

Fleet Safety

Barton Malow maintains in excess of 200 various types and sizes of vehicles that operate on public highways. These vehicles include passenger automobiles up to and including eighteen (18) wheeled vehicles that can weigh as much as 80,000 pounds. As such, the safety of Barton Malow employees and the general public is equally important. Fortunately accidents do not happen very often. But when they do, they can be catastrophic. For instance, an article in 2005 in the Atlanta Journal-Constitution describes a terrible accident involving a truck and a passenger vehicle. The truck rear-ended the automobile. This article describes numerous surgeries one individual suffered as a result of the accident as well as the ensuing multi-million dollar settlement that resulted. The basis of the accident was – speed and distraction.

Toolbox Talking Points

According to the website driveandstyalive.com , did you know that an **automobile**:

- At 30 mph the average car moves 30 feet forward during the driver perception\reaction period while the car moves forward 45 feet during the braking action\stopping period for a total of 75 feet. If the pavement is wet the total distance becomes 120 feet!
- At 70 mph the average car moves 70 feet forward during the driver perception\reaction period while the car moves forward 245 feet during the braking action\stopping period for a total of 315 feet. If the pavement is wet the total distance becomes 560 feet! That is almost two (2) football fields!

According to the Utah Department of Transportation website an **eighteen-wheel truck**:

- At 40 mph the average truck moves 44 feet forward during the driver perception \reaction period while the truck moves forward 125 feet during the braking action \stopping period for a total of 169 feet.
- At 65 mph the average truck moves 71 feet forward during the driver perception \reaction period while the truck moves forward 454 feet during the braking action \stopping period for a total of 525 feet. On dry pavement!



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Why is vehicle safety so important?

The above statistics were compiled with the driver knowing the tests were being conducted and expecting the best possible outcome. What might the statistics read if the driver were tuning their radio or reaching to pick up their coffee from the console as issues are developing ahead? How might long will it take that driver to perceive and recognize the need to stop – quickly? Perceiving and interpreting what lies is ahead accounts for substantial vehicle travel before brakes are even applied!

Additionally, the above statistics were derived utilizing good dry pavement with a high friction coefficient and good tires permitting stopping in the shortest available distance. If the tires are worn or road is worn, the friction between the tires and the roadbed may be reduced thereby reducing available traction and increasing stopping distance. Other items that increase stopping distance is oil accumulation on the road bed on hot days. Add rain the stopping distance increases further. For drivers in colder climates snow and ice in winter will drastically increase stopping distance.

Therefore as owners and operators of a fleet of highway vehicles, it is imperative that all employees driving a Company vehicle be aware of the speed they are traveling, the highway congestion and road condition and adjusting their speed for the road and weather conditions encountered. In light of the conditions encountered while driving, we must all consider how long it may take to stop at the speed we are traveling. It is our duty to our Company, the driving public in general and to our families waiting for us at home to drive safely.

BUILD IT SAFE NO EXCEPTIONS

