Vehicle Safety

Vehicle Operation

Introduction
Motor vehicle accidents are the leading cause of death and crippling injury in the United States. Traffic Safety laws are important components of Vehicle Safety, but the most important aspect is the driver.

IMPORTANT: All TAMU-CC employees and student employees who operate a vehicle on University business (whether a university vehicle, rental vehicle, or personal vehicle) must possess a valid state drivers license for their vehicle class.

Safe Driving Practices

- Driver and passenger are required to wear seat belts.
- Never Drink and Drive. Driving while under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs is strictly prohibited.
- A driver shall not permit unauthorized persons to drive, operate or ride in or on a university vehicle.
- Obey all traffic laws, signs and signals.
- Respond to dangerous driving conditions as appropriate.
- Maintain a safe distance between your car and any car in front of you.
- Allow at least one car length for each 10mph (e.g. three car lengths if you are driving 30mph)
- Keep your eyes moving to avoid fatigue, especially if you plan on driving for a long period.
- Always use your turn signal to indicate your intended action.
- Leave yourself an out by either driving in the lane with a shoulder, driving in the middle lane of a multi-lane road, or following other vehicles at a safe distance.

Defensive Driving

By taking defensive driving courses, employees can promote driving safety and lower their insurance rates. The principles of defensive driving include the following:

- Knowledge: Know your vehicle and know the law.
- Control: Always maintain control of your vehicle. To improve your control, perform routine vehicle maintenance and respond to road conditions as appropriate.
- Attitude: Be willing to obey all laws and be willing to yield to all other vehicles and pedestrians.
- Reaction: Respond to driving conditions appropriately. Do not impede your reaction time by driving when tired or under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
- Observation: Be aware of potential accidents and take preventive measures. Always try to anticipate the actions of other drivers.
- Common Sense: Do not risk your safety to save time. Do not respond to rude or obnoxious drivers by violating the traffic laws.
Accidents

Immediately report any accidents or damage you incur while operating a vehicle on University business. Each vehicle contains an emergency packet in the glove compartment. Included in the packet are emergency phone numbers for the Motor Pool and key Departmental employees, Texas Liability Insurance Card, a local wrecker service 24 hour number and a Texas A&M University System Accident Report.

When you have been in an accident, you must:

1. Keep calm
2. Provide medical assistance.
3. Make no statements concerning guilt, fault, or liability.
4. Never agree to make payments for the accident.
5. Notify the police.
6. Discuss the accident only with police officers or a university official.
7. Record as much information as you can on all other parties to the accident. This information may include their name, their insurance company, license plate number, make, model, and year of vehicle, how accident happened, witnesses (with addresses and phone numbers).
8. Report the accident to the University Police Department (361-825-4444) and your immediate supervisor as soon as possible.

Pre-Trip Inspection

The following rules apply to the condition of university vehicles:

- Windshields and windows shall be kept clear of anything that may obstruct the vision of the driver.
- Brakes shall be tested by the driver at the start of each day. The driver shall report all defects and they shall be adjusted or repaired before the vehicle is put in operation.
- Lights and other signaling devices shall be inspected daily. If found defective, they shall be repaired before the vehicle is placed in operation. NO vehicle shall be operated at night unless equipped with properly working headlights, taillights and other necessary safety devices as required by law.

Transporting Employees and Students

Trucks, buses and other vehicles used regularly for the transportation of employees and students shall be constructed or accommodated for that purpose, and shall be equipped with adequate seats properly secured in place, and shall be protected on sides and ends to a height of 46 inches to prevent falls from the vehicle.

Motor vehicles used to transport employees and students shall be kept in good repair, this includes seat belts, lights, brakes, horn, mirrors, windshields, turn signals and any other equipment affecting passenger safety.

The number of employees or students transported on vehicles covered by this section shall be limited to prevent crowding, and shall never exceed a number, which may endanger the safe handling of the vehicle or the safety of the passengers. The passengers carrying capacity of trucks and buses regularly used to transport employees shall be conspicuously marked on the outside of the vehicle near the door or entrance.

Every bus, conventional type or truck type, used for the transportation of employees or students, every compartment with an enclosed seating capacity of seven or more shall be provided with an emergency exit remotely located from the normal means of entrance.
University Haulage Vehicles

Materials and equipment shall be loaded so they will not cause a hazard by shifting.

Heavy equipment and materials shall be securely fastened.

