

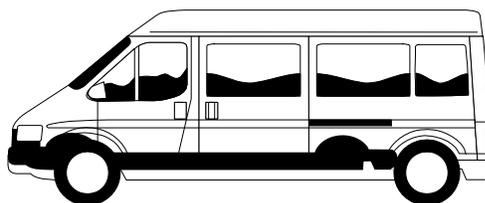


Title: Model Vehicle Safety Program

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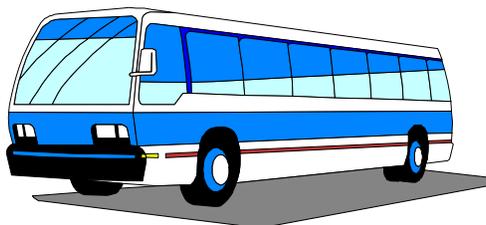
Summary: This model program from the Ohio Department of Transportation describes the policies, procedures and requirements to be followed by management, maintenance, and operating personnel in order to provide a safe environment for agency employees, volunteers, and the general public.



MODEL VEHICLE SAFETY PROGRAM



Agency



Adoption Date: _____



Management Commitment

Safety Policy Statement

(Principal Source - Logan)

This safety program describes the policies, procedures and requirements to be followed by management, maintenance and operating personnel in order to provide a safe environment for Agency employees (volunteers) and the general public. All personnel are expected and required to adhere to the policies, procedures, and requirements established herein and to properly and diligently perform safety-related functions as a condition of employment.

The Agency has a sincere concern for the welfare and safety of its employees (and volunteers) as well as the public it serves. The goal of this program is to eliminate the suffering and cost of avoidable personal injury and vehicle accidents.

It is the Agency policy to provide safe working conditions for all employees (and volunteers) and to provide complete instructions covering safe work methods. All Agency employees (and volunteers) will promote accident prevention by actively supporting the safety program.

PURPOSE

The National Safety Council defines a preventable accident as one in which the operator did not do everything that reasonably could have been done to prevent the accident. This plan's purpose is to determine whether an accident resulted from the action or inaction of an Agency employee (or volunteer), in order to identify and implement corrective action and ultimately prevent future accidents and/or injuries. The Agency Safety Program will be accomplished through the following activities:

- The Agency will pursue an active safety inspection program involving all facilities, vehicles, and work procedures to identify and correct all hazardous conditions and practices;
- The Agency will actively investigate and review all accidents involving Agency employees (and volunteers) or property to determine the source of negligence in the accident and to outline preventive measures;
- The Agency will conduct both formal and informal safety training sessions for all employees (and volunteers);
- The Agency will establish personal protective equipment guidelines for its employees (and volunteers), provide the equipment, and require employees (and volunteers) to utilize the equipment.
- The Agency will provide adequate equipment so as to provide a safe transportation



system for its riders and the general public.

The Agency Safety Plan will involve all employees (and volunteers) and will be actively pursued as a condition of employment.

Signed – Executive Director



Safety Program Responsibilities

Compliance Responsibilities

(Principal Source – Logan County)

Executive Director

The executive director is responsible for establishing this safety program and for maintaining safe working conditions and practices for all Agency personnel. The executive director will:

- Be responsible for successfully administering the plan and establishing, monitoring and reporting on the system's safety objectives;
- Develop, publish and enforce reasonable safety procedures pertinent to the Agency activities;
- Provide for adequate operator training and continuing instruction for all employees (and volunteers);
- Make the final determination as to preventability or non-preventability of accidents;
- Meet with employees (and volunteers) involved in accidents that are determined to be preventable to review disciplinary and corrective action; and
- Set a good example for safety by working in a safe manner and by encouraging others to do so.

Operators, Mechanics and Others Operating Agency Vehicles (and Volunteers)

Operators (and volunteers) are responsible for exercising maximum care and good judgment in preventing accidents. Each employee will:

- Maintain and have in his/her possession a valid operators license or Commercial Operators License (CDL) as required by law at all times while operating Agency vehicles.
- Maintain and have in his/her possession a valid Department of Transportation medical examiners certificate, as required by law or regulation, at all times while operating an Agency vehicle.
- Immediately report all motor vehicle citations, convictions, suspensions or removal of operators license to Management.



- Immediately report all accidents, no matter how insignificant they may seem, to the Executive Director or his/her designee;
- Immediately report all unsafe practices or vehicle conditions and not operate a vehicle in an unsafe condition;
- Use proper judgment and care to avoid accidents;
- Participate in all safety training;
- Become familiar with, and operate within, all safety procedures for the assigned work activity;
- Notify the Executive Director or his/her designee when taking medication, whether prescription or nonprescription, which may impair physical or mental alertness and affect ability to perform a job safely;
- Notify the Executive Director or his/her designee when a physical or mental condition may impair the ability to perform the job safely;
- Use or wear protective equipment at all times and obtain replacements for such equipment when damaged or otherwise unserviceable;
- Accurately complete “Employee Statements” on appropriate accident reports; and
- Consent to all mandated pre or post accident drug and/or alcohol tests or screenings whether required by law or the Agency.

Vehicle Accident Prevention Committee

(Principal Source - Pike)

The ***Vehicle Accident Prevention Committee*** shall be established with the following guidelines:

It is the purpose of the committee to act as a resource for enhancing and facilitating vehicle safety. The ***Vehicle Accident Prevention Committee*** shall not supersede the role of management and employees in safety.

Meetings, Membership, Officers, Duties

a. Meetings

The ***Vehicle Accident Prevention Committee*** shall meet at least 4 times



each calendar year at a time and place established by the current members during a regularly scheduled meeting. In addition, any current member may call a meeting for good cause by contacting either the Chairperson or the Vice-Chairperson. The Executive Director may also call *a Vehicle Accident Prevention Committee* Meeting.

b. Membership

Membership will be limited to Management, Employees (and Volunteers) of the Agency.

As much as possible and taking into consideration staff schedules, representatives should be from both supervisory and direct service staff.

Terms shall be two (2) years:

All members must attend a minimum of 75% of all scheduled meetings in order to remain on the committee. If a member is unable to fulfill this requirement, the departments being represented shall appoint someone to replace that member.

c. Officers

Annually and at the first meeting of each calendar year, *the Vehicle Accident Prevention Committee* shall elect the following officers:

Chair - Chair all meetings of the committee and prepare the agenda.

Vice Chair - Chair all meetings of the committee in the absence of the chair.

Recording Secretary - Record and prepare the minutes of each meeting and chair all meetings in the absence of both the Chair and the Vice-Chair. Notify all members of meetings. Forward recommendations and findings to Management.

d. Duties of the Committee

i. Help management identify current accident prevention and safety training needs.

ii. Assist supervision to develop strategies that prevent vehicle accidents.

iii. Identify and communicate new vehicle and operator safety requirements. Along with Management, identify staff who should attend any training related to these requirements.

iv. Identify and recognize successful safety projects.



- v. Maintain a vehicle safety training resource library.
- vi. Attend safety training as applicable to safety committee operations and general safety procedures.
- vii. Maintain confidentiality of all records (as required by law and Governing Board Policy).
- viii. Conduct an annual safety audit of all facilities and provide a report, including recommendations, to Management.

Safety Incentive Program(s)

Safety Incentive Programs are based upon positive reinforcement of good driving skills. Key elements include:

1. Standards must be set high but be attainable so as not to reward mediocre behavior.
2. The incentive must be earned.
3. The incentive must have some personal value, whether it be an elevation in status, physical reward or both.
4. The award should be based upon performance over a reasonable period of time. Not too long or short. For safe operator awards, an interval of yearly is appropriate. For other incentive programs such as contests, three or six months are appropriate.
5. For operators, individual performance, rather than group performance should be used as a criteria.
6. It is better for many participants to receive small awards rather than one person to receive a big reward.
7. The presentation of an award should be preceded by a celebration to emphasize the importance.

The following safe operator award program is suggested:

Every operator who completes a year (1500 hours or ____ miles) or more of safe driving without a preventable accident and without a moving violation will be presented with a Safe Operator patch denoting the number of years of continuous safe driving and the following monetary awards:

One Year	-	\$25
Two Years	-	\$50
Three Years	-	\$75
Four Years	-	\$100
Five Years	-	\$150
Over Five	-	\$150 + \$25 for each year over 5
Ten Years	-	\$400

In addition, to encourage family support of the safe operator, the spouse or significant other will receive an appropriate gift and recognition.

The award will be presented at the annual Safe Operator Award Dinner. All operators and their spouses or significant others will be invited to attend at no cost.

Patches will be sewn onto uniforms at Agency expense.



Operators – Initial Hire

Qualifications

(Principal Source – Champaign)

Application

Each potential employee shall complete a written application.

