



LESSONS LEARNED

Driving Courtesy: A Habit That Ensures Safety

by Frederick C. Clark, ARM
Vice President, Transportation Services

Courtesy is an important part of defensive driving as well as a mark of the professional vehicle operator. The defensive driver knows that strict

THE FIVE GOLDEN RULES OF DRIVING COURTESY

To making driving courtesy a habit, practice the following rules:

1. Grant pedestrians every courtesy due them while they are crossing in front of vehicles or at intersections. By law, as well as by the rules of courtesy, pedestrians have the right to expect the driver to permit them to reach the sidewalk safely. During wet or slushy weather, the courteous driver will take precautions to avoid “splashing” the pedestrians.
2. Right-of-way laws are designed to enable courts to judge cases. The driver on the right has no more privilege to assume the right-of-way than the driver on the left. Slowing down at intersections and pausing a few seconds to permit the other drive to pass safely will eliminate many intersection accidents.
3. Waiting your turn at converging traffic lanes is another example of courteous driving. The courteous driver will avoid forcing another driver into a fixed object. Squeeze-play or shut-outs like his result from a lack of courtesy.
4. Signaling is simple courtesy in action. Let the other driver know when you intend to turn, slow down or stop.
5. Acknowledging courtesy is part of the team effort of professional drivers. They are courteous to each other as well as to the non-professional drivers they meet on the road. They quickly acknowledge courtesy extended by others.

observance of traffic laws will go a long way toward preventing accidents. They also know that courteous driving gives them an extra degree of safety in these days of high accident potential on the highways. Driving courteously means:

- keeping a courteous distance
- maintaining a safe distance
- allowing the faster traffic to pass

The professional driver knows that situations often arise as to who has the right-of-way. If drivers or pedestrians jump the gun in these situations, an accident is bound to happen. That is why courtesy – the “way-of-right” rather than the right-of-way – is so important.

Courtesy in driving covers up the gaps beyond the law, and when courtesy becomes a habit it can assure safe driving. For example, safe and courteous drivers will slow down as another vehicle is passing them so they can help the other driver – and help themselves.

Some drivers forget courtesy when they are behind the wheel. Others attempt to use their vehicles to intimidate anyone they meet on the road. Defensive professional drivers cannot afford to forget courtesy, as it can keep them out of trouble.

Frederick Clark has a BS degree in Chemistry and over 30 years of experience in the safety, health and environmental field. He has gained expertise in many aspects of personal and fleet safety and loss control management. He serves the fleet safety needs and distribution-related needs of clients by providing training, assessments, risk analyses, and other loss prevention programs.

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XL Environmental • Risk Control Division • 505 Eagleview Boulevard • Suite 100 • PO Box 636 • Exton, PA 19341-0636
Phone: 800-327-1414 • Fax: 610-458-7285 • www.xlenvironmental.com