



Speeding-Following Too Closely A Deadly Combination!

The Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) reports that driver actions or inactions by both large truck, bus and automobile drivers account for 88 percent of the critical reasons for crashes in 2010. Recently, 3,675 persons lost their lives in truck involved traffic crashes. Speeding alone resulted in 30.7 percent of all traffic crashes that involved both a car and truck.ⁱ

A recent study by the American Transportation Research Institute concluded that if a commercial vehicle driver had a violation or conviction for one of these hazardous violations, her/she was much more likely to be involved in another crash.ⁱⁱ

If a commercial vehicle driver had a...

Their future crash likelihood increases...

A Failure to Use/Improper Signal Conviction	96%
A Past Crash	88%
An Improper Passing violation	88%
An Improper Turn conviction	84%
An Improper or Erratic Lane Change conviction	80%
An Improper Lane/Location conviction	68%
A Failure to Obey Traffic Sign conviction	68%
A Speeding More Than 15 Miles Over Speed Limit conviction	67%
Any conviction	65%
A Reckless/Careless/Inattentive/Negligent Driving conviction	64%

SPEED DIFFERENTIAL between vehicles operating along the same roadway poses a significant safety risk. Variances in operating speeds frequently results in vehicles following too closely and making improper or erratic lane changes, often without signaling. As the table above shows, these hazardous driving behaviors significantly increase the likelihood of a driver being involved in a crash.

All drivers should follow these tips to avoid the dangers of speeding, following too closely and improper/erratic lane changes:

- **GO WITH THE FLOW**—try to maintain a legal speed that is consistent with surrounding vehicles.
- Allow plenty of time to reach your destination so you will be less likely to speed.
- Drive at a speed that is appropriate for current conditions. Remember, the posted speed limit is the maximum allowable speed. Often, it is safer and more prudent to drive at a slower speed. Consider road and weather conditions, traffic volumes, school zones and other factors that might warrant a slower speed.
- Slow down in road construction zones.
- Don't tailgate! Following too closely reduces your visibility of the road ahead and also reduces your reaction time. Maintain a minimum following distance from the vehicle ahead of you of one car length for every 10 miles per hour of speed.
- Always signal any lane change or turning movement well ahead of the event.
- Don't cut off another vehicle, especially a large truck or bus.
- Avoid alcohol and drug before and during driving.
- Buckle up! It is your last line of defense. Remember, seat belts save lives.

ⁱ Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration Large truck Crash Overview 2010

ⁱⁱ American Transportation Research Institute report on Predicting Truck Crash Involvement, April 2011

Remember, driving is a full-time job. Stay focused, keep your hands on the wheel, keep your eyes on the road and keep your mind in the game!

For more information, please visit the following websites:

www.FMCSA.dot.gov
www.NHTSA.dot.gov
www.NSC.org
www.AAAFoundation.org
www.ATRI-online.org

www.operationsafedriver.org

