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Rear End Collisions—How to Minimize the Chances of Being Hit

Preventive measures to control rear-end crashes

- **Know what's going on behind you—** Adjust outside mirrors and inside rear-view mirror before moving the vehicle. Then, scan at least one mirror every 5-8 seconds to follow-up hazards and update driving conditions in the rear. Checking mirrors before slowing down, before and after making turns, and while stopped keeps you properly informed with what's approaching from behind.
- **Flash brake lights** when stopped, moving slowly or preparing to stop. Check brake lights frequently to verify they are working, and maintain clean brake light lenses for clear visibility of other motorists.
- **Signal well in advance** for turns, stops and lane changes.
- **Slow down gradually** over a long distance to give vehicles following more time and space to react. Never try to beat a green light—always anticipate a changing green light.
- **Keep pace with traffic** when road and weather conditions and speed limits permit.
- **Get rid of tailgaters—** First, signal in advance and move to the right, if space is available, to let the tailgater pass. If this does not work, encourage them to pass by gradually slowing down to wave them on. Exercise caution when slowing down by flashing brake lights several times, use proper arm signals, and slow down as traffic permits to discourage tailgaters. If the tailgater does not pass or increase following distance, exit the roadway at the first available safe location.
- **Don't cruise in another driver's blind spot —** If the vehicle suddenly swerves into your lane you may have to brake hard and risk a rear-end crash from following vehicles.
- **Raise hood if your vehicle stalls** and can't be moved from the traffic lane. Then safely do everything else you can to make your disabled vehicle visible to approaching drivers. A stalled vehicle is particularly dangerous at night. If you have flashers, use them. A professional driver usually has a flare or other signal device handy for driving emergencies. Call authorities for assistance.

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