Red flags during the day and red lights at night shall be attached to equipment or material that extends more than four feet beyond the back of the vehicle. Red flags or approved clearance lights shall be attached to loads extending more than two feet beyond the front of the vehicle.

Tools, materials, or equipment shall not be permitted to extend beyond the permanent fixtures provided in the sides of the truck.

Trailers or equipment, while being towed, shall be securely coupled to the truck, and the towing ball and towing hitch shall be compatible. A vehicle with a 1 7/8 inch ball shall not tow a trailer with a 2 inch connector. At a minimum safety chains shall be 3/8 inch galvanized and wither shackled or securely hooked to the towing vehicles bumper.

Trucks shall not be operated with tailgate hanging or dangling.

Vehicles will not be operated unless back-up signals are in operating order.

Parking, storing or repairing gasoline fueled vehicles, motorcycles, mopeds or other similar devices shall not be allowed in any dwelling unit, office, exit way or location that would create a fire or life hazard.

On Campus Pedestrian and Vehicle Safety

Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi is committed to making on-campus travel as safe as possible—whether it be as a pedestrian, in a personal or university motor vehicle, or in an electric cart.

Personal Motor Vehicles
When traveling on-campus in a motor vehicle, personal or university-owned, all faculty, staff, students, and visitors are expected to observe all traffic and parking signage. All traffic and parking regulations are in effect twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week.

Speed Limits
The speed limit on campus is 20 miles per hour, unless otherwise posted.

Leaving Vehicles On-Campus for Extended Periods
Should faculty or staff need to leave their personal vehicle parked on-campus for an extended period of time (more than 24 hours), they should contact the University Police Department.

On-Campus Travel
To protect the safety of pedestrians and prevent damage to the campus sidewalks and other facilities, Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi has developed the following regulations concerning non-motorized and motorized traffic on-campus.
Electric cart operators are required to follow the guidelines listed below when operating a cart:

- Employees suffering from illness or fatigue will not be permitted to operate an electric cart.
- Operators under the influence of alcohol, controlled substances, or any medications causing a drowsy effect will not be allowed to operate an electric cart.
- Designated service/parking drives for each building on campus.
- Check tires, batteries, and lights on the cart and be sure they are operating in good condition.
- Check that the cart is in the proper switch position before starting.
- Be familiar with the campus and prohibited areas of driving.
- Know and follow passenger limitations on the cart he/she is operating (e.g. passenger capacity).
- Know hand signals for turns and stops.
- Start cart slowly depressing the accelerator.
- Bring cart to a complete stop before changing direction of travel.
- Drive slowly when making turns.
- Always allow pedestrians to have the right of way.
- Do not leave the keys in an unattended cart.

**Non-Motorized: Pedestrian Traffic**

All pedestrians have the right of way.

Unauthorized vehicles are not allowed on campus sidewalks. Authorization to use a vehicle on campus sidewalks must be obtained from the University Police and appropriate building contact persons. The rule applies to employees, vendors servicing different offices on campus, and other individuals. Offices that need to transport items to vehicles on a regular basis should purchase dollies or contact Physical Plant to move items.

Except in emergency situations, no vehicles are allowed within the spine or on sidewalks crossing the spine areas. The spine refers to the interior walkways that extend from the Center for the Sciences past the Library to Corpus Christi Hall. See the campus map at the end of this section. Should a vehicle need to travel on campus sidewalk, and authorization has been obtained from the University Police, a walking escort must accompany any vehicle entering a sidewalk between the hours of 7:00am and 7:00pm. The person escorting the vehicle should walk approximately 10 feet in front of the vehicle and warn pedestrians of the on-coming vehicle.

Measures will be taken to minimize traffic by service vehicles along the spine of the campus. Especially on the spine, pedestrians have the right of way. Service vehicles must yield to pedestrians when on or crossing the spine. Service vehicles will not exceed the speed of normal pedestrian traffic on the spine. Drivers of service vehicles should access the buildings from designated exterior routes and not along the spine. Measures to minimize traffic by service vehicles may include the establishment of one-way traffic patterns in designated areas and other actions deemed necessary to promote sidewalk safety. Exceptions to the provisions concerning service vehicles may be made for campus tours.

**Skateboards, Roller Blades, Skates, Bicycles, Etc.**

The safety concerns for others precludes the use of skateboards on campus. However, operators of roller blades, skates and bicycles may utilize the campus sidewalks while maintaining a speed complimentary to pedestrians.