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Pedestrian Safety

Almost 40% of all road users killed on our roads are pedestrians. Some of the factors that contribute to pedestrian related fatalities when using the road are:

- Substance Abuse and Walking.
- Inability to judge the speed and distance of approaching vehicles.
- Wearing clothes that are dark or non-reflective at night or during bad weather conditions.
- Not using designated crossing points.
- Some informal settlements are situated next to busy highways, thus making them more vulnerable to road fatalities.



It is therefore important that both motorists and pedestrians develop mutual respect for each other, by following road safety rules. Pedestrians can be safe road users by adhering to the following rules:

- **Exercise the golden road safety rule.**

Always stop at the kerb or at the side of the road before attempting to cross. Then apply the golden road safety rule. Look right, look left, look right again, listen and cross only when it is safe to do so. While crossing keep looking in both directions and listen for traffic. Never assume that you have been seen.

- **Remember to wear bright-coloured/reflective clothing** at night or during bad weather. This will make you more visible to drivers.

- **Alcohol and drugs can impair your ability to walk safely.** They have a negative effect on your co-ordination, hearing, sight and your ability to judge the speed and distance of approaching vehicles.

- **Try to cross the road at a controlled crossing point** eg. Traffic lights, intersections or a pedestrian crossing.

- If there is a **pedestrian bridge**, use it even if it means walking further.

- **Don't walk on the roadway.** If you have to walk on the roadway, always walk on the right hand side as far away from the road as possible, facing oncoming traffic.

- **Always cross the road in a straight line.** The shortest route across the road must be taken.

- When crossing a double lane, **do not cross the road halfway.** Wait on the side of the road until both lanes are clear, and then cross.

Vehicle Safety

Roadworthiness is one of the most important requirements for road safety and requires regular vehicle inspection. Vehicle inspection is a procedure mandated by National and Provincial road safety authorities. It requires that a vehicle is inspected to ensure that it conforms to regulations governing safety standards. Vehicle inspections should however not be done merely to comply with the legal requirements, but rather with a focus on safety of the driver, passengers and other road users.

1. START BY CHECKING YOURSELF:

■ **Did you have a drink before entering your car?** If you are drinking or doing drugs, do not drive.

■ **Did you consume over the counter or prescription medication.** If a drug label or your doctor warns against driving after taking the medication then you should take a taxi or have a friend drive you. Do not drive yourself.

■ **How is your emotional state?**

Did you just have a fight with your boss or your spouse? Did your boyfriend/girlfriend just break-up with you? Are you angry or sad? Take some time to calm down before heading for the road.



■ **Are you tired?** A tired driver is as bad as a drunk driver on the road. Stimulants are not the answer to overcome tiredness. Stimulants can impair your driving abilities by making you overconfident or even causing you to see things which are not there. If you are tired let someone else who is well rested to drive you or call a taxi.

■ **Switch off your cell-phone.** The law does not allow anyone to use a cell-phone while driving. Remember driving requires your full attention.



Vehicle Safety continued

CHECK THE OUTSIDE OF YOUR VEHICLE

■ Are there any leaks under your car?

If so, you should not drive the car as you could have an accident due to brake or steering failure.

■ Check your cars indicators, lights and mirrors.

■ **How are your tyres?** Fit the correct type and size of tyre for your specific vehicle. Ensure that your tyres are inflated to the correct pressure. Low tyre pressure will cause excessive flexing, resulting in overheating, tyre stress and failure. Smooth tyres limit roadholding capability, especially in rainy weather and can result in skidding and even loss of vehicle control. Check and replace smooth tyres. The tread and depth of the tyre should not be less than 1mm at any given place.

■ Check that your windscreen wipers are working.



Vehicle Safety continued

3. CHECK INSIDE YOUR VEHICLE

- Check that your car's gauges are working properly and accurately reflect what is going on under the bonnet. If you smell something, check it out, even if the gauge says your car is fine.
- Look at your car mirrors, air vents and windows. Can you see out your rear window? Make sure that your windows are clean. Make sure that your air vents are working so that your windows do not fog up when you are driving. If you need to adjust your seat, airconditioning or heat in your car, do it before you drive.
- Check that head and seat restraints are comfortably adjusted.



4. FINALLY CHECK YOUR PASSENGERS:

- Ensure that all passengers are buckled in.
- Make sure that all car doors are closed properly and have been locked.
- Children should be buckled up in appropriate car seats or restraints.
- BUCKLE UP.

