

# SAFETY ALERT

September 2008

## SEPTEMBER THEME

### SCHOOL IS IN

Here we are at the start of another school year. The following information is provided to help remind us how important it is to be extra cautious when we share the road with school buses and as we drive by occupied school grounds.

#### **School Buses**

When we share the road with school buses, we need to realize they are not like every other vehicle on the road. We need to pay special attention to their yellow and red flashing lights.

Flashing yellow lights indicate the bus is approaching a stop and the red lights will come on momentarily. The law forbids vehicles approaching from either direction from passing school buses that are stopped with their red lights flashing or while their stop sign is out.

If you pass a school bus while their red lights are flashing or their stop sign is out, you will be fined, but the fine is minimal compared to the 6-points you will receive on your driving record.

#### **School Zones**

Be careful to observe school zone speed limits. We probably haven't paid much attention to school zones over the summer, so extra care is required.

Be extra cautious near schools, even if you are not actually in the area designated as the school zone. Small children are sometimes careless and can dart out from between parked cars or from behind other obstructions without looking beforehand.

Both vehicular and pedestrian traffic can be quite heavy around schools in the morning and afternoon as students and buses come and go and parents drop off and pick up their children. This congestion can extend beyond the designated school zone, so be extra careful when driving in the vicinity of schools during these times.

There are crossing guards at some schools. Be watchful around these schools for children that might dart into the street somewhere other than in the crossing lanes.

Children are our most precious resource and little ones (and sometimes not so little ones) often don't consider danger before they act. We need to watch out for them, since they don't always watch out for themselves.

**REMEMBER TO BUCKLE UP EVERY TIME YOU GET IN A VEHICLE!!!**

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### SAFELY DRIVING IN FOG

You head out on your trip and once you get on the road you notice a blanket of fog so thick you can barely see to the end of your car's hood. Don't panic. Follow these safety tips for driving safely in fog:

- Slow down gradually and drive at a speed that suits the conditions.
- Use your low beam headlights. High beams reflect off the moisture droplets in the fog, making it harder to see. If you have fog lights on your vehicle, use them in addition to your low beams.
- Be patient. Avoid passing, changing lanes, and crossing traffic.
- Use pavement markings to help guide you. Use the right edge of the road as a guide, rather than the center line.
- Increase your following distance. You will need extra distance to brake safely.
- Look and listen for any hazards that may be ahead.
- Reduce distractions in your vehicle.
- Keep looking as far ahead as possible.
- Keep your windows and mirrors clean. Use your defroster and wipers to maximize your vision.
- If the fog is too dense to continue, pull completely off the road and try to position your vehicle in a protected area from other traffic. Turn on your emergency flashers.

Before your drive, and during your trip, check weather forecasts and road reports (this can be done by dialing 511). If authorities have released weather warning or reports of poor visibility and driving conditions, delay your trip, if possible, until conditions improve.

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