

**Driver Education
Classroom and In-Car
Curriculum
Unit 9
Sharing the Road with
Commercial Motor Vehicles**

Driver Education Classroom and In-Car Instruction Unit 9-2

Unit Introduction

This unit will present drivers with information about large commercial motor vehicles (CMV's). Content will include types of commercial motor vehicles, stopping distances for CMV's, CMV's turning left and right, driving behind trucks, passing trucks, meeting on-coming trucks, trucks merging onto highways, and off-tracking.

Goals

Time Frame: 3 hours

Student will:

- Participate in teacher-led discussions dealing with the characteristics of CMV's
- Identify the "no zones" of CMV's
- List the procedures for passing, following and meeting CMV's
- Identify the hazards associated with CMV's making left and right turns
- Analyze the stopping distance of CMV's vs. passenger vehicles
- Complete Unit 9 Test

Driver Education Classroom and In-Car Instruction Unit 9-3

<p>Title: Sharing the Road with Commercial Motor Vehicles</p>	<p>Time Frame: 3 hours</p>
<p>Resources Needed</p>	<p>Instructor Preparation</p>
<p>Textbooks: <u>Drive Right</u> Ch. 8 <u>How to Drive</u> Ch. 5, 8, 12 <u>Handbook Plus</u> Ch. 6 <u>Responsible Driving</u> Ch. 13</p> <p>Slides 9.1-9.32 Fact Sheets 9.1-9.3</p> <p>Included Video:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>“The Unsafe Driving Acts of Motorists in the Vicinity of Large Trucks”</i> (17 min 41 sec) <p>Optional Video:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>“Semi-Conscious-Driving in the Real World”</i> (12 min) <p>Available at http://www.aaafoundation.org Item#447</p> <p>Unit 9 Test</p>	<p>Review recommended learning activities</p> <p>Review textbooks</p> <p>Review on-street lesson plan used in combination with this unit and textbook</p> <p>Review slides</p> <p>Review fact sheets</p> <p>Review included video</p> <p>Included</p>
<p>2.0</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">http://www.adtsea.org</p>

Driver Education Classroom and In-Car Instruction Unit 9-4

Performance Objectives	Learning Activities	Resources
<p>Students will be able to describe the importance of learning about large Commercial Motor Vehicles.</p>	<p>Use Slide 9.1 and explain the statistics of CMV collisions to the students. Emphasize that many passenger car drivers are the cause of most large CMV collisions involving a fatality.</p>	<p>Slide 9.1 “Commercial Motor Vehicle Collision Facts”</p>

Driver Education Classroom and In-Car Instruction Unit 9-5

Content Outline

Collisions involving passenger cars and inter-city commercial motor vehicles including over 4,000 fatalities per year are still occurring at an unacceptable rate. In fact, one death is one too many. Truck drivers contribute to these accidents. However, automobile drivers are most often at fault in collisions between cars and trucks. It is now becoming clear, however, that too many drivers of passenger cars unnecessarily endanger themselves by failing to recognize that trucks and cars differ in the way they behave on the road.

Did you know...

According to the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA):

- Of all the people killed in motor vehicle crashes in 2003, 11% (4,289) died in crashes that involved a large truck.
- Another 122,000 people were injured in crashes involving large trucks.

Driver Education Classroom and In-Car Instruction Unit 9-6

Performance Objectives	Learning Activities	Resources
<p>Students will be able to identify the different types of large commercial motor vehicles and their characteristics.</p>	<p>Use Slides 9.2 through 9.8 and discuss the different types of large commercial motor vehicles and their characteristics.</p>	<p>Slide 9.2 “Types of CMV’s” Slide 9.3 “Straight Truck” Slide 9.4 “Truck Tractor Conventional” Slide 9.5 “Truck Tractor Cab-over” Slide 9.6 “Tractor Semi-trailer” Slide 9.7 “Semi-Trailer” Slide 9.8 “Full Trailer”</p>

Driver Education Classroom and In-Car Instruction Unit 9-7

Content Outline

Types of CMV's:

- A straight truck is a single unit truck with the engine, cab, and cargo compartment all on the same frame.
- Truck tractor is used to pull other vehicles or trailers. There are two general truck tractor styles: Conventional and the cab-over.
- Conventional truck tractors have the engine under the hood and have some disadvantages such as a long wheel base, making the vehicle more difficult to turn around in tight spaces. Another disadvantage is a blocked sightline to the front of the vehicle because of the extended hood. Cab-overs have an engine that is under the cab and have a shorter wheel base making them easier to turn around in tight spaces. Because cab-overs sit higher off the ground and have no extended hood, drivers have a better sightline toward the front of the vehicle.
- A tractor semi-trailer is the one most widely used commercial motor vehicle. This is where a tractor pulls a trailer and is most commonly called "eighteen wheeler." With this configuration, the front of the trailer rides on the back of the tractor. The two are connected by a fifth wheel (located above the rear axle of the tractor) and the king pin which is connected to the trailer. The fifth wheel is the pivot point between the tractor and the trailer.
- Another style of trailer is called the full trailer. This trailer is built so that no part of it's weight rests upon the vehicle pulling it. A full trailer is fully supported by it's own axles. These are also used as a second trailer in a double-trailer rig.

Driver Education Classroom and In-Car Instruction Unit 9-8

Performance Objectives	Learning Activities	Resources
<p>Students will be able to identify the components that make up a stopping distance and factors that can increase a CMV's stopping distance.</p>	<p>Ask the question to the students, "What is the definition of a stopping distance?". Solicit responses from the students.</p> <p>Use Slides 9.9 and 9.10 and explain the components of a stopping distance and what conditions can increase/ decrease stopping distances.</p> <p>Ask the question to the students, "Why do CMV's have longer stopping distances than passenger vehicles?" Solicit responses from students. Show Slide 9.11.</p> <p>Use Slide 9.12 and emphasize that CMV's are much heavier and explain the weight differences between CMV's and passenger cars.</p>	<p>Slide 9.9 "What is a Stopping Distance?"</p> <p>Slide 9.10 "Conditions that Affect Stopping Distances"</p> <p>Slide 9.11 "Why do CMV's have Longer Stopping Distances?"</p> <p>Slide 9.12 "Weight Differences Between CMV's and Passenger Cars"</p>

Driver Education Classroom and In-Car Instruction Unit 9-9

Content Outline

Total stopping distance is the distance a vehicle travels while making a stop. A total stopping distance is made up of several components. They are perception time/distance, reaction time/distance and braking distance. Perception distance is the distance a vehicle travels while a driver is identifying, predicting and deciding to slow for a hazard. Perceptual distance/time can be affected greatly depending on visibility and the hazards itself.

Reaction time is the time it takes for a driver to execute a decision once the danger is recognized. The distance a vehicle travels while the driver reacts is called a "reaction time". Most drivers have an average reaction time of 3/4 of a second. A variety of factors can influence a driver's reaction time such as fatigue, drugs, alcohol, and age of driver.

Braking distance is the distance a vehicle travels from the time a driver begins pressing on the brake pedal until the vehicle comes to a stop. There are many factors that affect the braking distance of a vehicle such as:

- Speed of the vehicle - Higher speeds will cause the vehicle to take longer to stop.
- Vehicle condition - Tires, brakes, suspension all can affect braking distance depending on their condition.
- Roadway surface - Rain, snow, leaves, gravel, dirt can cause a vehicle to have a longer braking distance.
- Hills - Braking distances can be increased depending on the grade of hill.
- Weight of the vehicle - Large vehicles such as CMV's can have much longer braking distances depending on the vehicle weight.

Today's standard trailer lengths are 45 and 53 feet with some as long as 57 feet. Trailer width has grown to 102 inches, and it's height has risen from 102 to 110 inches. While the CMV has grown larger, the passenger vehicle has become smaller. Stopping distances between the two are drastically different.

Studies by the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety have shown that at 55 miles per hour a fully loaded tractor trailer can take 49% more distance to stop than a passenger car (335 feet versus 225 feet).

CMV's traveling at 55 m.p.h. with a full load, under ideal conditions, will travel a total of 335 feet before coming to a complete stop. With hot brakes, the distance will be even longer. The bottom line is that CMV's take much longer to stop than a passenger car and motorists must take this into account while driving.

