



**SPECIAL POINTS
OF INTEREST:**

- Seating Position
- Steering Grip
- Simple and Effective
- Defensive Driving
- Distractions, Stress and Fatigue
- Normal Braking
- Emergency Braking
- Slick Surface Braking
- Impaired Driving

P.O. Box 18667
Charlotte, NC 28218

800.849.1503
Fax: 704.331.9663
Kathy@
southernbuilder.org

Visit our website
southernbuilder.org

Hats ON for Safety

VOLUME 1, ISSUE 27

JULY 2009

Drive Smart - Stay Safe

If your 10-year high school reunion has come and gone then a lot of what you learned in driver's education has become outdated. Schools update their textbooks to reflect advances. Driver's ed has experienced changes with new safety research and technology. How many obsolete behind-the-wheel techniques do you still use?

Seating Position By the early 1990s the federal government mandated airbags for both drivers and passengers. By the mid 90s people suffered serious injuries from sitting too close to deploying airbags. Experts began recommending drivers sit 10—12 inches away from the

Motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of work-related injuries, according to the National Safety Council. Driver fatigue, drinking, time pressure and not wearing seatbelts are contributing factors. Do all you can to stay safe on the

steering wheel to prevent airbag related injuries. Manufacturers have reduced airbags' power by 25 percent, but they still pack quite a punch.

Steering Wheel Grip

You probably learned to grip the steering wheel at 10 o'clock and 2 o'clock. Airbags changed that, too. It is now recommended to grip the wheel at 4 and 8 o'clock due to the force an airbag exerts when it inflates. The grip has changed, too. Wrap your fingers under the wheel, with thumbs on top.



road. — on and off the job. **Defensive Driving** Help prevent accidents by driving responsibly and courteously. Keep your cool and be patient. Don't insist on the right of way or expect other drivers to do the right thing. Stay alert and focused on

Simple and Effective especially on tight turns, the hand-over-hand method has a major drawback: your forearm inevitably winds up over the airbag.

With hands at 10 and 2 and hand-over-hand steering, it doesn't take much input before your forearm is over the hub. If the airbag deploys, your hand, wrist or forearm will whack your face. You could get facial lacerations from a watch or ring or you might break a wrist, nose or cheekbone.

4 o'clock & 8 o'clock offers better steering control and allows finer steering inputs. With the push-pull—forearms never cross the steering wheel.

the road as well as on other drivers. Never tailgate; leave at least a two-second gap between you and the car ahead. Obey traffic laws and signs **DON'T SPEED**—it's the most common driver error in fatal accidents.

McHUMOR.com by T. McCracken



"Yes, you're right, there is less traffic, but it's still illegal."

Distractions, Stress and Fatigue

- If you get tense while driving, take deep breaths and try to relax. Reduce stress by allowing plenty of time to get to your destination.
- Avoid using cell phones, eating, reading maps or any other type of distracting activity while driving.
- Avoid driving if you're tired. Limit fatigue by getting at least eight hours of sleep before you go.



Information in this newsletter was taken from go Magazine, March-April 2008; Think Safety Monthly Planner

Normal Braking

For normal braking you learned to put your foot on the brake peddle and increase the pressure, easing up slightly as you came to a halt. Today, you keep your heel on the floor and use the smaller muscles in your toes for finer control (rather than lifting your foot and using the leg's muscles.) This allows you to stop more smoothly and saves the wear on the brakes.

Emergency Braking

Antilock brakes are now the norm. Keep a steady, firm pressure on the pedal, and steer where you want the car to go. The antilock system pumps for you.



Slick-Surface Braking

If you take your foot off the accelerator and shift into neutral, the vehicle will eventually stop, without braking. But if you take your foot off the accelerator and leave the transmission in gear, it will come to a stop faster, because the drag of the engine compression helps to slow it down.

Let us know if you have any ideas for our safety newsletter. E-mail kathy@southernbuilder.org.

Impaired Driving

Any alcohol—even a small amount, can impair driving. Never drive after you've had alcohol, drugs or medications that make you sleepy. Don't accept a ride from anyone who's been drinking, and don't try to pass drunk drivers on the road. Stay a safe distance away and call to report them (get the license plate number.)



Wear a seatbelt every time you drive or ride in a vehicle!