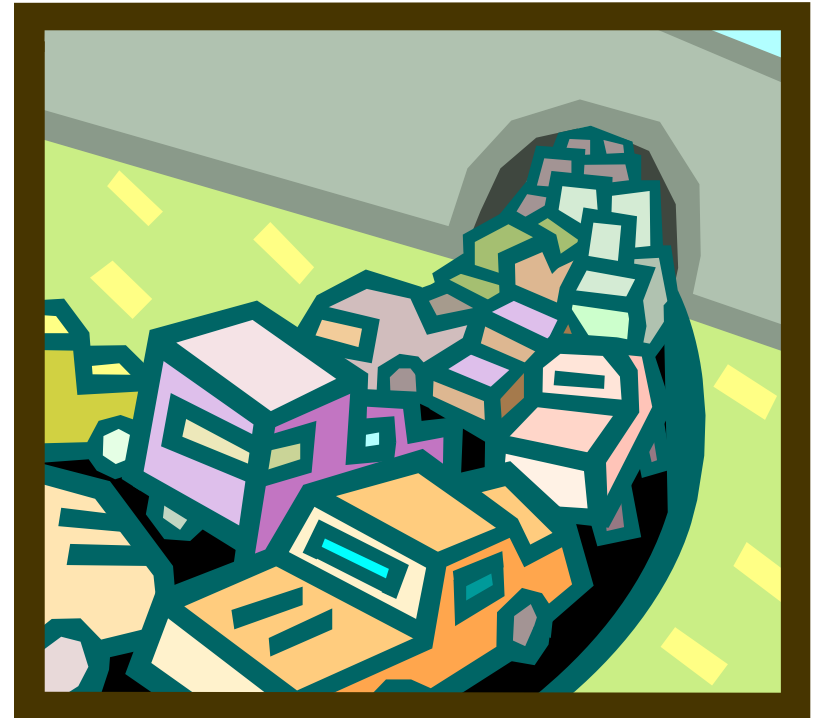
- Be patient and courteous at all times
- Road rage is strictly prohibited
- Your passengers count on you to be cool and keep them safe

Aggressive Driving

- Aggressive driving puts your life and those of your passengers in danger
- It also endangers the lives of others on the road
- Poor driving reflects badly on your organization
- Aggressive driving is:
 - Passing on the right when it is unsafe / illegal to do so
 - Tailgating
 - Excessive lane changes
 - Blocking traffic so they cannot pass
 - Speeding and making unsafe passes

To Avoid Road Rage in Others

- Do not cut people off
- Do not tailgate
- Use turn signals
- Do not use inappropriate gestures or verbal taunts
- Use horn sparingly
- Allow other drivers to merge
- Drive courteously



If Confronted by an Angry Driver

- Do not make eye contact
- Do not engage in the confrontation
- If they persist, have a passenger call for emergency help and drive to a police station



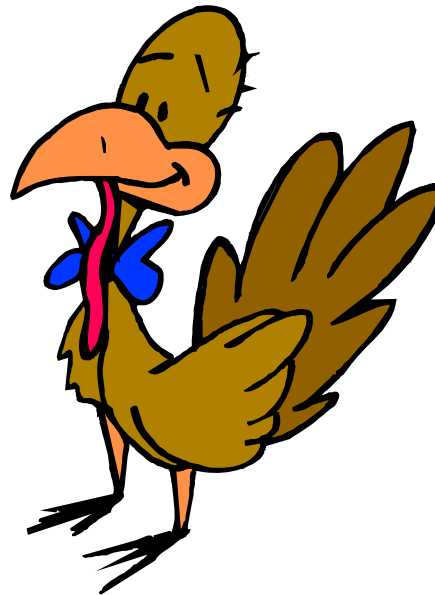
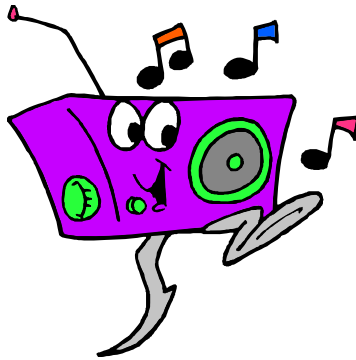
Fatigue



- Drivers must be well rested
- Signs of fatigue
 - Excessive yawning and blinking
 - Difficulty focusing and keeping eyes open
 - Inattention and daydreaming
- Only cure for fatigue is to sleep
 - Stop and rest for 15-30 minutes
 - Longer than 30 minutes is not advisable



