Defensive Driving for Code Enforcement
F. A. C. E.

Presented by the Seminole County Sheriff’s Office
Steps to Safety

- Prevention
- Reading the Road
- Defensive Driving
- Avoiding Distractions
- Crash Procedures
Prevention

Ensure vehicle is in proper operating condition by conducting vehicle inspections.
Vehicle Inspections

- **Exterior**
  - Scratches, dents, loose molding
  - Check glass & mirrors
  - Cracked or broken lenses
  - Functional damage
  - Foreign objects
Under the Hood

- Fluids
  - Oil
  - Coolant
  - *Transmission fluid
  - *Power steering fluid
  - Brake fluid

* if applicable by vehicle manufacturer and/or device installed ie; 2011 Ford Explorer
- **Serpentine belt**
  - frays, cuts, wear

- **Battery**
  - corrosion
  - ensure tight connections

- **Hoses**
  - leaks, cracks, bubbles

- **Wiring**
  - loose, frayed, insulation worn/cut, laying on engine

- **Any** – unusual smells or fluids present
Trunk

- Fire extinguisher
- First aid kit
- Flares
- Make sure everything is secure
  - Anything not secured could become a projectile in a crash.
  - Same principle applies to passenger compartment of your vehicle.
Inside the Vehicle

- Make sure to secure any equipment that can be locked down, including computers, car seats, etc.
- Limit the amount of loose items as much as possible, all can become projectiles during hard maneuvers or crashes.
Tires

- Visual inspection
- Nails / screws / foreign objects
- Tire wear – 2/32nd of inch
  - or top of Lincoln’s head on a penny
- Tread depth / wear patterns
- Tire pressure
  - Use VEHICLE manufacturer’s recommended tire pressure
Tire Pressure

- **Under inflated tire**
  - Less tread on roadway
  - Unnecessary wear / premature replacement
  - Poor handling
  - Roll tire off the rim

- **Over inflated tire**
  - Less tread on roadway
  - Unnecessary wear / premature replacement
  - Poor handling
Quick Check

- Before driving check....
  - **Steering**- noises, pull, bind, jerky, stiff
  - **Acceleration**- smooth, missing, hesitation
  - **Brakes**- pull, pedal mushy, pedal to the floor, float to the floor, noises
Why?

- Proper vehicle inspections help us:
  - Prevent crashes
  - Prevent liability for damage to the vehicle
  - Make us safer
  - Gives the public a clean and professional image
Reading the Road

➢ Driving Geography
  ➢ Types of Turns, build of road, pitch, crown,

➢ Road Conditions

➢ Traffic Hazards
  ➢ All must be observed, analyzed and processed simultaneously in order to make, then execute, appropriate driving decisions to allow for the quick and safe operation of a motor vehicle

Death Valley, CA
Reading the Road: Driving Conditions

- Driving Conditions
  - These cannot be overlooked since they affect the safe and quick operation of a motor vehicle
  - Road Condition
  - Weather Condition
  - Time of Day or Night

These conditions affect visibility and/or traction.
Reading the Road: Traffic Hazards

- Traffic Hazards
  - Heavy or light traffic
  - Pedestrians or likelihood of pedestrians
  - Traffic control devices
  - Lighting (at night)
  - Construction workers present, school zones, etc...

All these hazards must be considered and planned for in order to operate a vehicle quickly and safely.
Road Hazards

- Watch for Road Hazards such as
  - Potholes
  - Railroad tracks
  - Curbs
  - Debris
  - Chatter bumps
  - Water / fluid / “Fla. Ice”

- Wet roads are most dangerous during the first 30 minutes of rain
Defensive Driving

- You only have the ability to make decisions about YOU!