Interviews

Each potential employee shall be interviewed by the Executive Director and supervisor.

Physical Requirements

No person shall drive, require or permit any person to drive any vehicle in the service of transporting clients or on agency business unless the operator possess the following minimum qualifications:

- a. **Mental and Physical Conditions** - Operators shall be in sound physical and mental condition. Operators shall not have any physical or mental defects or limitations likely to interfere with safe driving, customer assistance or emergency activities, in the opinion of the party responsible for hiring or supervising operators and the physician performing the operator's physical examination. The operator must be physically capable of assisting persons with disabilities including mobility aid users if the job duties require it.
- b. **Eyesight** - Operators must have vision in both eyes, normal depth perception, normal peripheral vision and be free of any disease or condition that could impair vision. Operators must have 20/40 vision in each eye with or without correction, and 140 degrees or better horizontal vision. Operators must be able to distinguish between green, red and yellow.
- c. **Hearing** - Operators shall have adequate hearing to assure safe response to vehicle horns, emergency vehicle sirens, and train signals.
- d. **Alcohol, narcotics and drugs** - Operators shall not be addicted to the use of alcohol, narcotics or habit-forming drugs. Drug and alcohol tests shall be conducted in accordance with State and/or Federal Regulations.
- e. **Doctor's Physical Examination** - The Director shall have and keep on file a certificate of Physical Examination given within twelve (12) months prior to employment, signed by a qualified, licensed physician, for every operator in

the organization's employment, attesting that such a doctor has examined said operator and found him/her to meet satisfactorily the qualifications set forth in applicable State and/or Federal Regulations.

Age

Operators shall be at least twenty-one years of age.

Knowledge of English

Operators shall be able to read, write and speak the English language.

Operator Licensing

Operators transporting people shall hold a valid Operator's License or Commercial Operator's License as appropriate. An original, not a copy, of the Bureau of Motor Vehicle (BMV) report issued within the past ten (10) days must be produced before the potential employee is considered for hire. (See qualification criteria below.) **In no case will an individual be given a road test, placed in training or allowed to operate an Agency vehicle without a BMV check that is in compliance with this policy and has been approved by the Executive Director.**

These criteria include:

- Good driving record with no Driving While Intoxicated (DWI), Driving Under the Influence (DUI) or similar charges, reckless driving, railroad crossing violations or leaving the scene of an accident offenses.
- No more than a total of two moving violations or accidents within the last three years.
- No suspended or revoked licenses within the past 10 years for moving violations or violations of criminal laws.
- Any combination of violations, unfavorable road observations or accidents that indicates a **pattern** of unsafe vehicle operation behavior, whether on or off the job.
- Minimum of five years driving experience.

Operating Skills

Operators shall have experience in safely driving some type of motor vehicle (including private automobile) for not less than five (5) years, including experience throughout the four seasons.

Criminal Record Checks



An original criminal record check, issued within the past 10 days, shall be obtained as part of the application process. Persons with felony convictions of any sort are unacceptable. Other unacceptable convictions include crimes of violence, drug usage or sales, physical abuse, fraud or theft. A pattern of unlawful behavior shall also disqualify an applicant.

Ability to perform simple math.

Reasonable knowledge of the service area and ability to read basic maps.

A road test given by a designated Agency Supervisor is required.

A written driving skills test is required.

Training – Initial

The following subjects will be covered and trainees will demonstrate expertise in:

Agency Policies and Procedures

This includes:

- a) Policy and Procedures Manual
- b) Personnel Policy Manual
- c) Scheduling
- d) Radio Procedures
- e) Office and Paperwork Requirements

Federal and State Guidelines and Regulations

- a) Drug and Alcohol Program
- b) Bloodborne Pathogens
- c) ADA Requirements
- d) Other Federal and State Requirements

Pre and Post Trip Inspections

Training will be conducted on proper pre and post trip inspections as shown later in this manual.

Vehicle Familiarization

New employees will be given a complete familiarization of the vehicle including

engine compartment, all operator controls, emergency equipment and customer safety devices.

Basic Operations and Maneuvering

Training will include starting, stopping, left and right turns, and parking.

Special Driving Conditions

- a) Interstate – Proper procedures for entering and exiting Interstate or other limited access highways will be covered.
- b) Intersections – Procedures for safely negotiating intersections of all types will be covered.
- c) Railroad Crossings – Agency vehicles will stop at all railroad crossings, the front door will be opened and both directions will be carefully checked for trains. In the case of multiple tracks, vehicles will not proceed until all tracks can be verified as clear. Special caution will be exercised at unguarded crossings.

Backing

Backing is prohibited unless absolutely necessary. When backing is necessary, it is only to be done with a spotter or guide.

Bad Weather

New employees will be trained in operating in adverse weather conditions as shown in the Emergency Driving Procedures section.

Boarding and Alighting Customers

Proper procedures for boarding and alighting customers safely will be covered. This includes stopping, starting, bus stops, special situations and hazardous conditions on steps or outside the vehicle.

Defensive Driving Course (DDC)

Operators shall complete the National Safety Council's Defensive Driving Course (DDC) prior to beginning his or her driving duties if possible, or within six months following employment, and every third year thereafter. The four-hour Defensive Driving Course II (DCII) may be used as the "refresher course" for those operators who have previously completed the eight hour DDC core course.



Customer Assistance Training – DRIVE Training

All operators operating mobility aid lifts, ramps or otherwise assisting disabled persons shall receive specialized training and supervised practice on safe and proper techniques prior to offering such assistance. Such operators shall also be prepared to deal with mechanical failures of lifts or other emergencies that may arise. An eight (8) hour training program will be completed.

On Road

All trainees shall complete an on the road training program that shall cover all aspects of driving duties. Due to varying levels of expertise and experience, the program will be adapted to the training needs of the trainee. After initial training, the new operator will be assigned to an experienced supervisor or operator for continued orientation and observation. Only when the operator is deemed to be fully trained will he or she be permitted to operate a vehicle in regular service.



Operators – Ongoing Supervision and Training

Training - Refresher/Retraining

In Service Training - Operators shall participate in regular operator safety meetings and training sessions. Suggested training topics include first aid, cardio-pulmonary resuscitation, safe driving films, weather related driving topics, emergency procedures and review of state driving laws.

Evaluation and Supervision

- Ride Checks – Management or supervisory staff should ride with and critique each operator once every six (6) months. A written report will be completed and reviewed with the operator. The report will be kept in the operator file.
- Road Observations – Management or supervisory staff should observe the driving skills of each operator from outside the vehicle once every six (6) months.

Motor Vehicle Record Checks

Bureau of Motor Vehicle (BMV) reports, also known as Motor Vehicle Record (MVR) checks, are crucial documents that should be used in the process of determining whether to **consider for hire, to hire or retain** an operator. The existence of an acceptable BMV record is only one of the criteria used for hire or retention. An unacceptable BMV record stops the hiring or starts the dismissal process.

It is the applicant's or current operator's responsibility to maintain an acceptable driving record in compliance with Agency policy. Only original reports issued within 10 days of Agency request are acceptable (no copies).

Procedures

The following procedures should be followed closely:

- a. BMV checks will be required at the following times:
 - i. At the time of application and **before hire** (applicant's responsibility),
 - ii. Every 6 months (Agency responsibility),
 - iii. At the time of a preventable accident, (Agency responsibility)
 - iv. Any other time that the manager has reason to believe that the employee's driving record may have deteriorated. (Agency responsibility.)
- b. Current (issued within the last 10 days), original BMV reports (not copies) shall be obtained **before** the applicant's application is acted upon.
- c. Where required by state law or regulations, authorizations to obtain BMV records



shall be obtained from employees. Failure to authorize a check is reasonable cause for dismissal.

- d. Violations that occur on an employee's personal time or in a non-company vehicle are to be considered as part of the overall driving record.
- e. BMV records will be reviewed and approved by the Executive Director based upon the criteria listed below, upon receipt.

The following are unacceptable driving records:

- i. If license has been suspended, the person must have ten (10) years with no subsequent violations.
- ii. If license has been revoked, the person must have ten (10) years with no subsequent violations.
- iii. Reckless driving within the past five (5) years.
- iv. A combination of more than two (2) accidents and/or two (2) moving violations in the past three (3) years. For example, one accident and one moving violation or two (2) moving violations.
- v. Person convicted of Driving under the Influence (DUI)/Driving While Intoxicated (DWI) are not acceptable candidates for driving employment no matter when the conviction.
- vi. Any combination of violations, unfavorable road observations or accidents that indicate a pattern of unsafe vehicle operation behavior, whether on or off the job.
- vii. Current employees charged with DUI/DWI will be suspended immediately pending the outcome. If the employee is convicted, this is cause for immediate termination.