WEEKLY CHECKS

Apart from undertaking daily checks on your car, there are things that you should be checking weekly:

- Check your oil level weekly.
- Check your water tank.



Vehicle Safety continued

ROADWORTHINESS CHECKLIST FOR TRUCKS AND BUSES

■ BRAKING SYSTEMS

When starting your vehicle the air pressure must build up to the maximum (cut-out pressure). Switch off the engine, air pressure should remain constant. If the pressure continues to drop, the system has an air leak. The low pressure indicator should warn you with a buzzing sound and a flashing light. If this occurs, do not attempt to drive. Brake adjustment must be checked weekly by an authorized workshop.

■ TYRES

Tyre pressure must be adjusted according to the load to be carried. Tyres must also be the same size and type on the same axle. Dual wheel tyres must not make wall contact. Both tyres on a dual wheel must make ground contact when the vehicle is unladen on a flat surface. Tyres must be checked for lumps, cracks and bulges in the side-walls. Make sure that there are no obstructions wedged between dual wheels.



■ STEERING

Steering must operate freely from side to side. There should not be too much free play on the steering wheel.

■ WINDSCREENS, WINDOWS & WIPERBLADES

A cracked or clouded windscreen that obstructs a driver's vision will not pass a roadworthy test. Windscreen and window glass must be clearly identifiable as safety glass. Any cracks in side windows that obstruct the drivers view in the left rear-view mirror will lead to test failure. One windscreen wiper in operation must be fitted in front of the driver.



Vehicle Safety continued

■ LIGHTS

The following lights are compulsory by law and must be in full working order at all times, main beam and dipped beam (headlights), front and rear park lamps, stop, tail and number plate lights, indicator and hazard lamps and reverse lamps.

■ Make sure that all peripherals like reflective tape, reflectors and chevron boards are clean and clearly visible.

■ Make sure that correct signage ie. Warning diamonds are displayed and the corresponding documents are in order when transporting dangerous goods.

■ BODYWORK

All bolt on accessories like bumpers, bars and mirrors must be fastened and secured correctly. Overhead storage racks must not be overloaded.

■ Emergency exits must be clearly marked.



OVERLOADING



Overloading and defective tyres result in a large number of deaths and injuries on South African roads. Overloading causes damage amounting to millions of rands to the road network; thus risking the lives of road users.

OVERLOADING IS DANGEROUS BECAUSE:

- An overloaded vehicle will take longer to stop making it dangerous, especially in an emergency.
- An overloaded vehicle is more difficult to handle and cannot accelerate as normal making it dangerous to overtake.
- At night, the headlights of an overloaded vehicle will tilt up, blinding oncoming drivers to possible obstruction on the roadway.
- Overloaded vehicles tyres flex and overheat, which could result in a blow-out.
- Overloading results in higher maintenance costs to the vehicle eg, tyres, brakes, shock absorbers and higher fuel consumption.

Driver Safety

SUBSTANCE ABUSE

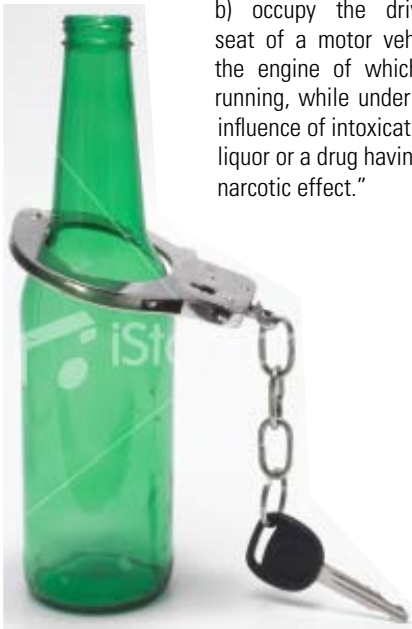
Substance Abuse destroys millions of lives every year. It damages the lives of young people who are the future of our country. Substance Abuse can cause sleep deprivation, appetite loss, brain damage, depression, confusion, severe anxiety, increased heart rate, muscle spasms, kidney and liver failure and convulsions. Substance Abuse can also make people paranoid, angry, hostile and anxious.

Alcohol is not a stimulant, but a depressant. Therefore drinking too much often leads to both short term and long term health risks.

Drunk Driving is one of biggest threats to Road Safety in South Africa. The National Road Traffic Act (NRTA), Act 93 of 1996 as amended under Section 65 states that:

“ No person shall on a public road-

- a) drive a vehicle or
- b) occupy the drivers seat of a motor vehicle the engine of which is running, while under the influence of intoxicating liquor or a drug having a narcotic effect.”