- **ALWAYS** wear your seatbelt! Inertia is NOT your friend and you cannot help if you cannot control your car

- When driving, look further ahead
  - Gather more information..make better decisions—“Get The Big Picture”
  - Identify *potential* problems - Leave an “out.”
Defensive Driving

...continued

- Use the “L-R-L Rule” at intersections
- Make your intentions known
  - Use turn signals always
- Be visible
- Be aware of blind spots
  - Both yours and other driver’s
- Keep your eyes moving
  - Avoid highway hypnosis
Defensive Driving
(continued…)

- At intersections
  - Far enough to see rear-tires – allows you an “out”
- While rolling – 3 seconds is a good standard
  - daytime, good weather, good road conditions, good traffic conditions
- “Work Driving” – i.e.; anything else – 6 seconds
  - Night time, inclement weather, poor visibility, fatigue, etc…
Entering Intersections

- Why are intersections so dangerous?
  - “You give people choices”
- Move through ALL intersections with caution
- Check left first (L-R-L)
  - Anticipate that “red light runner” + 5 seconds even
  - Keep your head on a swivel and your eyes moving
...why we wait even after the “green.”
Stopping

- Pay attention
- Plan for the unexpected
- Drive the speed limit
- Avoid distractions while driving

If you must use your brakes in emergency, ABS will help

- It does NOT guarantee success however based on vehicle operations at the time of the incident
Defensive driving – at night

- **DO NOT** look into oncoming headlights
  - Look off to the right side
- **Dim** interior dash lights to reduce glare
- **Avoid** looking into the spotlight & overhead lights
- **Allow** extra distance for response to unexpected situations
- **DO NOT** overdrive your headlights
  - Overdrive: faster than your ability to stop based on reaction to what your headlights illuminate
...and remember where the gas pedal is located.
DISTRACTED DRIVING
Distracted Driving

Definition: Distracted driving is any activity that could divert a person's attention away from the primary task of driving. –
(http://www.distraction.gov/content/get-the-facts/facts-and-statistics.html)

- Manual: taking hands off the wheel
- Visual: taking eyes off road
- Cognitive: taking mind off driving
Examples

- Eating and drinking
- An outside person, object or event: animal, a crash scene, or road construction
- Adjusting a radio, cassette, compact disc player, I-pod or GPS device
- Other occupant in the vehicle: talking, arguing, or assisting a child
- A moving object in the vehicle: a pet, an insect, or an object falling off the seat
More Examples........

- Smoking related: reaching for, lighting, smoking, or dropping a cigarette
- Cell phone related: dialing, talking, listening, texting or reaching for a cell phone
- Other device brought into the vehicle: reaching for a water bottle, purse or sun glasses
- Using a device integral to the vehicle: adjusting mirrors, lights, or seatbelt
- Other distraction: a medical issue, looking at a map or road sign, sleepy, or fatigue
- Inattentive or lost in thought
Avoiding Distractions

- Pre plan your route so you minimize GPS use.
- Use programs that forward calls or auto reply to text messages when you are driving.
- Do not eat and drive, take an actual break to eat.
- Use hands free technology when available.
- If all else fails pull over to check GPS, Phone, etc.
Personal Assessment

- Policy guidelines
  - If your boss knew?
- Weather/Road conditions
- Traffic conditions
- Pedestrian traffic
- Vehicle condition
- Personal condition / Health problems / Fatigue
Crash Procedures
Primary Reasons for Crashes

- Tail Gaiting – What do you gain?
- Backing – Not looking to rear when vehicle is in reverse
- Distractions – Driving is a full-time job
- Speeding – Public is watching so, why do it?
- Use of turn signals – Public is expecting, let other drivers know your intentions, use them and avoid a complaint or a crash.

Turn Signals

They do come standard on every car. Even yours.
Crash Procedures

- When all else fails and you leave the road...

- STEER THE VEHICLE
  - Choose what to hit, keep driving
  - Soft objects - bushes, grassy fields, crops, very small trees, etc.
  - Choose something your car will "eat"
  - Allow the unibody construction to do its job.
“crashing”
(continued)

- Avoid steel, concrete & wood
- Put as much vehicle as possible between you & the point of impact
- Crash Priority
  - Life first, vehicle last
- Protect the driver at all costs as you control the vehicle
Types of Crashes

- Right angle
- Rear end
- Backing
- Fixed object
- Side swipe
- Head-on

- Any crash is better than a head-on
- Avoid at **ALL** cost

23 Aug 2012 – Toronto – Code 3 traffic did NOT get out of way
Always Remember

- Your car goes where your eyes go
- Expect the least experienced drivers to be the ones around you
- Be aware of your surroundings
- “Smooth is fast”
- Expect the unexpected, plan for the worst and hope for the best
- Watch Your Speed
- Avoid Distractions
- Wear your Seatbelt

END