Note: State sponsored safety courses or DDC courses do not "erase" accidents or moving violations.

- f. Employees are required to notify their manager immediately if they have received moving violations, DWI/DUI citations or have had their license suspended or revoked. Those that operate an Agency vehicle with a suspended or revoked license are subject to immediate dismissal. Employees not notifying management of tickets will be subject to disciplinary procedures up to and including dismissal.

Annual Physical Examination

Annual physical examinations are required for all operators.

Safety Meetings

Safety meetings shall be held not less than quarterly. They should cover a topic germane to the time of year, types of accidents that have occurred in the near term or to reinforce important rules and regulations.



Seat-belt Usage

The use of seat-belts by operators and customers is mandatory in all Agency vehicles. Disabled customers shall be secured and restrained in accordance with their disability and type of mobility device in use.

Discipline/Recognition

When an Agency employee (or volunteer) violates work rules/policies or commits an unsafe act, immediate corrective action is required. Safe work rules/policies and driving procedures must be enforced for the protection of the employee (and volunteer), customers and the public.

When determining disciplinary action, cost incurred from the accident is not addressed. Unsafe acts, which cause little accidents, also cause big accidents. All Agency employees (and volunteers) are obligated to follow the necessary precautions to avoid accidents and injuries.

- **VIOLATIONS WHICH WILL BE CAUSE FOR DISCIPLINARY ACTION**
 - **UP TO AND INCLUDING DISCHARGE**

- Showing up for any shift under the influence of any intoxicating substance and/or the use of an intoxicating substance while on duty
- Unauthorized use of an Agency vehicle
- Failure to immediately report any accident involving an Agency vehicle
- Possession of an open alcoholic beverage or illegal drug within the Agency facility
- Possession of any weapon or firearm while on duty
- Preventable accidents involving personal injury and/or substantial property damage
- Failure to secure mobility aid or mobility devices properly
- Failure to restrain mobility aid customers or require customers to use seat-belts
- Falsification of records
- Attitude detrimental to the productive operation of the Agency
- Operation of an Agency vehicle in a reckless or unsafe manner
- Theft of any money or property from the system (including improper fare collection) or from customers
- Assaulting or threatening any individual while on duty
- Conviction for driving under the influence (DUI/DWI)
- Failure to pick up customers as assigned

INCIDENTS THAT ARE ALSO SUBJECT TO DISCIPLINARY ACTION

- A no-show for a shift
- Late for a shift
- Improper radio use



- Failure to run on schedule for reasons within the control of the operator
- Failure to report to the supervisor any reroutes caused by traffic or road conditions
- Misuse of an Agency vehicle (i.e. stopping at an unauthorized location)
- Failure to perform the required pre and post trip inspections
- Violation of or inability to perform duties and responsibilities as prescribed in this handbook
- Eating, drinking, or smoking in your vehicle.
- A moving violation
- Violation of other responsibilities as prescribed by common sense judgments

Preventable Accidents/Injuries

This category addresses employees' negligent acts, which result in:

- Preventable injuries to employees, customers or the general public;
- Preventable vehicle accidents.

Minimum disciplinary action required for violations in this category are as follows:

First Occurrence: Verbal Warning. The employee will be counseled by the Executive Director to determine the need for additional training, instruction, and/or other corrective action. Record of the warning will be kept in personnel file.

Second Occurrence (within 3 years): Written Warning. The employee will be counseled by the Executive Director and be suspended without pay for at least one (1) day.

Third Occurrence (within 3 years): Written Warning. The employee will be counseled by the Executive Director and be suspended without pay for at least three (3) days.

Fourth Occurrence (within 3 years): The employee's employment with the Agency will be terminated.

Grievance Procedure

An employee shall not be disciplined or dismissed from service, nor shall entry be made in the employee's record, without just cause. He/she shall receive a written statement of the charges.

Under ordinary circumstances, the Agency will administer discipline within ten working days (not counting Saturdays, Sundays, and holidays) from the date of knowledge of a violation. If an investigation is necessary, the discipline will be administered within ten working days of completion of the investigation.

If an employee objects to a disciplinary action taken by the Agency, he/she must file a written statement of the grievance with the Executive Director within five working days of being informed of the disciplinary action. The statement must be signed by the employee.

Within five working days, the employee will be accorded a hearing with the Executive Director or other representative of the Agency. A written decision will be issued within five working days of the hearing.

Responsibility of Employees

Your vehicle operator's license is a privilege granted to you by the state. It is also a prerequisite to your employment as a operator for the Agency. Anything that affects your operator's license, affects your job.

You are expected to report all violations that you may incur on your license. Accidents, moving violations, vehicle equipment violations, etc., whether in an Agency vehicle or your own, must be reported to the Agency.



Emergency Driving Procedures

(Principal Source – Fayette & CDL Manual)

An emergency can happen any time. No operator can control weather conditions, unexpected vehicle breakdowns, other operators' mistakes, or customers' illness. However, the operator must be prepared for all these possibilities.

Preparing yourself mentally is not automatic. You need to ask yourself specific questions that might relate to the types of emergencies that you might encounter.

Professional operators prepare themselves for the day by finding answers to the following questions:

- What is the weather forecast?
- Will the route require driving on dangerous roads?
- What will traffic be like?
 - Will the vehicle be carrying an unusual number of customers or different types of customers than usual?

In addition to information gathering, professional operators need to regularly review how to handle emergencies by restudying the materials in training programs, learning from their own experiences, and talking to other operators about how they have dealt with various situations.

Remember, you must always wear a seat-belt when operating your vehicle. This will help you maintain control of your vehicle in an emergency and may prevent you from being injured. If you should be in an accident, wearing a seat-belt increases the chance that you will be able to respond to the needs of your customers.

Accident Causes

One of the types of emergencies you may have to deal with is a traffic accident. What are the most common causes of these accidents? The Interstate Commerce Commission, through a study of accidents, concluded that the causes of traffic accidents are as follows:

- Mechanical defects - 3%
- Condition of street or highway - 12%
- Human failure or error- 85%

Some people might argue that apparently some 15% of traffic accidents are caused by factors beyond the control of the operator. Further studies of accident reports reveal, however, that this is not necessarily true. Quite a large percentage of accidents ascribed to condition of street or highway are actually caused by failure of operators to adjust their driving to hazardous street or highway conditions. Also, quite a large percentage of



accidents ascribed to mechanical defects are actually caused by failure of operators to take into consideration known mechanical defects, or failure to see that proper repairs are made when mechanical defects are discovered.

Remember: If an accident results from a mechanical defect that you should have discovered during the pre-trip inspection, the accident is preventable and your fault.

Thus, many accident investigators today state that 95% to 99% of all traffic accidents are due to human failure or error.

Unless thorough investigation shows circumstances beyond a operator's control, the following accidents are generally classified as preventable:

- Backing accidents
- Intersection accidents
- Pedestrian accidents
- Rear end collisions
- Traffic lane encroachment accidents
- Accidents resulting from mechanical conditions
- Accidents with parked vehicles
- Collision with stationary objects
- Unattended vehicle accidents
- Accidents blamed on adverse weather conditions
- Customer activities

Slippery Road Surfaces

It will take longer to stop and it will be harder to turn without skidding when the road is slippery. You must drive slower to be able to stop in the same distance as on a dry road. Wet roads can double stopping distance. Reduce speed by about 1/3 (i.e., slow from 55 to 35 mph) on a wet road. On packed snow, reduce speed by 1/2 or more. If the surface is icy, reduce speed to a crawl or discontinue operations until it is safe to drive.

Sometimes it is hard to know the road is slippery. Here are some signs:

Shaded Areas - Shady areas of the road will remain icy and slippery long after open areas have melted.

Bridges - When the temperature drops, bridges will freeze before the road will. Be especially careful when the temperature is close to 32 degrees F.

Melting Ice - Slight melting will make ice wet. Wet ice is much more slippery than ice that is not wet.

Black Ice - Black ice is a thin layer that is clear enough that you can see the road



underneath it. It makes the road look wet. Any time the temperature is below freezing and the road looks wet, watch out for black ice.

Vehicle Icing - An easy way to check for ice is to open the window and feel the front of the mirror, mirror support or antenna. If they are icy, the road surface is probably starting to ice up.

Just After Rain Begins - Right after it starts to rain, the water mixes with oil left on the road by vehicles. This makes the road very slippery. If the rain continues, it will wash the oil away.

Hydroplaning - In some weather conditions, water or slush collect on the road. When this happens, your vehicle can hydroplane. The tires lose their contact with the road and have little or no traction. You may not be able to steer or brake. You can regain control by releasing the accelerator. This will slow your vehicle and let the wheels turn freely. If the vehicle is hydroplaning, do not use the brakes to slow down. It does not take a lot of water to cause hydroplaning. Hydroplaning can occur at speeds as low as 30 mph if there is a lot of water. Hydroplaning is more likely if tire pressure is low or the tread is worn. The grooves in a tire carry away the water; if they are not deep, they cannot work well.