By consuming drugs or alcohol drivers become a danger not only to themselves but also to others. As stated in the Act above, any person behind the wheel of a vehicle whose blood alcohol level is 0.05g per 100 ml is regarded by the law as being incapable of driving.

A drugged/drunken person may be prosecuted just for sitting in the driver's seat of a stationary vehicle while the engine is running. The court may order that the license be endorsed, suspended or cancelled.





STAGES OF INTOXICATION

Stage 1 - Apparently Dry and Decent

The person who is drinking appears normal, but his reactions are slowed down.



Stage 2 - Delighted and Devilish

This is the so called sociable stage. The drinker often does things which, if he were perfectly sober, he would not say or do.



Stage 3 - Delinquent and Disgusting

He staggers and his condition can no longer be hidden. He has arrived at the criminal stage.



Stage 4 - Dizzy and Dirty

The drinker cannot now stand up alone. In this stage he is a danger to the public and he is unable to control his body movements.



Stage 5 - Dazed and Dejected

The early stage of apparent excitement disappears and the stage of apathy and general inertia develops.

Stage 6 - Dreadfully Drunk

The person may fall unconscious or pass into a coma.



Stage 7 - D.T.'s or Dead

The drinker passes into a condition of wild excitement. He displays symptoms of going mad, fights with ambulance attendance and suffers from hallucinations and is in serious danger of dying.



The Drinking Rule is... DRINK LESS AND SLOWER

(Test yourself with a breathalyzer to make sure)

1 unit per hour Maximum

(Rule is for Males over 18 years, weighing 68kg. Women need to drink less, and slower than men).

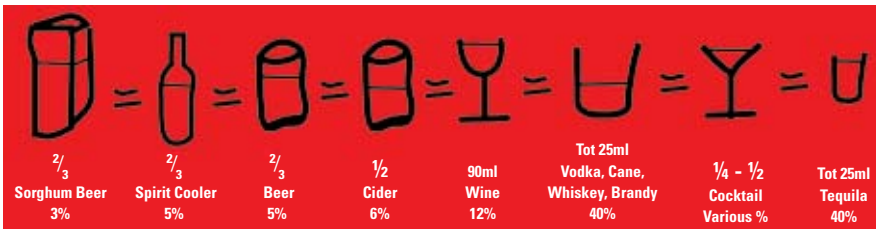
Never more than 6 units at one time! It takes 1 hour or more to get rid of 1 unit.

1 Unit = 10ml of pure alcohol

1 unit = 0,02g Blood/0,10mg of Breath

Legal Limit = < 0,05 Blood / < 0,24mg Breath

ONE UNIT =



Quart Beer = 3.5U+ Nip Brandy = 3U Bottle Wine = 9-10.5U (W/Red) Cocktail = 2.5U+ Cider = 2U

CAUTION: YOUR DRIVING IS IMPAIRED AFTER EVEN ONE UNIT, SO IT IS SAFER NOT TO DRINK THEN DRIVE AT ALL.

NEW DRIVERS: It is recommended that new drivers do not drink ANY alcohol before driving for the first 3 years after getting their licence.



Driver Safety continued

APART FROM ALCOHOL ABUSE SOME COMMON DRUGS THAT ARE ABUSED ARE:

Name	Description
DAGGA	Dagga is usually rolled up in a cigarette called a joint. It can also be brewed as a tea or mixed with food, or smoked through a water pipe called a bong.
INHALANTS	Inhalants include chemicals found in such household products as aerosol sprays, cleaning fluids, glue, paint, paint thinner, nail polish remover, amyl nitrite and lighter gas.
ECSTASY	Ecstasy is usually taken orally in tablet form. Ecstasy is a synthetic drug made in a laboratory. It is illegal and has effects similar to hallucinogens and stimulants.
COCAINE & CRACK COCAINE	Cocaine and crack cocaine can be taken orally, through the nose (snorted), intravenously, or, in the case of crack, through inhalation of the fumes from heating it.
CRYSTAL METH & METH AMPHETAMINES / TIK	Crystal meth & meth are inhaled, smoked or injected. Crystal meth is a form of methamphetamine that resembles small fragments of glass or shiny blue-white rocks. It is a highly powerful and addictive man made stimulant that causes aggression and violent or psychotic behaviour.
HEROIN	Heroin is usually injected, snorted or smoked. Heroin enters the brain rapidly but makes people think and react slowly, impairing their decision-making ability. It causes difficulty in remembering things. Heroin is one of the three most frequently cited drugs in drug abuse deaths. Violence and crime are linked to its use.
LSD	LSD is sold in tablets, capsules or in liquid form. It is commonly added to absorbent paper and divided into small decorated squares. Each square is a dose. LSD is one of the most potent mood changing chemicals.



