

Spring Driving Tips

With spring being just around the corner, now is the time to start tweaking some of our driving habits. Keeping your attention focused on the task at hand is, for some, more difficult in spring.

As the weather warms, there is a reemergence of bike traffic, motorcycles, children, pedestrians, animals and potholes. That is a lot to focus on for even the most experienced driver.

It would be nice if every motorcycle or bicycle rider were as highly visible as a normal sized vehicle, unfortunately, that is not the case. It is your responsibility to be aware of these smaller sized vehicles you share the road with.

As a driver, it is also your responsibility to be aware of pedestrians, of all ages and activities. It is not uncommon that oncoming traffic does not distract children from their game playing as it takes them into the street after a stray ball. Let's not forget the dedicated walkers and bike riders who take advantage of the first warm breezes to get outside, many walking or riding along the side of the road.

Teenage drivers are often distracted by texting, socializing, eating, applying makeup or just not paying attention. It is your responsibility to be alert to these shortcomings and ensure your safety as well as others.

Many animals are coming out of hibernation and starting to forage for food as the weather turns warmer. Others, such as deer may be on the move from rising flood waters. Slow down and be prepared in areas known to have high animal traffic.

Potholes that develop as a result of winter freezing and thawing are not only an annoyance; they can cause serious damage to your vehicle. Allow ample space between yourself and the vehicle in front for ease of safe maneuverability around potholes.

Gravel shoulders also bear the brunt of winter and become a hazard during the spring as they are softer from melting snow. Use extra caution if you drop a wheel off onto a soft shoulder. Smooth steering will help you maintain control, never jerk the wheel to get back onto the pavement.

There is a lot of responsibility when getting behind the wheel of a vehicle, be alert, be aware, be safe!