

LAW OFFICES



PANTER, PANTER & SAMPEDRO, P.A.

Traffic Safety
Defensive Driving

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- The life you save could be your own or your family's life
- 243,342 crashes in Florida in 2008*
- 2,983 fatalities in Florida in 2008*
- 1,169 alcohol related fatalities in 2008*
- Defensive driving, doing all you can to avoid crashes, recognize bad drivers and avoid them.
- Follow vehicles at a safe distance (use the 2 second rule**)
- Alcohol increases reaction time and affects judgment
- Avoid head on collisions which are the most dangerous
- Drive at safe speed for conditions, stopping distance at 40 MPH is four times the distance than stopping at 20 MPH
- Handling emergencies

Breakdowns

- ♦ If possible, park where the disabled vehicle can be seen for 200 feet in each direction
- ♦ Move the vehicle so all four wheels are off the pavement
- ♦ Turn on your emergency flashers
- ♦ Get all passengers out on the side away from traffic
- ♦ Tie a white cloth on the left door handle or antenna
- ♦ Raise the hood

Tire Blowout

- ♦ Do not use brakes
- ♦ Concentrate on steering
- ♦ Slow down gradually
- ♦ Brake softly when the car is under control
- ♦ Pull completely off the pavement

Wet Brakes

- ♦ Test brakes lightly after driving through deep water
- ♦ Brakes may pull to one side or may not hold at all
- ♦ Dry brakes by driving slowly in low gear and applying brakes

Right Wheels off Pavement

- ♦ Take your foot off the gas pedal
- ♦ Hold the wheel firmly and steer in a straight line

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- ♦ Brake lightly.
- ♦ Wait until the road is clear.
- ♦ Turn back on the pavement sharply at slow speed.

Car or Motorcycle Approaching in your Lane

- ♦ Sound your horn
- ♦ Brake sharply
- ♦ Steer for the side of the road or the ditch

Jammed Gas Pedal

- ♦ Keep your eyes on the road
- ♦ Tap the gas pedal with your foot
- ♦ Try to pry the pedal up with the toe of your shoe
- ♦ Shift into neutral
- ♦ Turn off the ignition (Do not turn the key to lock or your steering will lock.)
- ♦ Use your brakes

Brake Failure

- ♦ Pump the brake pedal hard and fast, except for vehicles with anti-lock brakes
- ♦ Shift to a lower gear
- ♦ Apply the parking brake slowly and make sure that you are holding down the release lever or button. This will prevent your rear wheels from locking and your vehicle from skidding
- ♦ Rub your tires on the curb to slow your vehicle, or pull off the road into an open space

Skidding

- ♦ Take your foot off the gas pedal
- ♦ Do not use your brakes, if possible
- ♦ Pump the brakes gently if you are about to hit something
- ♦ Steer the car into the direction of the skid to straighten the vehicle out. Then steer in the direction you wish to go

Fire

- ♦ If the fire is small and you have a portable extinguisher, you should attempt to extinguish the fire
- ♦ If you cannot extinguish the fire and it continues to get larger, get away from the vehicle, due to the presence of toxic fumes and the possibility of explosion
- ♦ Never apply water to a gasoline or diesel fire

* Florida Crash Statistics
www.flhsmv.gov

**Florida Drivers Handbook
Department of Highway Safety & Motor Vehicles

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