Driving At Night

You are at greater risk when you drive at night. In the winter it gets light later and gets dark early. Operators cannot see hazards as soon as in daylight, so they have less time to respond. Operators caught by surprise are less able to avoid a crash.

Operator Vision - Operators cannot see as sharply at night or in dim light. Also, the eyes need time to adjust to seeing in dim light. Slow down.

Glare - Operators can be blinded for a short time by bright lights. It takes time to recover from this blindness. All operators face these risks when driving at night. The risks are greater for some operators whose visual recovery time is higher than others. Visual recovery time is the time it takes a operator's night vision to return to normal after being blinded by bright lights. Listed below are some specific causes that make visual recovery time higher for some individuals than for others:

- Age - recovery time increases as people get older
- High blood pressure
- Diabetes
- Other medical conditions

These operators will need to take special care when driving at night. Older operators are especially bothered by glare. Even two seconds of glare blindness can be dangerous. A vehicle doing 55 mph will travel more than half the distance



of a football field during that time. Do not look directly at bright lights when driving. Look at the right side of the road. Watch the sidelines when someone coming toward you has very bright lights.

Other Operators - There is an increased number of tired and intoxicated operators on the road at night, so be on the alert for them and be prepared to respond.

Poor Lighting - In the daytime there is usually enough light to see well. This is not true at night. Some areas may have bright streetlights, but many areas will have poor lighting. On most rural roads, you will probably have to depend entirely on your headlights.

Less light means you will not be able to see hazards as well or as quickly as in daytime. Road users who do not have lights are hard to see. There are many accidents that involve pedestrians, joggers, bicyclists, and animals.

Even when there are lights, the road scene can be confusing. Traffic signs and hazards can be hard to see against a background of signs, shop windows, and other lights. Drive slower when lighting is poor or confusing.

Headlights - At night your headlights will sometimes be the main source of light for you to see and for others to see you. You cannot see nearly as much with your headlights as you can see in the daytime. With low beams you can see ahead about 250 feet and with high beams about 350 to 400 feet. You must adjust your speed to keep your stopping distance within your sight distance. This means going slow enough to be able to stop within the range of your headlights. Otherwise, by the time you see a hazard, you will not have time to stop. If you are using your high beams, make sure you dim them within 500 feet of another vehicle so they will not cause glare for other operators.

Night driving can be more dangerous if you have problems with your headlights. Dirty headlights may give you only half the light they should, so keep them clean. If your lights fail you should:

Try low and high beams (one may work). Pull safely off the roadway and inform the customers. Call the dispatcher for further instructions.

Turn Signals and Brake Lights - At night your turn signals and brake lights are even more important for telling other operators what you intend to do. Make sure you have clean, working turn signals and brake lights.

Other Lights - In order for you to be seen easily, the reflectors, clearance lights and taillights must be clean and working properly.

Windshield and Mirrors - It is more important at night than in the daytime to have clean windshields and mirrors. Bright light at night can cause dirt on your



windshield and mirrors to create a glare, blocking your view.

Driving Through Water

If unable to avoid driving through deep puddles or flowing water and you feel it is safe, you should:

Slow down.

Place transmission in low gear.

Increase engine RPM and slowly cross the water.

When out of the water, maintain light pressure on the brakes for a short distance to heat them up and dry them out.

Make a test stop when safe to do so. Check behind to make sure no one is following, then apply the brakes to be sure they work correctly.

If, after entering deep water, you feel that it is too dangerous to continue, keep the engine running at a fast idle by holding the accelerator pedal down as you brake. This is one of the few situations where backing may be permissible. If possible, designate a customer to look out the window of the vehicle to guide you. Do not exit the vehicle in fast flowing or deep water. Once stopped, shift into reverse, checking to make sure it is clear behind you. Keep the engine running slightly faster than normal as you back out.

Whether you back out or drive through, drive slowly afterward and continue applying your brakes lightly for a few minutes to heat them up and dry them out. Test frequently to see if the brakes are dry enough for you to stop quickly. Always check traffic behind to make sure it is safe to do so.

Winter Driving

During pre-trip inspections pay extra attention to the following:

- Coolant level/antifreeze amount
- Defrosting/heating equipment
- Wipers/washers
- Tires/chains
- Lights/reflectors
- Windows/mirrors
- Handrails and steps
- Exhaust system



a. Special Techniques for Driving on Ice and Snow:

When first starting, get the feel of the road. Do not hurry.

Glare - Snow produces a glare which can adversely affect vision. The sun, shining on the snow, makes the problem worse. Keep a pair of sunglasses in your vehicle and use them. Fog - Remember, with moisture on the ground (in the form of snow) you are apt to run into foggy conditions frequently. Fog, coupled with slippery conditions, requires slowing down, as well as more alertness and attention to maintaining a safe following distance. In fog, driving with lights on low beam improves your visibility and your vision. Watch the right edge of the roadway to assure your vehicle is positioned correctly.

Braking - Know how and when to brake. When possible, use the braking power of the engine by downshifting to a lower gear rather than by using the brakes. When you must brake, do not jam on the brakes. For older vehicles tap and release them in a pumping motion. Newer vehicles have ABS brakes and require steady pressure rather than pumping. Know which type of brakes your vehicle has. Do not brake in the middle of a curve. If your vehicle goes into a skid, take your foot off the brake.

Skids - Do not panic. Do not over steer. Do not jam on the brakes. Remove your foot from the accelerator. For rear drive vehicles, turn the steering wheel in the direction of the skid, e.g., if the rear end of the vehicle is skidding toward the right, turn the steering wheel to right. When you are able to regain steering control, you may be able to resume braking by applying the brakes lightly.

Traction - To gain traction and avoid skids, start out slowly if parked on a slippery surface. If your wheels start spinning, let up on the accelerator until traction is returned. Before going up a hill, increase speed within reason to build up momentum to help you climb. Before going down a hill, especially a steep one, slow by shifting into a lower gear. Use your brakes only with extreme caution when going down a slippery hill. Remember the points discussed earlier in this chapter under “slippery road surfaces”.

Hills - When approaching, either descending or ascending, observe other vehicles on the hill and how they are reacting to conditions. Stay well behind the vehicle in front, so that you can go around it if it becomes stuck. If other cars begin to slide, spin out or have to back down the hill, wait until you have enough room to maneuver before going up the hill yourself. If an alternative route is available it should be used.

By observing what other vehicles are doing, it may be apparent that the hill is just too slippery and dangerous. Contact your dispatcher and report



the conditions.

Stuck - If you are stuck, use your judgment. The action you take depends on how badly you are stuck. Whatever you do, avoid spinning your wheels since this will aggravate the problem and could cause serious equipment damage. Also be realistic about your physical capability. Do not over exert yourself.

You must call the dispatcher if stuck and advise if you need help. Until help arrives, you should set out flares or triangles to alert other traffic. Do not run the engine without checking to be sure the exhaust pipe is clear of snow, or other obstructions.

If the snow is deep, shovel the snow from in front and behind the wheels (both front and rear wheels). Also, shovel out as much snow from under the vehicle as you can. If you have it, spread some salt or sand in front and behind your driving wheels.

Do not let anyone stand behind the rear wheels. If you are using devices under the wheel for traction or if the wheels dig into the dirt or gravel, individuals behind the vehicle may be injured by rocks or objects thrown rearward by the spinning wheels.

If possible, try to keep the front wheels pointed straight ahead until the vehicle is moving. The rolling resistance of the front wheels is lessened when they are not trying to move sideways.

If your wheels keep spinning and the vehicle does not move, stop and let your tires cool. Tires heated from spinning will just dig deeper into ice and snow.

If nothing works, try to rock the vehicle out of the rut by alternatively shifting from reverse to drive. With automatic transmissions check the owner's manual to make sure such a procedure can be followed with your particular vehicle.

b. Snow and Ice Removal

Do not wait until the last minute to load your vehicle with those items you will need to combat snow or ice. These include: flashlight, ice scraper, brush to remove snow from vehicle, extra fuses for vehicle electrical systems, a rag to clean lights and windshield, work gloves, small shovel and battery booster cables.

Visibility is always critical. But, in cold wintry weather many motorists take unwarranted chances by cleaning just a portion of the windshield and rear window when they have been iced over or by brushing snow only



from the windshield and rear window. Such laziness invites disaster since they may be unable to see your vehicle clearly.