Caffeine, loud music, cold air are only temporary cures for fatigue



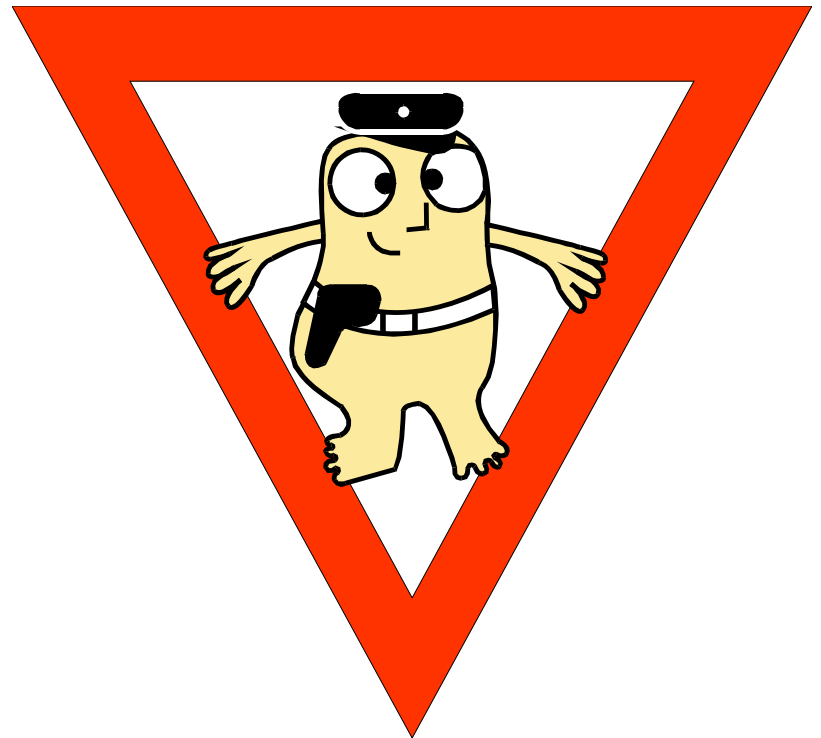
Avoid turkey, chicken and milk as they contain an enzyme which makes you drowsy



- Drivers experience more fatigue between midnight and 6 a.m.
- Be aware that 3:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. is a time when fatigue is common
- On long trips, schedule rest stops every two hours
- Drive during the day, if possible
- Have someone awake in the front passenger seat

Remember...

- Obey all traffic laws
- Concentrate on your driving
- Allow **NO** distractions from passengers or any source
- Discuss any concerns with your safety supervisor



Weather Conditions



- Check weather conditions prior to any trip
- Be prepared not to go if conditions are extreme
- Leave early to avoid making mistakes or becoming anxious

Crosswinds



- Because of the van's size and shape, you must be especially mindful of crosswinds
- Crosswinds can be created by open fields, overpasses and bridges as well as exiting tunnels
- Crosswinds are also created by larger vehicles and buses



Backing

70% of van crashes involve backing into a stationary object.

Avoid backing whenever possible!

Consider alternatives to driving into a place in which you will need to back out. However, if not possible, backing should be done upon arrival at locations rather than when leaving

Limited Visibility



Heads, seats, door posts and vehicle, equipment, and greater distance impeded visibility

- Whenever possible, back out to the left (the driver's side) for better visibility
- Use outside mirrors to direct you



More Visibility

- Avoid backing into traffic
- Get out and check the area behind the van before backing
- Turn on four-way flashers and back SLOWLY
- Have a spotter assist you to back ONLY when they understand what is expected of them
- There is a blind spot in front of the van which may prevent operators from seeing children and others of short stature walking in front of the van
- Be aware of van passenger walking in front of the van as they board or exit the vehicle

Method #1



Use a spotter

Coordinate hand signals with that person prior to backing

Method #2



After pulling into a spot, place a traffic cone behind your vehicle.

When leaving, retrieve the cone and look for any hazards or potential hazards prior to backing

Animals

Animals present a hazard to any vehicle, but more so with a 15-passenger van

Swerving to avoid small animals is dangerous, as it will cause the vehicle to roll over

Use high beams whenever possible





Crashes with deer can occur anywhere in Maine – even urban areas.

-More frequent in October, November and December

-Dusk and dawn (4-7 am and 5-10 pm)

Slow down!



Crashes with moose can occur anywhere in Maine – even urban areas.

-More frequent in May, June and July

-Nighttime (8 - 11 pm)



When you see one, there are usually many more to follow

Eyes reflect the light of oncoming headlights

Use High Beams When Appropriate!



