



New York State School Safety Group 491

Safe Schools Agenda

Volume 11, Issue 12

December 2004

Route to:
__ Superintendent
__ School Business Off.
__ Athletic Director
__ Supt. Bldgs/Grounds
__ Site Administrators
__ Transportation Dir.
__ Lunch Director
__ Classroom Teachers
__ _____

A monthly service provided to help you with your efforts to make your school safe for students, staff and the public

December Safety Reminders

1. Make sure that holiday decorations are hazard free:

- ★ Use only artificial trees and wreaths
- ★ Use only UL approved decorations
- ★ Use miniature light bulb leads. They generate less heat
- ★ Use sturdy stands for trees and tie them back to the wall
- ★ Keep passages open to classrooms, hallways and assembly areas
- ★ Limit student art work to 20% or less of wall space, and keep it away from doors and ceilings.

2. Control access of holiday visitors

3. Prepare for inclement weather:

- ◆ Schedule personnel or contractors to clear driveways and walkways before the staff arrives for work, before student dismissal, and before evening activities
- ◆ Monitor bus loading areas and inside the entranceways at the beginning and end of each day. Keep floors dry and sidewalks clean, and control student traffic
- ◆ Test your emergency school closing procedures with a table top exercise involving key personnel. Do this at the district and building level.

4. Review preparations and supervision for holiday evening music and sports events.

Pupil Transportation System Security Resources

The National Association of State Directors of Pupil Transportation Services (NASDPTS) has developed a primer and an action plan on pupil transportation security. According to NASDPTS, the pupil transportation industry is extremely vulnerable to acts of terrorism. It is more likely that we will experience many small security incidents rather than terrorist attacks, but planning and training for terrorist events will make us better prepared to handle the less serious incidents. See www.nasdpts.org/security.html.

Working to Prevent Roadway Crashes

Roadway crashes are the leading cause of death from unintentional injury in the general population and in the workplace according to NIOSH. In fact, they were the leading cause of occupational fatalities in the U.S., accounting for 22% of all injury-related deaths. Your program to promote vehicle safety on and off the job should:

- Provide for vehicles with maximum level of occupant protection
- Ensure regular inspection and maintenance
- Ensure regular checking of driver licenses and driving records
- Require mandatory use of seat belts
- Contain a ban on use of cell phones while in motion
- Provide periodic screening of vision and general physical health for all those whose primary duty is driving
- Provide schedules t/correspond w/speed limits

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December Driving Safety Reminders

Winterize:

- * Check the anti-freeze in your vehicle radiators and windshield washers
- * Check battery charge and fluid level
- * Check the exhaust system
- * Check wipers, lights, and defrosters
- * Check brakes, tire pressure and tire treads
- * Check your tool box to make sure that it contains winter emergency equipment

Adjust your driving patterns for winter conditions:

- * Keep in mind that traffic is going to be slowed by wet, slippery, or foggy roads. Allow extra time to get to your destination.
- * Anticipate stops and slow down gradually
- * Be extra cautious at intersections
- * Increase following distance – allow more room for stopping
- * Drive with low-beam headlights on
- * Slow down before curves to avoid skidding
- * Plan ahead for lane changes and move into them gradually.
- * Signal your intentions for all lane changes

Driving at night:

- * This is the time of year when most of us go to work in the dark and return home in the dark. Be aware that the accident rate during night time driving is considerably higher than during day time driving
- * Keep your headlights clean and in proper focus. They can lose more than half their effectiveness otherwise
- * Do all you can to avoid temporary blindness caused by the glare of oncoming headlights.

The human eye enlarges its pupil to admit all possible illumination. When a bright headlight beam strikes the wide-open pupil, it contracts immediately – 60 times faster than it can enlarge – leaving us temporarily blind. At 40 miles per hour, our vehicle will travel at least 200 feet during our blind interval.

Avoid blinding other drivers by not using high beams.

- * When approaching another vehicle, dim your headlights.
- * Decrease speed and focus your eyes on the right hand margin of the road.

Skids

- * Slow down at the first hint that the road is slick
- * Skids are more likely on curves and turns, so slow down ahead of them, then apply power slowly on the curve.
- * Keep steering steady, with no abrupt change in direction or abrupt braking
- * If you go into a skid –

Don't steer against the skid

Don't hit the brakes

Do steer in the direction the vehicle is sliding until you feel the recovery of traction, then slowly straighten the wheels and keep rolling

- * Know your brakes. If your vehicle is equipped with anti-lock brakes, just hold the brake down and apply firm and constant pressure. The brake pedal may feel hard or seem to ratchet or pulsate. You may also hear a noise. Do not pump the brake.
- * Keep in mind that wet ice, warmed by the sun, is twice as treacherous as “cold” ice
- * Anticipate stops. Slow down gradually.