Snow Removal - If your vehicle is covered with snow, it is essential that all snow be removed from hood, glass surfaces, roof and lights before driving. When driving, vehicle movement and stops can result in snow sliding from the roof onto the windshield or rear window, obscuring visibility. Wind, and the mere movement of the vehicle, can have the same effect.

Ice scrapers should be used with care. When edges become burred or chipped, the scraper should be replaced. Use of a damaged scraper or trying to dig out encrusted ice with the point of the scraper can result in scratches to the glass and may even cause the glass to break because its strength has been weakened.

Recessed Wipers – If you have windshield wipers that disappear into a recess below the windshield when not in use, be especially careful to keep such recesses free of obstructions during snowy or cold weather. If the vehicle is outside during a snowstorm, such recesses must be cleared of snow and ice before wiper use.

While driving in a snowstorm, it may be necessary to stop periodically and clear accumulated snow and ice from such recesses. In cold weather, even if there has not been snow, it is a good idea to check wiper blades before driving to make sure they operate properly. Should wiper arms or wipers be frozen fast, the wiper motors could be seriously damaged, a fuse may blow, or bits of the blade rubber may be torn loose making the wiper ineffective.

Remember: Most things break more easily in extreme cold.

c. Some Additional Hints and Precautions:

Keeping your tires inflated properly will improve your traction.

Observe traffic coming toward you and be prepared to take defensive action in the event of oncoming cars going into a skid.

Always keep your gas tank at least half full.

Driving In Very Hot Weather

During pre-trip inspections, pay special attention to: the tires, engine oil, engine coolant, engine belts and hoses.



Tar in the road pavement frequently rises to the surface in very hot weather. Spots where the tar “bleeds” to the surface are very slippery.

Vehicle Breakdowns and Unavoidable Stops

Should a vehicle act erratically or a breakdown is suspected, or occurs, safely guide the unit off the road onto the right shoulder or into a parking area.

Immediately engage emergency flashers and position emergency reflectors. Notify the dispatcher. Indicate whether there are customers on board, give a brief description of the problem, and vehicle location.

If necessary, use landmarks to clarify the location of vehicle. The dispatcher will dispatch another vehicle to the designated location and arrange for towing. The operator must ensure that customers are kept as safe as possible.

Customers may be moved into an appropriate public building if the disabled vehicle is in a high accident area or if cold or hot weather endangers customers. Removing customers is not favored unless they will be safer than staying in your vehicle.

Sometimes, it becomes imperative to remove the vehicle from the flow of traffic. Customer illness, such as vomiting, vision impaired by sleet, snow, rain, or the unwanted presence of a bee or other insects, are all valid reasons for temporarily pulling clear of the road. Use directional signals and steer off the street exiting from the right lane onto the right shoulder or parking area. Engage hazard lights immediately.

Do not leave customers unattended, unless it is an extreme emergency.

Be sure that you and your customers are SAFE. If it is extremely cold, you will want to find shelter for your riders. If you cannot get shelter and your riders must remain on the vehicle, do not let your vehicle run standing still for more than ten (10) minutes every hour.

When your vehicle is running, windows should be cracked open. Also, be sure your tailpipe is clear. This will prevent carbon monoxide poisoning. Carbon monoxide is a non-irritating, colorless, tasteless, and odorless gas. Overexposure is extremely dangerous and can occur without victims realizing it.

Vehicle Fire/Evacuation

(Principal Source – Hancock County)

1. At first indication of fire on the vehicle, proceed as follows: PULL TO A SAFE LOCATION, STOP the vehicle immediately, SHUT OFF ENGINE, open all doors, contact dispatcher to request emergency services assistance and evacuate customers.



2. Evacuate customers in an orderly manner. Assist disabled customers first. Safety of all customers is your first consideration.
3. If possible, use the fire extinguisher located on the vehicle. If the fire is extinguished, notify dispatcher for further instructions.
4. If fire cannot be controlled by fire extinguisher, notify dispatcher immediately giving vehicle location and fire location on vehicle. Do not re-board vehicle. Await assistance and tend to customer needs. Customers will be loaded on to another vehicle.

Hold up/Robbery

(Principal Source – Hancock County)

1. Operators are not to carry any weapon while on duty, nor should they argue with or resist a bandit in case of a holdup. Instead, keep cool and notice the description of the bandit as to color, approximate size and weight, and color of clothing. If armed, notice what is used as weapon.
2. Notify the dispatcher immediately after the holdup and request that the police be called. Do not state the amount lost to anyone other than the police or Management. Names of witnesses should be obtained and a full report written by the operator.

Natural Disasters

Tornado

(Principal Source – Sandusky Transit)

If a tornado warning is sounded or broadcast, employees will immediately report to the designated shelter. If operators are in vehicles, operators and customers should exit the vehicle and seek shelter in a ditch, under a bridge, in the basement of a nearby building or in the safest possible place given the situation.

Continue monitoring local weather reports.

Management will determine when personnel and vehicles can return to a normal operating mode.

If vehicles have sustained any damage from wind or wind blown debris, they should be inspected and repaired by maintenance staff before operating again.



Flood Procedures - Vehicle

The Manager or dispatcher will inform operators that emergency flood preparedness measures are to be taken.

Management will determine when and if transit services need to end. Service to areas susceptible to flood may be discontinued.

Vehicles that are parked in areas that could flood should be moved to high ground if possible.

In case of flash flood warnings, operators on the road should avoid known flood areas. Never attempt to cross roads or bridges that are flooded. If your vehicle stalls because of high water, it is generally safer to stay in the vehicle and radio for emergency help rather than try to walk through fast flowing water.



Customer Safety

General Guidelines

(Principal Source – Sandusky Transit)

Bus, van and car customers must obey the following rules which apply to vehicle travel.

- The operator is in charge of the vehicle.
- Customers must remain seated and seat belted at all times and until the vehicle comes to a complete stop.
- Customers are not allowed to have any part of their body out the windows of the vehicle.
- No smoking, drinking or eating is permitted on the vehicles.
- Customers must keep noise at a level that will allow the operator to hear traffic and requests for assistance.
- No radios are to be played on the vehicles without earphones.
- Customers are not to disturb the operator.
- Customers are not permitted to yell or throw things out of the windows.
- Customers should keep the vehicles clean.
- Customers will not use profanity or language that is upsetting and/or disruptive to other customers or staff.

Seat-belts,

Customers will be required to properly use seat-belts at all times in all vehicles so equipped.

Child Safety Seats

Children, as required by State law, will be placed in child safety seats. The Child Safety seat law requires that children who are either or both:

1. less than 4 years old
2. less than 40 pounds

must be in an approved, properly installed child safety seat (infant seat, convertible seat or booster seat) while being transported.

Handicapped and medically fragile children must also be in an appropriate child restraint device.



Examples of children who must be in an approved, properly installed child safety seat by law are:

1. A child who is 5 years old and weighs 38 pounds.
2. A child who is 3 years old and weighs 43 pounds.

The operator is responsible to make sure that each seat is properly installed in the vehicle and that the child is properly restrained to minimize the possibility of injury before transporting the child.

It must be remembered that there are a wide variety of approved child seats on the market. Some may also be installed in different ways depending upon the age and weight of the child.

For those children that are handicapped or medically fragile, management must be consulted for proper procedures for safely transporting them.

The following general rules apply to most child safety seats:

1. Read and follow the manufacturers instructions for the child safety seat.
2. Small children will not sit in the front seat, especially if the vehicle is equipped with air bags.
3. The seat must be secured to the vehicle tightly.
4. The harness straps should be snug and in the right slots for the age and weight of the child.
5. Inspect the label for the date it was made. Seats over 6 years old may not be acceptable. Older child safety seats will be referred to Management.
6. Damaged seats or seats that have been in an accident will not be used. Seats that are cracked or missing pieces are not acceptable.
7. Child safety seats will be approved for the age and weight of the child.
8. Children under 1 year old and up to 22 pounds will generally be placed in rear facing seats.
9. Operators who have any questions on the appropriate use of child safety seats will contact their manager immediately.

Children Between 40 and 80 pounds

These children are not required to be restrained by state law however the normal seat belts are normally not adequate to protect them in an accident.

Observe the following guidelines:

1. Adult lap and shoulder belt systems will not fit children that are smaller than 4'9" tall and weight less than 80 pounds.
2. Lap belts should fit low over the child's upper thighs. The shoulder belt should stay on the shoulder and be close to the child's chest. If the shoulder belt fits so poorly



that it goes across the neck or face, a booster seat is necessary. **Never put a shoulder belt under the child's arm or behind the back.**

Mobility Device Securement and Customer Restraint Systems

All mobility devices will be properly secured to the vehicle using the installed securement systems. Wheelchair customers will be required to wear a mobility aid seat-belt and be properly restrained using the vehicle restraint system. Those using non mobility aid mobility devices will be requested to move to a seat and use the vehicle seat-belt system.

