Defensive Driving

Defensive driving means operating your vehicle with such care that regardless of what the other driver may do, you will be able to protect yourself and not become involved in an accident. The National Safety Council defines defensive driving as follows:

*Defensive Driving is driving to save lives, time and money in spite of the conditions around you and the actions of others.*

The following are essential defensive driving practices:

1. **Always leave yourself an out.** It is not good enough just to anticipate your own movement. A good defensive driver will always try to anticipate the other drivers’ intentions. **Caution: never assume anything.**

2. **If in doubt, play it safe.** Regardless of any other considerations, do not take chances. To arrive safely is more important than to arrive on time.

3. **Do not pass on curves.** Before passing, ask yourself, is it really necessary? What will I gain? Is it legal?

4. **Always downshift before starting down a steep hill.** No motor vehicle shall be driven on a downgrade with gears in neutral or with clutch pedal depressed.

5. **Knowledge of routes is of vital importance.** In the event you are dispatched over a run with which you are unfamiliar, exercise the utmost care to guard against the unexpected. Always expect the unexpected, asking yourself, what if...?

6. **Allow sufficient space and time for maneuvering your unit.** Remember the four-second rule. Sudden braking or steering movements could cause you to lose your load and possibly roll over.

7. **Before backing, make sure you have a good, clear mental picture of what you’re trying to do.** This will normally require getting out of your tractor and walking back to visually inspect the case. Remember... never assume anything.

8. **Always signal your intention to move right or left.** The law requires you to signal “100 feet prior to making any lane changes or turns”. However, depending on your driving speed and traffic conditions, you might need to signal even earlier and allow more time.

9. **While attempting any kind of turn, be sure to watch both of your MIRRORS constantly.** If you ever lose sight of your trailer, STOP immediately. Also, while making right hand turns, beware of the vehicle that might try to go around you on your right, commonly referred to as the “Right Hand Turn Squeeze Play”.

The manner in which you conduct yourself relative to defensive driving directly affects the image of G.D. Leasing of Indiana and all its employees. Therefore, it is imperative you conduct yourself in a manner that we can all be proud of.