X Beware of Drugs



SOME OF THE COMMON EFFECTS OF SUBSTANCE ABUSE ARE:

SHORT TERM EFFECTS

Anxiety

Sexual difficulties such as impotence

Impaired judgment leading to accidents and injuries

Slowed breathing and heartbeat

Loss of consciousness

Suffocation through choking on your own vomit (aspiration)

Potentially fatal poisoning

LONG TERM EFFECTS

Damage to unborn child

Liver disease

Osteoporosis - thinning of the bones

Pancreatitis

Stomach ulcers

Infertility

Heart Disease

Raised blood pressure

Strokes

Dementia

Brain Damage



**Drugs damage
your health**



Driver Safety continued

SPEED

Speeding can be defined as exceeding the legal speed limit. A speed limit sign is the maximum speed at which you are allowed and at which it is safe to travel. Many people do not view obeying speed limits as an important way to avoid crashes, however speeding is regarded as a factor in nearly one-third of all fatal crashes.



The speed at which you travel, affects the stopping distance of your vehicle. The stopping distance is mainly determined by four main factors:

a) Reaction time

The lapse between the time you notice the danger and the moment you brake (normally more than one second)

b) Condition of the vehicle

eg. Brake linings, tyres and shock absorbers.

c) Condition of the road

eg. Potholes, gravel or slippery roads.

d) Weather Conditions

A wet road surface increases your stopping distance and chances of skidding when applying brakes. Mist and night conditions decreases visibility and your chances of identifying other road users/hazards in time to avoid a collision.

SPEEDSTERS - TAKE NOTE:

- When visibility is bad, you won't be able to stop in time to avoid a hazard on the road.
- You won't be able to stop in time if pedestrians suddenly cross the road in front of you. Eg If you encounter a pedestrian at a distance, of 60m ahead, the car will hit the pedestrian at an impact speed of 80km/h.
- The higher the speed, the longer the braking distance and the more difficult it is to control the vehicle in the process of stopping.
- Pedestrians are also road users. Their behaviour on the road is often unpredictable, demanding even more caution from drivers.
- Human error is the main cause of collisions during peak traffic periods, you can expect that more mistakes will be made during this time.



CELLPHONES

The invention of cellphones is both a blessing and a danger. While they are useful for reporting accidents and breakdowns, using them while driving can be fatal.

DRIVERS WHO USE CELLPHONES WHETHER HAND-HELD OR HANDS FREE:

- Are much less aware of what's happening on the road.
- Fail to see road signs.
- Fail to maintain proper lane position and steady speed.
- Are more likely to "tailgate" the vehicle in front of them.
- React more slowly and take longer to brake.
- Are more likely to enter unsafe gaps in traffic.
- Feel more stressed and frustrated.
- Are four times more likely to have an accident than those driving without using a cellphone.



DANGERS OF USING CELLPHONES WHILE DRIVING:

- Never SMS whilst driving.
- SMSing messages means that at least one hand is fully occupied which is extremely dangerous.
- Hands-free car kits are slightly safer but they are not the full answer. If, for example, you should receive bad news while driving, your concentration would be lost, quite possibly leading to an accident.



Driver Safety continued

SEATBELT SAFETY

Proper use of seatbelts can prevent deaths. The difference between a belted persons stopping distance and the unbelted persons stopping distance when involved in an accident is often the difference between life and death.

SEATBELTS CAN PROTECT YOU BY:

- Decreasing the time it takes for an occupant to come to a stop on impact.
- Spread the impact force over a greater area of the body.
- Minimize contact with the interior of the vehicle.
- Prevent ejection in case of an accident.

THE LAW ON SEATBELTS

- Front seat and back seat passengers should always wear a seatbelt.
- Seatbelt use is essential on every journey, no matter how short or how slow you go.



RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE PASSENGER

If you are the passenger, ensure:

- That your seatbelt is properly fastened and adjusted.
- That you never hold another passenger, especially children, on your lap.
- That you encourage the driver and other passengers to buckle up.


In order to wear a seatbelt correctly, the following points should be adhered to:

- The seatbelt should be worn as tight as possible with no slack.
- The lap belt should go over the pelvic region, not the stomach.
- The diagonal strap should rest over the shoulder not the neck.
- Nothing should obstruct the smooth movement of the seatbelt.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE DRIVER

If you are the driver, ensure:

- That your own seatbelt is properly fastened and adjusted.
- That your passenger's seatbelts are properly fastened and adjusted.
- That all children are restrained in a properly fitted chair or harness.