Driver Education Classroom and In-Car Instruction Unit 9-10

Performance Objectives	Learning Activities	Resources
<p>Students will be able to identify the hazards of following large CMV's.</p>	<p>Use Slide 9.13 and ask the students "What are some of the hazards with following a large CMV too close?" Solicit responses from students.</p> <p>Use Slide 9.14 and discuss the hazards associated with following a large CMV too close</p> <p>Included Video: After discussing Slide 9.14, show "<i>The Unsafe Acts of Motorists in the Vicinity of Large Trucks</i>"</p> <p>Pass out Fact Sheet 9.1 and explain how following distances are calculated.</p>	<p>Slide 9.13 "What are the Hazards of Following too Close to Large CMV's"</p> <p>Slide 9.14 "What are the Hazards of Following too Close to Large CMV's"</p> <p>Included Video: "<i>The Unsafe Acts of Motorists in the Vicinity of Large Trucks</i>" (17 minutes 41 seconds)</p> <p>Fact Sheet 9.1 "Following Distances"</p>

Driver Education Classroom and In-Car Instruction Unit 9-11

Content Outline

One of the biggest problems resulting from tailgating a large CMV is sighting distance. If a driver follows too closely, the truck's size will almost prevent a driver from viewing the road ahead. You will be forced to depend on the truck's brake lights for a signal that something is going on in the front. Avoid following too closely, and position the vehicle so the truck driver can see the car in his or her side mirrors.

When coming to a stop behind a truck, always leave plenty of room between the vehicle and the truck. Also, move your vehicle to the left of your lane so that the driver can see you in his/her side mirror. Being too close to the rear of a CMV when it is stopped can contribute to a rollback collision. This type of collision generally occurs when a truck driver is forced to stop on an upgrade. As the driver takes his/her foot off the brake and engages the clutch, the truck may roll backwards a few feet striking the vehicle to the rear.

Another extreme hazard for passenger car drivers is striking the back of a large CMV. This type of collision is known as an "underride". Underride is generally defined as a type of collision in which a portion of a passenger vehicle slides under another vehicle. Underrides can occur between two passenger vehicles, but are more common and more dangerous between a large truck and a passenger vehicle.

Following large CMV's too closely can place a motorist in danger if debris should fall from the truck. Tires can blowout, cargo, large pieces of metal, spare tires, etc., can all fall off a large CMV causing considerable damage to any vehicle following too close. In some cases, debris falling from large CMV's has caused some drivers to the rear to become seriously injured or killed.

Driver Education Classroom and In-Car Instruction Unit 9-12

Performance Objectives	Learning Activities	Resources
<p>Students will be able to list the proper procedures for passing and meeting large CMV's on the roadways.</p>	<p>Use Slide 9.15 and discuss with students the procedures for passing CMV's on the roadways.</p>	<p>Slide 9.15 "Passing Large CMV's"</p>
	<p>Use Slide 9.16 and ask the questions, "If this large CMV was approaching, what would you do with your vehicle's speed and lane position? Solicit responses from students.</p>	<p>Slide 9.16 "Meeting a Large CMV"</p>
	<p>Use Slide 9.17 and discuss what to do when meeting a large CMV.</p>	<p>Slide 9.17 "Meeting a Large CMV"</p>
	<p>Use Slide 9.18 and emphasize how turbulence from a CMV can push a motorist off of the road.</p>	<p>Slide 9.18 "Turbulence Around a Large CMV"</p>

Driver Education Classroom and In-Car Instruction Unit 9-13

Content Outline

Many motorists are apprehensive about passing trucks because of their size, but the same rules apply for passing a large CMV as for passing cars. The first step in a safe pass is to check the traffic to the front and rear. Do not pull out if being overtaken by traffic from behind or if there is other traffic approaching. Once a driver has decided to pass and see that the roadway is clear, do not hesitate. Declare your intention to pass and follow through, making your pass as quickly and safely as possible. Less accidents occur when there is clear, decisive action. When moving into the passing lane, be aware that large trucks can create turbulence.

Truck drivers work hard to get up to normal highway speeds, sometimes shifting through as many as 15 gears. For this reason, and because trucks take longer to stop due to their size and weight, the drivers appreciate it if, after passing, drivers maintain their speed. If the driver flashes his/her lights after you pass, it maybe a signal that it is clear to pull back in. Do not trust this signal. Check to make sure you have cleared the front of the CMV and can now safely return to the lane. Be sure to move back only when you can see the front of the truck in your rearview mirror. After you pass a truck, maintain your speed.

When a truck passes, a driver can help the truck driver by keeping to the far side of your lane. You will make it easier for the truck driver if you reduce speed slightly. In any event, do not speed up while the truck is passing. After passing, the truck driver should signal to let a driver know that the truck will be returning to the lane.