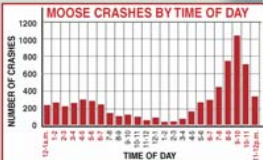
Eyes do NOT reflect the light of oncoming headlights

Watch the lines on the road ahead of you for animals that may be there

Low-lying swampy areas

Swerve to avoid large animals, but not into oncoming traffic

DRIVING TIPS THAT COULD SAVE YOUR LIFE



The number of moose crashes peaks between 7pm and midnight. The high number of crashes from midnight to 6am, when traffic is very light, indicates this is also a dangerous time for moose crashes.

The key to safe driving is to stay alert and pay attention. The **SPIDE** process is these steps to avoid crashes:

- Search the roadway and off-road at 20-30 seconds ahead.
- Identify objects that may enter your travel path in advance.
- Predict actions or changes in the road that may increase crash risk.
- Decide how to minimize collision risk.
- Execute your decision.

CRASH RATES ARE RISING

Crashes involving animals in Maine have nearly doubled over the past 10 years. Crashes with moose can occur anywhere in Maine—even urban areas. With their dark brown color, moose are very difficult to see at night. A crash with a moose results in:

- A one in four chance of injury
- An average of 3 fatalities per year

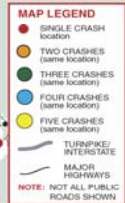
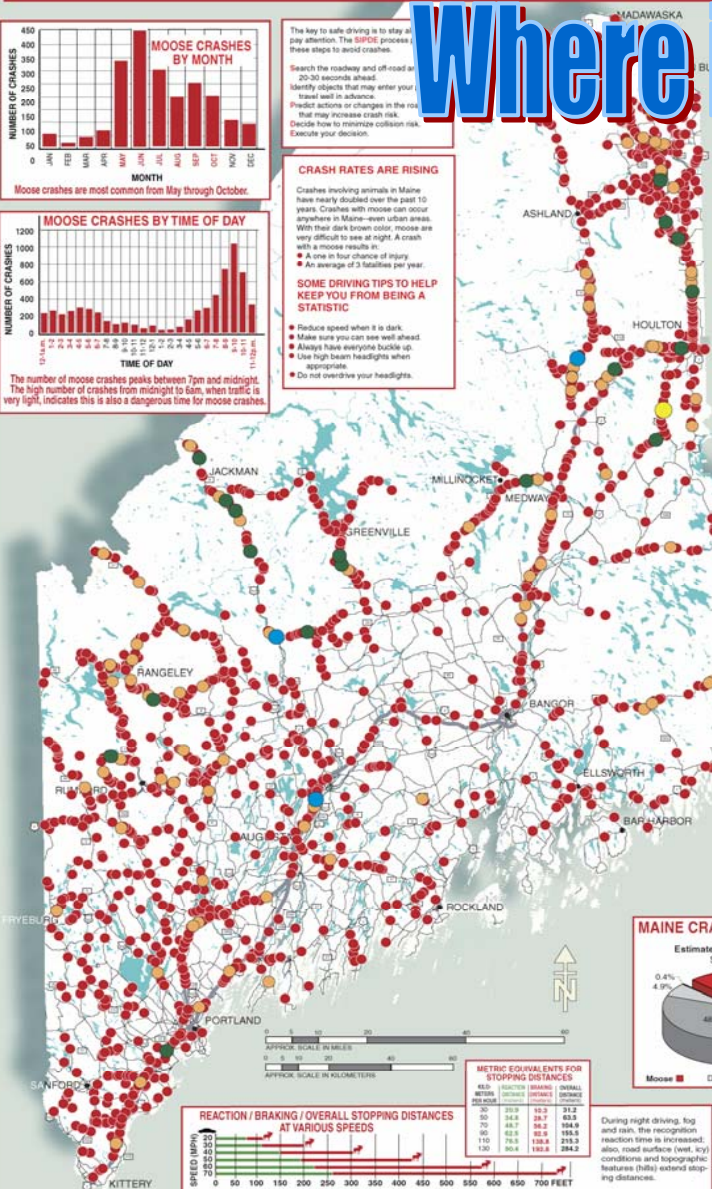
SOME DRIVING TIPS TO HELP KEEP YOU FROM BEING A STATISTIC

- Reduce speed when it is dark.
- Make sure you can see well ahead.
- Always have everyone buckle up.
- Use high beam headlights when appropriate.
- Do not overdrive your headlights.

Where in Maine are the moose?

