



# LESSONS LEARNED

## The Safe Approach to Commercial Driving DEFENSIVE DRIVING SKILLS MASTER COURSE

What do the following types of accidents have in common: lane change and sideswipe accidents, intersection collisions, turning squeezes, hitting pedestrians, and backing accidents?



The predominant characteristics associated with all of these accident types are lack of driving skill, as well as impatience and carelessness.

According to the Federal Highway Administration's Preventable Accident Manual, the countermeasure to prevent future accidents of these types is increased training. In order to assist our insureds with managing their accidents and implementing corrective measures, XL Environmental's Risk Control Division has developed The Safe Approach to Commercial Driving, a defensive driving skills course and train-the-trainer program for your drivers, supervisors and safety managers.

## THE RESULT OF DRIVING DEFENSIVELY

Defensive driving means driving safely and correctly in spite of adverse conditions and the poor decisions and errors made by others on the road. The XL Environmental safe driving program is based conceptually on the attitude to anticipate. By being aware of this concept and practicing the six steps XL Environmental recommends, your driver will create a situation in which he/she has:

- more space to maneuver his/her vehicle should a hazard arise,
- increased visibility, and
- more time to evaluate the situation to make a good decision.

The ultimate result of driving safely, or defensively, is that the driver maintains a high level of control, both mentally in his/her head and physically on the road with his/her vehicle. The defensive driving concept encompasses not only the desire to avoid a crash, but also to exercise courtesy and consideration toward others.

The Safe Approach To Commercial Driving serves as an ongoing training tool that positively presents the concepts of defensive driving. Drivers learn to apply these concepts to each situation they encounter and improve their safe driving habits, decision-making ability and attitude.

## The Six-Step Defensive Driving Sequence

The Safe Approach to Commercial Driving covers the following topics:

### Step One: Look Down the Road

Learn to develop the habit of looking beyond the present traffic situation for hazards down the road by expanding your field of vision.

### Step Two: Know Your Environment

What is your environment while driving? Learn the importance of scanning.

### Step Three: Be Considerate of Others

Learn the basics of communication, right-of-way, and share the road.

### Step Four: Expect the Unexpected

Plan ahead to avoid surprises like tailgate traps. Develop a constant awareness of your surroundings and vehicle position while driving.

### Step Five: Be Decisive

Learn how to make a "good" decision and act in a safe and timely manner.

### Step Six: Maintain Focus

This step brings the previous five steps together in a conclusion and discusses techniques to stay in control while behind the wheel.

### FIND OUT MORE

The course can be presented in 6 or 12 sessions throughout the year (12 months), or drivers can complete the course in a one-day training session. Certificates will be issued upon completion of the course. For more information, contact Fred Clark at 800-327-1414.

### DEFENSIVE DRIVING TIPS

- Learn to recognize hazards
- Assume other drivers will make mistakes
- Adjust speed, position, direction and attention to be able to maneuver safely
- Scan far ahead and frequently to the sides and rear



- Scan completely before changing speed or direction

Practicing defensive driving techniques allows us to get safely to the things that are really important.

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