

Worksite: _____ Instructor: _____ Date/Time: _____

Topic C197: Braking and Stopping

Introduction: Once the brake is applied it can take long distances for a vehicle to come to a safe, complete stop. When vehicles ahead of you do something unexpectedly, you need time to react. You must keep enough following distance between you and the vehicles ahead to avoid a collision if the traffic stops suddenly. The distance required to stop your vehicle is important in helping you decide on a safe driving speed. A two second following distance is a good rule for most driving situations. Your actual stopping distance will depend upon many of the items listed below:

- Driver perception time (length of time it takes a driver to see and recognize a dangerous situation).
- Driver reaction time (time from perception of danger to start of braking – the average is 0.75 seconds).
- Type and condition of road surface (unpaved, asphalt, concrete, - wet, snow, or ice).
- Type and condition of the tires.
- Vehicle design and the condition of the shock absorbers.
- Vehicle weight when loaded or towing. The heavier the vehicle, the more braking power required to stop it.
- Type and condition of the brakes (disc brakes, drum brakes, anti-lock braking system, etc.).
- Speed of the vehicle (the greater the speed of any vehicle, the longer the stopping distance required).

When you are following a large vehicle, such as a tractor-trailer that blocks your vision of the road ahead, you will need extra distance to see around the vehicle, and view any dangers ahead on the road.

Following are situations where a longer following distance is required:

- When driving on slippery roads, you should double your following distance to at least four seconds to allow for the extra distance needed to adjust your speed or stop. When stopping on slippery roads, if your vehicle is not equipped with anti-lock brakes, do not apply your brakes too forcefully or you may cause them to lock up. If your brakes lock up, it will increase your stopping distance, and may cause you to lose control of your vehicle. Pump the brakes until you are able to come to a full stop.
- When the driver behind you wishes to pass, reducing your speed will allow the driver to pass quicker. The added distance will make it easier for the passing motorist to pull back into the lane, and increase the distance between the vehicles, reducing the possibility that you may need to suddenly stop to avoid an accident.
- When you are following a large vehicle, such as a tractor-trailer that blocks your vision of the road ahead, you will need extra distance to see around the vehicle, and view any dangers ahead on the road.
- When you are towing or carrying a load, the distance required to stop your vehicle will increase in proportion to the weight of the load. If the load you are towing is equipped with an independent brake system, make sure that your vehicle is equipped with the proper connecting hardware to operate the trailer brakes, and that the trailer brakes are functional and adjusted properly.
- Never follow within 500 feet of fire or other emergency vehicles.

Conclusion: When driving, allowing yourself enough time to stop your vehicle in any situation or condition is the key to avoiding an accident. Remember to always buckle up.

Employee Attendance: (Names or signatures of personnel who are attending this meeting)

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These guidelines do not supersede local, state, or federal regulations and must not be construed as a substitute for, or legal interpretation of, any OSHA regulations.