

# November 2008 Safety Meeting

## Safe Driving Practices

As cold weather approaches (hopefully), propane drivers will be putting in longer hours on the road. In light of the longer work days, now is a good time to review a few safe driving practices. In addition to conducting regular vehicle inspection and proper maintenance, your commitment to operate your vehicle safely and pay attention to your driving duties is critical. Safe driving practices benefit drivers and the public. They are critical for propane drivers who transport a hazardous cargo. It is crucial for propane drivers to be alert, maintain vehicle control, and stay focused during deliveries. Consider the following:

- There is a tendency for anyone who repeats the same duties to fall into patterns. Do not forget the larger implications of forgetting the smaller details.
- Stay alert and avoid distractions and anything that can take your eyes off the road, including eating, talking on the phone, and checking tickets and maps while in route.
- Vehicles operate differently. Your company's fleet may be made by numerous companies. Be aware of how varying vehicles may drive, operate, and handle differently. Know the safe operating procedures for the vehicle you drive.

Driving defensively is the key to avoiding accidents. Always wear a seat belt, obey traffic laws, and follow safe driving practices. Remember these tips:

- Share the road – Don't forget your vehicle is heavier and larger than many vehicles on the road. Protect all the zones around your Commercial Motor Vehicle (CMV). (**Drive for five**).
- Look at the big picture - Be aware of your surrounding area. Use the "**what-if**" strategy. When you are driving, look at other vehicles around you. Pick one and ask:

What would I do if the driver pulls in front of me?

What if the vehicle ahead suddenly stops?

What would I do if a cyclist or pedestrian crosses the street in front of me?

The "what-if" strategy helps you anticipate hazards and think of some actions to take that could help you avoid a collision. If we do this block by block, mile by mile, we will be mentally alert and prepared to take the correct action in a timely manner.

- Stay back – Keep a safe following distance between you and the vehicle in front of you. Remember, your CMV takes a lot longer to stop than a passenger vehicle. A common driver error that contributes to collisions is following too closely or tailgating. Following distance should never be less than six seconds when driving in ideal conditions.
- Keep one step ahead – Be aware of what defensive action you will take to avoid an accident. To prevent collisions, we need to develop driving habits that help us see hazards before they become dangerous situations.

Scan the road ahead and behind your vehicle.

In city driving, scan ahead to the next intersection or block.

In rural driving, scan ahead to the next hill or curve.

Scan ahead by twelve to fourteen seconds.

- See and be seen – Check your blind spots often, keep your eyes on other drivers by using your mirrors, and use your headlights or horn when you need to make someone aware of your presence. Remember to check your rear and side mirrors every three to five seconds.

### Class Discussion

Ask the employees to discuss safe driving practices that were covered in this safety message and share other safe driving practices gained through personal experience.

### Closing

Safe driving practices are critical for propane drivers. You transport hazardous cargo, and a mistake you make while behind the wheel can have devastating consequences. You greatly reduce the chance of accidents when you drive professionally and safely. The Bureau of Labor's statistics show the most dangerous part of the day for any worker is the time they spend in their CMV. Drive in a manner that protects you and all other drivers.

# November 2008 Test

## Safe Driving Practices

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Instructions: Read and answer each of the following questions. When complete, grade the test and review incorrect answers so each employee is “armed” with the correct answers before they leave the training.**

1) \_\_\_\_\_ is when a driver protects all other zones around his or her vehicle on the road.

- (A) What-if
- (B) What’s-up
- (C) Reasonable
- (D) Drive for five

2) Scanning the road ahead and checking the mirrors are examples of using the \_\_\_\_\_ strategy to recognize hazards.

- (A) what-if
- (B) what’s up
- (C) drive for five
- (D) reasonable

3) When driving in ideal conditions, following distance should never be less than \_\_\_\_\_ seconds.

- (A) 3
- (B) 4
- (C) 5
- (D) 6

4) In the propane industry, using safe defensive driving techniques is important because:

- (A) The fines are high.
- (B) The vehicles you drive are difficult to repair.
- (C) The vehicles you drive carry hazardous materials.
- (D) You may receive a driving citation.

5) According to the Bureau of Labor, the most dangerous part of the day is the time you spend in your \_\_\_\_\_.

- (A) Bulk Plant
- (B) Commercial Motor Vehicle (CMV)
- (C) office
- (D) customer’s house

# **November 2008 Answer Sheet**

- 1) D
- 2) A
- 3) D
- 4) C
- 5) B