When you meet a truck coming from the opposite direction, keep as far as possible to the side to avoid a sideswipe accident and to reduce the wind turbulence between the two vehicles. Remember that the turbulence pushes the vehicles apart. It does not draw them together. Also, because of its large size, a truck often appears to be traveling at a slower speed than it really is. A substantial number of car-truck collisions occur at intersections because the driver of the car does not realize how close the truck is or how quickly it is approaching.

Driver Education Classroom and In-Car Instruction Unit 9-14

Performance Objectives	Learning Activities	Resources
<p>Students will be able to list the proper procedures for turning in front of large CMV's on the roadways.</p>	<p>Use Slide 9.19 and discuss the hazards of turning in front of a large CMV.</p>	<p>Slide 9.19 "Turning Left/ Pulling in Front of a Large CMV"</p>

Driver Education Classroom and In-Car Instruction Unit 9-15

Content Outline

One of the main causes of collisions between cars and trucks at intersections is the inability of motorists to accurately determine the speed of an approaching truck before making a left turn. When in doubt about the speed of an oncoming truck, do not turn left in its path or drive toward it in an attempt to pass another vehicle. The truck may be going faster than you think.

Large trucks use air brakes rather than the hydraulic brakes found in cars and light trucks. These brakes take longer to engage, adding many feet/meters to a big rig's stopping distance. It takes more than 100 yards (90 meters) - the length of a football field - for an average fully loaded tractor-trailer truck traveling at 55 miles per hour (90 km/h) to stop. It takes even longer if the truck's brakes are hot.

Driver Education Classroom and In-Car Instruction Unit 9-16

Performance Objectives	Learning Activities	Resources
<p>Students will be able to define off-tracking and identify the hazards of large commercial motor vehicles making left and right turns.</p>	<p>Use Slide 9.20 and explain to the students what off-tracking is and where it occurs.</p>	<p>Slide 9.20 “Off- Tracking...What is it?”</p>
	<p>Use Slide 9.21 and discuss to the students that off-tracking occurs mainly when turning.</p>	<p>Slide 9.21 “Off-Tracking to the Left and Right”</p>
	<p>Use Slide 9.22 and emphasize the danger of off-tracking causing motorists to be caught off guard at intersections.</p>	<p>Slide 9.22 “Off-Tracking- What are the Dangers?”</p>
	<p>Use Slide 9.23 and explain that staggered stops are designed to give large CMV’s the clearance they need when turning.</p>	<p>Slide 9.23 “Staggered Stops”</p>

Driver Education Classroom and In-Car Instruction Unit 9-17

Content Outline

Off-tracking occurs when the trailer follows a tighter path than that of the tractor. The longer the trailer, the more the off-tracking. As a result, the tractors will swing wide left or right to prepare for the turn and to compensate for the off-tracking. Because right turns are sharper than left ones, off-tracking is greater on right turns. Off-tracking is dangerous, but often unavoidable, because of the large size and limited turning radius of trucks. Left-turning drivers will first swing wide to the right, and right-turning drivers will first swing wide to the left, to enter a cross street. The sharper the turn, the narrower the intersection, and the longer the truck, the wider the driver must go. Off-tracking can force a truck's trailer to cut off or "squeeze" roadway users to the sides.

Many drivers following a tractor semi-trailer assume that if the truck moves to the left it is preparing to make a left turn. However, drivers of large trucks usually swing out to the left as the first step in making a right turn. If a truck is stopped at or approaching an intersection, never attempt to "cut in" along the right side of the roadway as the driver first maneuvers left, or you will find yourself sandwiched between the turning truck and the curb. Trying to pass a right-turning truck driver on the left can also present dangers. If the truck swings wide enough, it can force you to stray into oncoming traffic or the median of the cross street. Always give a truck driver sufficient clearance and time to complete a turn safely.

Many intersections are marked with stop-lines indicating where a driver must come to a complete stop. Stop-lines are designed to set motorists farther back at an intersection in order to give larger vehicles more turning space.