Difficult Customers

In order to ensure the safety of staff and other customers, any customer who is unruly and is affecting the operation of a vehicle or the customers on said vehicle will be dealt with in the following manner:

The unruly customer will be advised to stop their pattern of behavior immediately. If not done, the operator will advise the dispatcher of the circumstances involving the unruly customer. The dispatcher may request that a Police Agency serving the area in which the vehicle is located be dispatched to that location immediately.

If there is a risk of harm to anyone on the vehicle, the operator will immediately pull the vehicle over to a safe location, have customers exit the vehicle and await the arrival of a Law Enforcement Official. Notify the dispatcher of the risk of harm.

The dispatcher shall immediately dial 9-1-1.

The operator will relay any information as to the demeanor of the customer to the dispatcher who will provide this information to the Law Enforcement Officer who is responding.

The operator will not engage in any physical confrontation with the Unruly Customer unless there is a clear and present danger to either themselves or another customer on the vehicle.

Upon arrival of a Law Enforcement Officer, the operator will relay information to that officer about the Unruly Customer and await final disposition. All information will be given to the dispatcher.

Medical Condition

Upon becoming aware that a Medical Condition exists on or around a vehicle, the operator shall immediately notify the dispatcher that there is an emergency condition and request assistance as needed.



If an ambulance is needed, the dispatcher shall maintain constant communications with the operator and call 9-1-1.

The operator will relay any information as to the condition of the customer to the dispatcher who will provide instructions to the operator and will make the necessary notification to have an ambulance respond to that operator's location.

If trained, the operator may perform first aid and CPR until the ambulance service arrives.

The operator, upon the ambulance arrival, will ascertain which ambulance company has the customer and their destination. This information will be given to the dispatcher.

First Aid

(Principal Source – Geauga County)

In the best interest of our clients, a Primary First Aid class shall be given to all employees at no cost, once a year.

The course for Primary First Aid will be given by an American Red Cross certified instructor. It will be provided to ensure that in the event of a medical situation on board, the operator will have the basic tools to react in the proper manner.

Emergency first aid is to be given as required to our clients or any other individual that may require assistance before emergency responders arrive on the scene. The procedure to follow if a situation develops on board is as follows:

- Pull off the road into a safe area, stop the vehicle, turn on emergency flashers and turn engine off
- Determine the problem
- Contact the Dispatcher and inform him or her of the situation
- Follow the instructions from the dispatcher
- Give the exact location of your vehicle
- Perform first aid procedures
- Remain calm until help arrives
- Assist, as required, the first emergency responders
- After the emergency has been dealt with, contact dispatch and follow instructions

It is the intention of this procedure to give the operator the information necessary to handle the situation that has developed in the most professional, humane manner possible until help arrives on the scene.



Bloodborne Pathogens/Infection Control

(Principal Source – Logan County)

If a bio-hazardous spill occurs as part of a vehicular accident, then first aid for injured customers should be the first priority, along with notification of appropriate medical assistance personnel. Bio-hazardous spills may also occur from an on-vehicle injury without a vehicular accident. Again, first aid provision comes first. Additionally, a bio-hazardous spill may occur as a result of vomiting or loss of bladder control, in which case, first aid is normally not necessary. However, anytime the operator does administer first aid, latex gloves and other personal protective equipment should be used.

Contaminated items should be carefully placed in the designated bio-hazard disposal bag.

Following first aid administration, where necessary, the vehicle must be cleared of the spill. The following steps should be followed:

1. Put on a new pair of latex gloves;
2. Contain the spill as best as possible with paper towels and/or solidifying powder
3. Clean up spill with paper towels, or if a solidifying powder is used, use a dustpan and brush.
4. Clean area of spill with the cleaning or decontamination solution and wipe with paper towels and/or fresh solidifying powder.
5. Place all items used to clean spill into bio-hazardous waste disposal bag.
6. If the exterior of the disposal bag has not been contaminated by the spill, then remove both Latex gloves and place them in the disposal bag, and seal the bag.
7. If the exterior of the bio-hazardous waste disposal bag has been contaminated by the spill, seal the bag and place inside another bag.
8. Upon return to home base, place the plastic bag(s) into the designated disposal container.
9. Management will have it disposed of by an appropriate medical hazard disposal organization for proper ultimate destruction.



Vehicles & Equipment

Preventive Maintenance

Introduction

The purpose of this outline is to provide instructions and a format for implementing an effective preventive maintenance (PM) program for a customer transportation system. It attempts to:

- Clearly outline the scheduling of the preventive maintenance program;
- Explain the functions that occur on a regular basis;
- Establish a format for recording maintenance information; and
- Provide easy access to needed vehicle specifications.

The following pages contain recommendations, procedures, and forms to aid in the PM process.

Program Development

Recommended frequencies of inspection and maintenance operations are specifically tailored to meet the needs of vehicles used. Research is conducted to determine manufacturer maintenance recommendations, transit industry standards, and actual vehicle maintenance experience. Improved maintenance techniques and modern diagnostic technologies have also been incorporated. This program is designed to comply with all manufacturer warranty requirements and to maximize the value of a PM program while keeping costs to a minimum.

A good PM program needs to be constantly monitored and updated to continue to be effective and efficient. Complete records are vital to this monitoring process and a format is included in this program. Changes in parts availability or improved maintenance may affect required inspection intervals.

If problems arise, steps must be taken to alleviate them. Continual fine-tuning of the program will ensure equipment reliability and help to control maintenance costs.

Preventive Maintenance Needs

The maintenance requirements of vehicles can be categorized in the following manner:

- 1. Daily Servicing Needs***



Daily attention is required to maintain:

- a. Full fuel tank levels
- b. Proper fluid levels and mixes
- c. Interior and exterior cleanliness
- d. Replacement of burned out lights
- e. Vehicle pre and post trip inspection
- f. Operational records and procedures

Additionally, it is necessary for the operators to effectively communicate vehicle defects to the manager so that the proper repair can be made.

2. *Periodic Inspection Needs*

Periodic inspections are scheduled to provide maintenance personnel an opportunity to detect and repair damage or wear conditions before major repairs are necessary. Inspection items include: suspension elements, leaks, belts, electrical connections, tire wear, and any noticeable problems.

3. *Interval Related Maintenance*

Interval related maintenance is required to identify wear, alignment, or deterioration problems of parts or fluids. Replacement intervals of these items are determined through experience and manufacturer recommendations. Replacing lubricating oils and filters are examples of this type of required maintenance.

4. *Breakdown maintenance*

Breakdown maintenance is required when a failure is encountered by a vehicle that makes it unsafe or damaging to continue operation. These repairs are unscheduled and usually require a vehicle switch-out or a service call to repair. Examples include: flat tires, line ruptures, loss of brakes, engine breakdowns, loss of power, etc.

Preventive Maintenance Program

The goal of an effective PM program is to reduce or eliminate costly and unscheduled breakdown maintenance by concentrating efforts on the scheduled activities of *Daily*, *Periodic* and *Interval Maintenance*. To achieve this goal, a two-part program of daily service and periodic inspection has been developed.

Daily Service

The daily service format is included in this report. Key features of this program are:

1. A thorough operational check of all systems each day.



2. A checklist to communicate defects to maintenance services.

Regular Interval Service and Record Keeping

Part two of the preventive maintenance program consists of a record keeping system and a programmed regularly scheduled inspection. Periodic and interval-related maintenance activities are performed and monitored in this section.

Each vehicle is provided with a Vehicle History File for recording this and other important maintenance information such as overhauls, rebuilds, and major repair work.

The information is tracked using the “Vehicle Service and Repair Record” or similar form.

Prior to each periodic inspection, the service record is reviewed and the present date and mileage of the vehicle is compared to those listed for the next scheduled service of each item. Items at or near the recommended service interval are then included in the inspection scheduled at that time.

All interval-related maintenance and scheduled/unscheduled major repairs are scheduled to be done during the regular inspection. This scheduling allows for efficient use of garage and vehicle dispatching efforts.

Quality parts are purchased with maximum warranties. Either the OEM (original equipment manufacturer) parts or approved equal is acquired for use in Agency and vehicles.

Conclusion

This preventive maintenance program outlines the service necessary to keep vans, small vehicles and buses operating cleanly, efficiently, and reliably. Through the extensive record-keeping program; maximum utilization of labor, parts, and fluids can be achieved. Quality management information also means tracking and maximum warranty services available through the manufacturer, vehicle dealer, or third party warranty service.

However, no program can be considered to be static. Continual monitoring and updating of the program is necessary to achieve the maximum preventive maintenance effect. We must comply with and even exceed maintenance standards, with cost-effectiveness in mind.

