



Driving During the Holidays

For many of us, the holiday season means traveling which means more cars on the road for those taking local trips to their friends and family.

With the holiday season comes holiday weather and holiday traffic. Yikes! So what makes holiday traffic so hazardous? Well there are many contributing factors but let's focus on the following:

- Fatigue
- Speed
- Seatbelts
- Alcohol

Fatigue - Driving after a long day at work, after a long flight or driving long distances without taking a break can cause you to involuntarily close your eyes and cause your car to drift off the road. Like alcohol, sleepiness slows reaction time, decreases awareness, impairs judgment and increases your risk of crashing.

Speed is a contributing factor in 31% of all fatal crashes. Cost of speed-related crashes is \$40 billion per year with nearly 12,000 lives lost. 88% of speed-related fatalities occur on non-interstate highways. Slow down. Never exceed the posted speed limit. Weather conditions permitting; always maintain the legal speed limit.

Seatbelts - It's a fact, seatbelt use saves lives! Period. It is the law so buckle up. According to the National Safety Council, there are still groups less likely to wear seat belts: Teens, commercial drivers, males in rural areas, pick-up truck drivers, people driving at night, and people who have been drinking.

Alcohol - According to MADD.org, in 2012, 10,322 people were killed and approximately 345,000 were injured in result to drunk driving. Each crash, each death, each injury impacts not only the victims in the crash, but family, friends, classmates, coworkers and more.

Understanding your alcohol consumption level can make all the difference in deciding not to drive. Driving under the influence can cause accidents leading to injury and death. Call a cab or family member to pick you up or even better do not drink unless you have a designated driver.

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