Driver Education Classroom and In-Car Instruction Unit 9-18

Performance Objectives	Learning Activities	Resources
<p>Students will be able to identify the “no-zones” around a large commercial vehicle.</p>	<p>Use Slide 9.24 and discuss the blindspot areas around a large CMV.</p> <p>Use Slide 9.25 and point out that large CMV’s have larger blindspots than passenger cars. Emphasize that blindspots around large CMV’s are referred to as the “No-Zones”.</p> <p>Emphasize to the student if they cannot see one of the driver’s sideview mirrors, then the driver cannot see them.</p> <p>Handout Fact Sheets 9.2 through 9.3 as supplemental material when discussing the No-Zones.</p> <p>Optional Video: To support the “No Zones” concept show the video “<i>Semi-Conscious--Driving in the Real World</i>”.</p>	<p>Slide 9.24 “What are Blindspots?”</p> <p>Slide 9.25 “No-Zones”</p> <p>Fact Sheets 9.2 to 9.3 “No-Zone Facts”</p> <p>Optional Video: “<i>Semi-Conscious-Driving in the Real World</i>” (12 minutes)</p>

Driver Education Classroom and In-Car Instruction Unit 9-19

Content Outline

Many people think that because truck drivers ride much higher than other drivers that they can see better. Because of their large size, however, truck drivers have larger blind spots, called “no zones,” than do passenger car drivers. In addition to blind spots on either side of the cab, there is a deep blind spot up to 200 feet (60 m) long directly behind large trucks in which the driver cannot see you and in which your view of traffic is severely limited. Drivers in truck cabs with long hoods cannot see up to 20 feet (6 m) in front of their bumper. This is enough room for a car to slip into a position of danger and be completely unnoticed by the driver. Even truck cabs with no hood, called cab-overs, can have a front blind spot up to 10 feet (3 m) long.

When drivers travel in a truck’s no-zones, they put themselves at a high degree of risk because they cannot be seen by the truck driver. When following a large truck a driver should increase following distance to allow clear sight distance ahead. Stay far enough back so a driver can see the sideview mirrors of the truck and traffic ahead. If a driver cannot see one of the truck driver’s sideview mirrors, then the truck driver cannot see the car.

Driver Education Classroom and In-Car Instruction Unit 9-21

Content Outline

Truck escape ramps have been part of our highway system for well over 30 years. They are found in many different settings including the mountains, the suburbs, and even in small urban communities.

The combination of heavy trucks and highway downgrades has long presented potentially dangerous conditions for truck drivers, other drivers on the road, and occupants of roadside property. The problem of runaway trucks generally results from brake failures which can arise for many different reasons. The inability of drivers to control vehicle speeds on downgrades is not only hazardous, but it can also have costly consequences. Passenger car drivers should be aware of the location of large trucks around their vehicle, especially when being followed on steep grades.

As of 1990, Truck Escape Ramps (TERs) numbered about 170 in the 27 states reporting them, three times as many as reported in 1970. While most are in western states, over 60 are in 12 states east of the Mississippi River. The states without escape ramps are primarily Southern, Midwestern or Great Plains states. Ramps already constructed report varying degrees of usage, but even rare usage can warrant ramp construction.

TERs are generally used in two situations: on long mountain grades in rural areas and on short steep hills likely to be in areas of dense traffic and development. Those located at the bottom of short steep hills are often in areas where there have been accidents involving fatalities or areas where serious property damage has occurred. TERs are likely to be found in locations that require a stop or slow-speed turn at the bottom of a grade.

Driver Education Classroom and In-Car Instruction Unit 9-22

Performance Objectives	Learning Activities	Resources
<p>Students will be able to identify and explain the categories of road signs which pertain to CMV's.</p>	<p>Use Slides 9.28 through 9.30 and discuss the importance and meanings of regulatory signs pertaining to trucks.</p>	<p>Slide 9.28 "Truck Regulatory Signs" Slide 9.29 "Truck Regulatory Signs" Slide 9.30 "Truck Regulatory Signs"</p>
	<p>Use Slides 9.31 and 9.32 and discuss the meanings of different truck warning signs.</p>	<p>Slide 9.31 "Truck Warning Signs" Slide 9.32 "Truck Warning Signs"</p>
<p>Students will complete the Unit 9 Test.</p>	<p>Distribute, collect and grade the Unit 9 test.</p>	<p>Test included</p>

Driver Education Classroom and In-Car Instruction Unit 9-23

Content Outline

Regulatory Signs

A regulatory sign regulates or controls the movement of traffic. These signs tell drivers what they must do and what you must not do when they drive. Regulatory signs are red, white, black, green on white, or white on black. Most regulatory signs have square, vertical rectangular, or horizontal rectangular shapes. A red circle with a red slash on any of these signs means NO. Drivers can recognize regulatory signs by their color and shape.

Many motorists may ignore these signs because they do not pertain to them. Motorists should pay attention to truck regulatory signs because it may give a motorist valuable information as to what maneuver a truck driver may be attempting.