Format for Preventive Maintenance Program for Transit Vehicles

- a. Vehicle Pre and Post -Trip Inspection and Defect Report



1. This form is to be completed by the *operator* of the vehicle.
2. The form is a two-part list:
 - a. Front side – daily vehicle check list, including space for breakdowns and accident notations
 - b. Back side – daily vehicle trip sheet, including mileage, tire pressure and gas and oil used
3. Each day the operator will inspect the vehicle and either check each item as okay or note any defects on the defect side. Slashes across the page with a large “OK” are not acceptable.
4. Operator will indicate the fuel added and oil added, daily.
5. Operator will enter beginning and ending mileage and the daily total.
6. Operator will sign the check list.

Preventive Maintenance Inspection Work Sheet

This is the individual work sheet or work order of service and inspection performed on each vehicle.

1. This worksheet should be completed by the mechanic performing the service.
2. Special instruction (such as tire replacement) will be so noted as will repairs to be made in addition to normal service.
3. Mechanic is required to perform service and inspection for each item listed and to also note any comments regarding service.
4. The overall purpose is to make all corrections necessary to the vehicle while also performing full maintenance and inspection.
5. Each box must be marked per code (“Okay,” adjustment made, or needs attention).
6. Mechanic will carry this service information forward on the Master Vehicle Service and Repair Record.
7. Mechanic will sign this report upon completion.



Master Vehicle Service and Repair Record – Maintenance History

This is to be kept on file for recording all repairs and service made on the vehicle. This record is also valuable in locating persistent problems that occur too frequently. This information will also serve to determine if individual operator habits merit particular attention.

Preventive Maintenance Intervals

The following are special maintenance instructions and recommended intervals for servicing of the listed components during periodic vehicle inspections. Normal intervals for inspections are:

- 3,000 miles for gasoline vehicles used in urbanized areas,
- 4,000 miles for gasoline vehicles used in non-urbanized areas,
- 4,000 miles for small diesel vehicles,
- 6,000 miles for medium-to-heavy diesel buses.

Mileage intervals may vary from those noted in this section according to local practices or manufacturers recommendations.

Typically, Schedule A is the level of preventive maintenance performed every 3,000 to 4,000 miles for gas and small diesel, 6,000 for medium/heavy duty buses. Schedule B tasks are performed every 8,000 to 12,000 miles depending on the specific fleet experience and manufacturer requirements. Schedule C maintenance is much more intensive and is only required every 24,000 to 36,000 miles. Schedule B includes Schedule A level tasks, and Schedule C includes both Schedule A and Schedule B level tasks.

A checklist is completed for each scheduled interval. The three scheduled PM levels incorporate some or all of the following tasks:

A Level Inspection

3,000 - 4,000 Miles or Two Months (whichever comes first)

- Check tire tread and pressure
- Check wheel rims for cracks
- Check lug nuts for tightness
- Check for oil and water leaks and belt condition
- Check brakes including master cylinder fluid level
- Check exhaust system
- Check seat-belts
- Check customer seats



- Inspect brakes (pull wheels at Schedule B)
- Change engine oil
- Change oil filter
- Inspect air filter
- Inspect spark plug wires
- Inspect belts and hoses
- Inspect rear axle differential oil (change as needed, generally during Schedule C Level Inspection)
- Check mobility aid securement and restraint systems. Make sure that all parts are for the system in use
- Check and cycle mobility aid lift
- Check windshield wipers and fluid
- Check all interior and exterior mirrors
- Check all exterior lights
- Headlights (high and low beams)
- Back-up lights and alarm
- Tail lights
- Stop lights
- License plate light and plate tail light
- Turn signals
- Hazard warning lights
- Dashboard lights
- Interior lights
- Check radio
- Check fare box

B Level Inspection

8,000 – 12,000 Miles or Six Months (whichever comes first)

All of “A” plus:

- Steam-clean engine area (as needed)
- Check steering wheel for play
- Check parking brake
- Check for any abnormal noise or vibration, both internal and external
- Check brake and acceleration pedals
- Check sun visor
- Check horn
- Check signs (signs required by USDOT or Local requirements such as “No Smoking” etc.)
- Check all window glass, door glass, and window operation
- Check power steering fluid level
- Check transmission fluid level



- Check batteries
- Check antifreeze and condition
- Check exterior for body damage and condition of paint, lettering, decals, and molding
- Check air filter
- Check shock absorbers and springs
- Check wheel bearings
- Check fuel tank condition
- Check alternator mountings for tightness
- Check A/C system
- Rotate tires

C Level Inspection

24,000 – 36,000 Miles or Twelve Months (whichever comes first)

All of ‘B’ plus:

- Detailed Frame and Body checks (Schedule C unless manufacturer requires more frequent) including bolts/nuts, rivets, and welds.
- Pull all wheels, measure and inspect brake drums, rotors, brake pads, and calipers
- Change rear axle differential fluid
- Change fuel filter
- Change air filter

Pre & Post Trip Inspections

No operator shall begin operation of a vehicle until the following parts and accessories have been checked by the operator and are in good working order. The pre and post trip inspection form shall be legibly completed and signed by the vehicle operator.

**Note: When malfunctions and/or defects are detected in the equipment listed in this section, or in any vehicle system or device which could threaten safe operating performance, no operator or other person will use the vehicle to transport persons until the defects are corrected.*

1. Lights and Reflectors – High/low beams, tail lights, turn signals, 4-way Hazard flashers, marker lights, license plate light and reflectors. They should be cleaned as needed before and during periods of operation.
2. Brakes – both foot and emergency, capable of effectively stopping or restraining the vehicle. Brake pedal should be firm after 1-2 inch free-play on a single down stroke



and no noises, vibration or steering changes result from applying brakes while moving.

3. Horn – Gives an adequate and reliable warning signal.
4. Windshield, washers, wipers and defroster – Mechanical systems must be functioning properly to assure clean and clear windshields, inside and outside. Surfaces must be clean and unobstructed. Washer reservoirs are to be filled as needed.
5. Mirrors – All rear vision mirrors must be clean, properly adjusted and unobstructed for operator use. Outside mirrors must be mounted on both sides.
6. Tires – All vehicles shall be equipped with tires of adequate load capacity to support the gross vehicle weight when fully loaded. Tires shall be inflated to the recommended pressures. All tires, including the spare, shall be compatible within each set (i.e., all radials or all bias ply; no mixed tire sets). Tire wear surfaces and sidewalls shall be inspected daily for debris, damage and wear. Tires shall be even across the full tread surface. Tires shall be replaced prior to revealing the “wear bars” between the treads at the contact surface.
7. Speedometer – Shall be operational and accurately record speed in miles.
8. Seat Belts – Shall be in good operating condition and used by all customers and operators. Wheelchair customer restraint and securement systems shall be fully operational.
9. Doors – Shall be maintained in safe operating condition, capable of being opened, shut and locked as required.
10. Fluids – All vehicle fluids shall be maintained at the manufacturers recommended operating levels, including engine coolant, oil, battery electrolyte, brake fluid, power steering fluid, transmission fluid and washer solvent. The vehicle shall have sufficient fuel to meet foreseeable needs.
11. Emergency Equipment – All vehicles shall be equipped with emergency equipment as shown below. A clean up kit to clean and sanitize the van shall also be included on board, in good working condition and securely stored to prevent movement in the event of an accident or sudden stop.
12. Cleanliness – The vehicle interior shall be properly maintained and kept free of loose articles. Windows and exterior surfaces shall be kept as clean as weather permits.
13. Back up Alarms – If the vehicle is so equipped, check the backup alarm. Making sure that there are no persons or objects behind the vehicle, set the parking brake and



firmly apply the foot brakes. Only then shift into reverse. The alarm should sound. Do not back up.

14. Wheelchair Lifts – Check operating and structural condition daily by operating through one complete cycle.

Emergency Equipment on Vehicles and Usage

The following emergency equipment should be on each vehicle. They should be checked daily to make sure that they are present and operational.