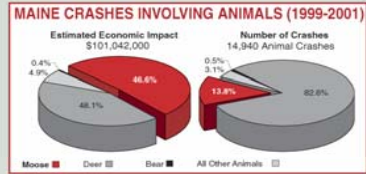


MAINE MOOSE CRASHES 1999-2001



ANIMAL VEHICLE CRASH FACTS IN MAINE 1999-2001

	MOOSE	OTHER ANIMALS
NUMBER OF CRASHES	2,058	12,872
NO. OF CRASHES WITH HUMAN INJURIES OR FATALITIES	4,948	568
NUMBER OF HUMAN FATALITIES	8	2
NUMBER OF HUMAN INJURIES	583	647
ESTIMATED ECONOMIC IMPACT	\$48,589,000	\$52,489,000
ESTIMATED IMPACT PER CRASH	\$23,500	\$4,500



During night driving, fog and rain, the recognition reaction time is increased, also, road surface level, sky conditions and topographic features (hills) extend stopping distances.

THE FOLLOWING MAINE STATE AGENCIES SUPPORTED THE PRODUCTION OF THIS MAP:

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
DEPARTMENT OF ISLAND FOREWATERS & WILDLIFE
OFFICE OF SECRETARY OF STATE
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY
MAINE TURNPIKE AUTHORITY

If you have questions or comments please contact us at: www.state.me.us/dot/planning/safety/safety1.htm

Where in Maine are the moose?

EVERYWHERE!

Be alert!

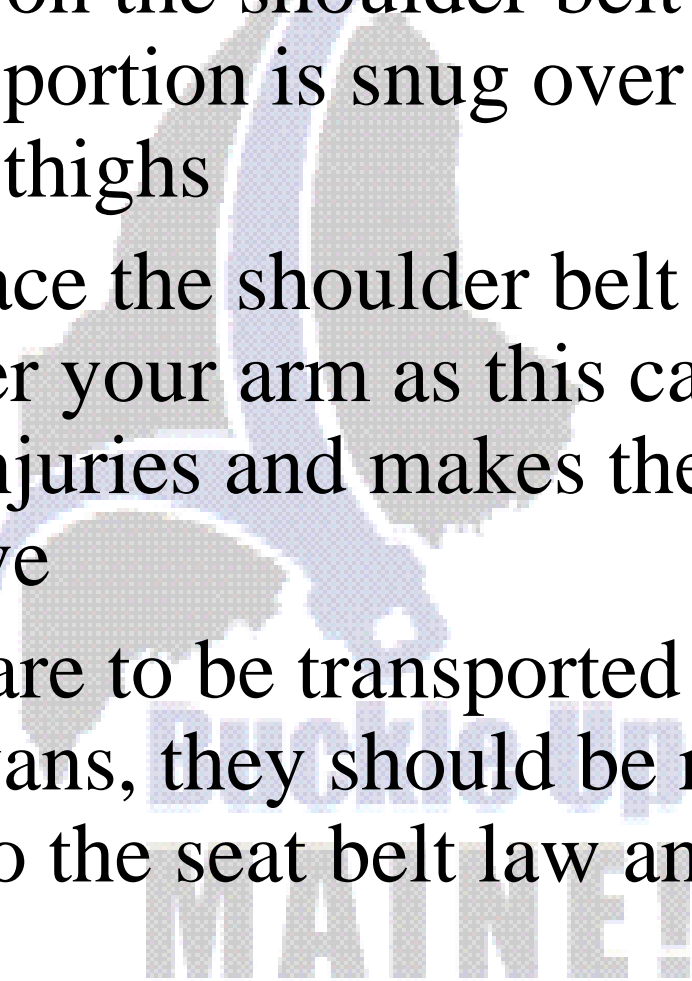
Safety Belts



Safety belts **MUST** be worn at all times

In fatal, single-vehicle roll-overs involving 15-passenger vans over the past decade, 92% of belted occupants survived

THERE IS NO EXCUSE FOR NOT BUCKLING UP!

- 
- Pull tightly on the shoulder belt strap so that the lap belt portion is snug over the pelvis and tops of thighs
 - NEVER place the shoulder belt strap behind you or under your arm as this causes traumatic injuries and makes the seat belt less effective
 - If children are to be transported in 15-passenger vans, they should be restrained according to the seat belt law and best practices

Maine's Safety Belt Law



Everyone else **MUST** be in a safety belt!

FMI: (207) 626-3840

- Children under 40 pounds must be secured in a federally-approved child safety seat
- Children between 40 and 80 pounds **BUT** less than 8 years old must be secured in a federally-approved child restraint system
- Children 12 years old and under **AND** less than 100 pounds must be in the back seat, if possible



Don't let this be you.
Don't let this be you.
Drive Carefully!
Drive Carefully!

Maine Bureau of Highway Safety
164 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333-0164
(207) 626-3840

Buckle Up!



Safety Works!

MAINE DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

Phone: 207-623-7900

Toll Free: 1-877-723-3345

TTY: 1-800-794-1110

E-mail: webmaster.bls@maine.gov