Warning Signs

A warning sign alerts drivers to changes in the condition or use of the road ahead. Warning signs include those that tell a driver about road construction and maintenance, school zones and crossings, railroad crossings, curves, intersections, changes in road width, and deer crossings. All warning signs are either yellow or orange with black symbols or letters, and most are diamond-shaped.

Specific truck warning signs are usually for downhill grades, sharp curves, clearances and truck escape ramps. Even though these warning signs are specific for trucks, motorists should not ignore these signs. Many truck warning signs can give important information to motorists as to hidden dangers ahead.

Guide Signs

A guide sign gives information about roadways and routes, the mileage to certain destinations; roadside services such as rest stops, service stations, and campsites; and recreational areas and nearby points of interest.

Driver Education Classroom and In-Car Instruction Unit 9-24

Fact Sheet

9.1

Determining Following Distances

Drivers need to maintain an ample space cushion between their vehicle and possible hazards in all driving environments. Managing the space cushion, or distance, between your vehicle and the vehicle ahead is the first step.

Following others:

An adequate following distance has these advantages:

- Drivers can see further ahead to get the “big picture.”
- Others can see you better.
- Drivers are in a better position to avoid the car/truck ahead if it stops suddenly.

3-second following distance:

A 3-second following distance provides a safe space cushion from the vehicle ahead in most normal driving situations. Use these steps to measure a 3-second following distance.

- Pick a fixed checkpoint on the road ahead. Road marks or shadows make good fixed checkpoints.
- When the vehicle ahead passes a checkpoint, count: “onethousand-one, one-thousand-two, one-thousand-three”, for your 3-second count.
- Now, check to see that the vehicle is still short of the fixed checkpoint. If not, slow and add more distance.

This 3-second technique works well at all speeds for measuring a normal following distance. As speed increases, so does the distance the vehicle travels during a 3-second count. Thus, when counting off 3 seconds, following distance will increase at higher speeds. This 3-second distance is not the total stopping distance needed to avoid hitting a stationary object. A 3-second following distance only protects a driver from colliding with the vehicle they are following. Increase following distance to more than 3 seconds under adverse conditions.

Driver Education Classroom and In-Car Instruction Unit 9-25

Fact Sheet

9.2

No-Zone Facts

The No-Zone represents danger areas around trucks where crashes are most likely to occur.

Passing a truck, cutting in too quickly, then abruptly slowing down, puts you in the No-Zone. Studies by the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety have shown that at 55 miles per hour the cab of a tractor-trailer can take 26% more distance to stop than a passenger car (243 feet versus 193 feet), while a fully-loaded tractor-trailer can take 222% more distance to stop than a passenger car (430 feet versus 193 feet).

Tailgating in the deep blindspot directly behind a truck puts you in the No-Zone. Large trucks have a blind spot directly in back that extends up to 200 feet behind the vehicle.

Driving in the large blindspots on both sides of trucks for any length of time puts you in the No-Zone.

Trucks have a blind spot on their sides starting behind the cab and extending behind the trailer.

Driving in the blindspots behind or on the right side of trucks when they are making wide and/or right turns puts a driver in the no-zone. Trucks have a larger blind spot on their right side starting behind the cab and extending up to the length of the truck; this blind spot increases in size the further off to the side a motorist is from the truck.

Driver Education Classroom and In-Car Instruction Unit 9-26

Fact Sheet

9.3

No-Zone Facts (cont.)

Advice for improving road sharing skills:

Do not cut off a truck in traffic or on the highway to reach an exit or turn, or to beat a truck into a single-lane construction zone. The few seconds that might be saved are not worth a life or lives.

Do not linger alongside a truck when passing. Remember that trucks have larger blind spots; always pass a large truck completely, at a steady pace, and on the left side. Also, if a motorist lingers alongside of a truck, even if they are not in one of the truck's blind spots, they limit the truck's maneuverability if an obstacle appears in the road ahead.

Don't follow too closely or tailgate. Most tractor-trailers are 8 1/2 feet wide, and if a motorist is within 200 feet of the back of a truck, some or all of your car will not be visible to the truck driver. Use this rule of thumb: If a motorist cannot see the truck driver in his side mirrors, he cannot see the motorist.

Tractor-trailers need to make wide right turns. If it looks like the truck ahead is turning left, do not rush ahead on the right side of the truck, because the truck might be making a right turn instead.