Remember to buckle up, it could save your life.



DRIVER FITNESS - VISION

The ability of the driver to have good vision is an important part of driver fitness as the eyes control most of your movements and decisions while driving. Good vision and visual comfort leads to safe driving.



Many vehicle collisions are caused by a driver's poor vision. Some reasons for such collisions taking place are:

- The driver's vision is below the recommended standard. He could have a visual deficiency such as nearsightedness, farsightedness or astigmatism. Cataracts could also affect the driver's vision.
- Failure to wear spectacles or contact lenses where they have been prescribed for distance use.
- Low visibility due to darkness or adverse weather conditions, including extreme heat.
- Driving too fast. The normal field of vision is 180 degrees. At 95 km/h the field of vision is only a quarter of its normal size. This means that the faster you drive, the less you see to the side.
- Glare in the drivers eyes.
- A dirty windscreen.
- Distraction of driver from either inside or outside the vehicle.



Safe driving involves:



VISUAL ACUITY

This is the ability to focus and see clearly with both eyes, individually as well as together. With good acuity you will see detail very easily. This is important in identifying road signs, cyclists, pedestrians and stray animals.

PERIPHERAL VISION

This is the ability to see over a wider area without moving either the eyes or the head, sometimes called "looking out of the corner of your eyes". It refers to your total field of vision.

DEPTH PERCEPTION

This is the ability to judge space and relative distance between objects or between an object and the vehicle. Depth perception depends on good binocular vision, essential for judging whether a car can be passed safely in the face of oncoming traffic and when moving from one lane to another among moving vehicles.

NIGHT VISION

This is the ability to see in the area of low illumination beyond your headlights, to see in the presence of the glare of oncoming headlights and to recover quickly from its effects. Night vision deteriorates with age and older drivers with reduced vision will need to exercise greater care when driving at dusk and at night and should have proper driving spectacles.

DRIVER FITNESS - FATIGUE

Driver fatigue is a very real danger. It is a known fact that driver fatigue results in diminished alertness, impaired perception, weariness and diminished motivation, performance, speed, accuracy, physical and mental alertness.

Factors affecting driver fatigue are divided into three categories:

- Psychological-motivation of the driver, his personality and emotional state as well as his stress level all determines his level of fatigue.
- Physical-Body vibrations, noise and temperature levels, the quality of the air and the driver's physical comfort while driving.
- Biological-sleep deprivation and withdrawal of attention from the road and other traffic demands.

TIPS ON HOW TO REDUCE DRIVER FATIGUE:

- Plan your journey well in advance, making provision for safety breaks.
- Do not exhaust yourself the day before a long trip.
- Do not take sleeping tablets the night before you have to leave on a trip.
- A heavy meal before you embark on a trip can increase fatigue and weaken your concentration.
- Never take any form of alcohol or drugs before embarking on a long trip. This will encourage fatigue as you become relaxed.
- Before embarking on a long journey make sure your exhaust system is in good order. Leaking exhaust fumes may cause drowsiness and even death if the vehicle is not properly ventilated.
- Take a break and rest every two hours.

AGGRESSIVE DRIVING

Aggressive driving is often demonstrated by drivers who take their anger, resentment and frustration with them behind the wheel. These attitudes can lead to crashes and nasty confrontations. Many instances of aggressive behavior involve drivers who cut you off, make unsafe lane changes, speed, follow too closely, run red lights, and disobey traffic signs and signals. This also includes the blaring of the hooter, angry voices shouting and rude hand gestures.

HOW TO AVOID AGGRESSIVE DRIVING:

- When you find yourself in a stressful driving environment or when your mood makes you irritable and impatient, calm down, take a deep breath and relax.
- When you join other traffic at an intersection or onramp, make sure that you have plenty of room. Always use your indicator to show your intentions before making a move. If someone cuts you off, slow down and give them room to merge into your lane. Remain calm.
- Use your hooter rarely, if ever.
- Keep your hands on the wheel and avoid any gestures that might anger another driver. This includes "harmless" expressions of irritation like shaking your head. If another driver is acting angry, don't make eye contact.
- Give angry drivers lots of room. If an angry driver tries to pick a fight, put as much distance between you as possible. And remember "it takes two to tango". One angry driver can't start a fight unless another driver is willing to join in.