- Flares
- Fire extinguisher
- First Aid kit
- Spare tire
- Jack and lug wrench
- Reflective triangles
- Flashlight with batteries
- Bloodborne pathogens clean up kit
- Reflective vest for operator
- Seat belt cutter

Use of Emergency Equipment on Vehicles

So that one can properly use the emergency equipment on the vehicle, it is extremely important that the operator knows what equipment is on the vehicle and how to use it. All operators must familiarize themselves with where the equipment is located in the vehicle and the following guidelines on the uses of this equipment should be learned:

1. Flares - encased in a metal container, are used as warning devices when the vehicle is disabled. Extreme care must be used when lighting the flare as it gets very hot. **Never use flares when there is the presence of gasoline or other flammable liquid.** The following procedure is used for lighting the fuse:
 - a. Grasp flare in right hand.
 - b. Twist and lift off cap with left hand.
 - c. Strike fuse across cap.
 - d. Point ignited end away from body.
 - e. Three (3) flares should be placed accordingly:



- i. At the side of the vehicle on roadway side - a safe distance from the vehicle and oncoming traffic.
 - ii. Approximately 40 paces or 100 feet to the rear of the vehicle. If there is a hill or curve, the distance should be greater, but no farther than 300 feet.
 - iii. Approximately 40 paces or 100 feet in front of the vehicle, again using greater distances if conditions warrant.
2. Three (3) red reflectors - should be used in the same way as flares. The reflectors may be used both day and night.
3. Fire extinguisher - has approximately thirty (30) seconds of use and must be checked daily. The needle must be in the green. After every use it must be properly recharged by a qualified person. The following operating procedure should be followed:
 - a. Remove extinguisher from mounting bracket and hold vertically.
 - b. Remove safety pin.
 - c. Point hose at the base of flames.
 - d. Squeeze handle to discharge chemicals.
 - e. Direct chemical discharge until fire is out or extinguisher is empty.
4. First Aid Kit – Management will provide a first aid kit meeting required standards. The kit should be sealed. Kits with broken seals will be turned in for restocking and resealing as appropriate.
5. Bloodborne pathogens clean up kit – Management will provide a kit meeting required standards. The kit should be sealed. Kits with broken seals will be turned in for restocking and resealing as appropriate.
6. Reflective Vest – The operator should wear the reflective vest whenever a roadside emergency occurs or when the operator must be in the roadway.

Vehicle Procurement

Making safety a priority during the vehicle procurement stage can have a long term positive impact on safety and accident costs. While aesthetics of a vehicle are important, many safety features can be incorporated at relatively low costs.

Exterior



Mirrors are critical for safe operation and maneuvering of the vehicle. The following should be considered:

- Upgraded mirrors on both sides of the vehicle.
- Remote adjusting right side mirrors.
- Convex or spot mirrors, separately mounted not covering the existing mirror space.
- Electrically heated mirrors.
- Convex mirrors mounted at the front and rear of vehicles.

Visibility

The more visible a vehicle is during day, night, low light or inclement weather conditions, the less likely it is to be involved in an accident. The following should be considered:

- Operating at all times with headlights on.
- Upgraded lighting package to include: extra large rear stop lights, running lights and “Wahlen scene” rear back up lights.
- Reflective stripping around vehicle at eye level.
- Logos or messages in reflective materials.

Interior

A significant number of accidents occur inside the vehicle. Many transit system customers have decreased physical capabilities because of age or disability. The following should be considered:

- Contrasting color schemes between floors, seats and walls.
- Upgraded interior lighting, especially on vehicle steps.
- Non-skid flooring on aisles and steps.
- Clearly marked step edges.
- Textured oval handrails on both sides of steps.

Vehicle Security

(Principal Source – Geauga County)

When leaving your vehicle, other than to assist a customer enter the vehicle or if the ignition must be on to operate the mobility aid lift, you will remove the keys from the ignition and take them with you. When you will be out of sight of the vehicle, the vehicle will be locked. Vehicle keys will be given to the dispatcher at the conclusion of your shift.

If the vehicle is parked at your home, the keys must be removed and the vehicle

locked. Keys should be kept in a secure location out of the reach of children. In no case may a vehicle be used for non-agency purposes, either during or after the work shift. Children shall not play in, on or around the vehicle.

Vehicles should be parked in a well lit location where it is unlikely for them to be damaged or vandalized.

The parking brake must always be set and the transmission placed in park whenever you are out of the operators seat.

Vehicle Safety in and around the Shop or Yard

Due to the congested nature of the shop and yard the following rules are established:

1. A maximum speed of 10 mph is allowed in the facility.
2. Vehicles are only to be parked in designated spaces.
3. Where feasible, vehicle routing will be in “pull through” fashion to avoid backing.
4. If backing is necessary the following rules will be observed:
 - a) The operator will set the parking brake and place the transmission in park.
 - b) The operator will get out of the vehicle and walk completely around it to inspect for any obstacles or persons in the vicinity.
 - c) Another person will serve as a guide, maintaining visual and verbal communication with the operator at all times.
5. In cases where the vehicle must be placed in a maintenance facility or garage, where there is no pull through capability, the vehicle will be backed in, rather than backed out using the above guidelines.
6. Vehicles will never be left running or with keys in them while unattended.



Accident Management

Accident Documentation Packet

Each vehicle will be equipped with the Accident Documentation Packet. This will include:

1. Operators accident report form.
2. Witness or courtesy cards.
3. Pens or pencils.

As soon as possible after all emergency procedures have been completed or turned over to qualified emergency personnel, the operator should clearly and legibly complete the report form. Follow the instructions below on Accident Notification Procedures.

Accident Notification Procedures – Operator Responsibility

In the event a transit vehicle is involved in an accident of any type, operators must take the following steps:

1. Assess whether or not customers should be evacuated from the vehicle.
2. Aid the injured.
3. Contact the dispatcher by radio. Give your exact location and scene description including number injured and potential for fire. Immediately ask the dispatcher to contact emergency squad or law enforcement as appropriate.

Make sure the responding Agency office personnel, emergency or law enforcement dispatcher has all information before you terminate your conversation. If you are unable to make contact because you are injured or providing first aid/CPR, ask the first able person you see to contact emergency personnel for help.

4. Obtain the name and address of the reporting officer and his/her badge number.
5. Obtain facts about other vehicles involved in the accident.
6. Obtain facts about the witnesses and give them a witness courtesy card. Witnesses include any person riding your vehicle at the time of the accident



or persons who witnessed the accident. Courtesy cards should be collected from all witnesses before leaving the scene whenever possible.

7. Describe the accident to law enforcement personnel only. DO NOT DISCUSS THE ACCIDENT WITH ANYBODY OTHER THAN LAW ENFORCEMENT, YOUR SUPERVISOR OR THE AGENCY INSURANCE COMPANY REPRESENTATIVE.
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 - 8. DO NOT MAKE ANY STATEMENT CONCERNING AGENCY LIABILITY. GIVE ONLY INFORMATION REQUESTED BY LAW ENFORCEMENT OR SUPERVISOR. DO NOT SIGN ANY STATEMENT UNLESS PRESENTED BY LAW ENFORCEMENT OR YOUR SUPERVISOR.
9. Under no circumstances should a operator leave the scene of an accident prior to the arrival of law enforcement unless directed to do so by emergency medical personnel. The operator shall not move the vehicle unless there is a danger from other traffic, or unless directed by law enforcement.
10. Every accident, no matter how small, shall be reported to the dispatcher. Management shall determine if law enforcement shall be contacted even in the event of a minor, non-injury accident. If law enforcement refuses to come to the scene, Management or the dispatcher should take the name and badge number of the law enforcement person notified. It is the operator's responsibility to obtain the name and address and insurance company of the other vehicle's operator prior to leaving the scene.
11. As soon as possible after an accident is reported to the dispatcher, a management representative shall go to the scene to facilitate the above-mentioned activities and to interface with media as necessary.
12. Anytime a operator is involved in an accident, the operator shall be taken off driving duty for the rest of the workday at a minimum. Drug and alcohol tests will be performed as soon as possible and within the time frames specified in the regulations. The Executive Director shall arrange for substitute operators as needed. The operator shall spend this time and any other time needed completing an Accident Report. The Executive Director shall assist the operator in the completion of these forms to assure accuracy and completeness.

Accident Investigation – Management Responsibility

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to set forth guidelines for Management responsibility in conducting an accident investigation for vehicle accidents



and/or employee injuries.

General

Accident investigation is more than filling out forms, as important as they are. It is a system of collecting and documenting factual data that can reveal accident causes, operator/employee error, vehicle/equipment failure, and/or other factors.

A thorough accident investigation program also shows accident trends and provides factual information to use when preparing legal defenses. Accident investigation data can help us improve vehicle and equipment purchase specifications, plan operator and employee safety training programs, validate actions against negligent operators, and reduce claim settling costs.

Although employee discipline could result from the accident investigation, it is an important process that should not be perceived by the employee as *fixing blame*. If fixing blame is the perceived purpose of the accident investigation process, vital information will often be withheld, or facts may be distorted.

When a good investigation procedure is in effect, there can be positive results on the employee's accident prevention awareness if management demonstrates its concern for employee safety and its interest in providing a safe workplace. Finding out the *why* of accidents, and then doing something about correcting it, is further proof to the employee that management means business.

All accidents involving the following must be investigated personally by either the Executive Director or other properly trained individual. This task is not to be delegated to others. The following accidents are to be investigated immediately:

- Any accident involving customers on Agency vehicles.
- Damage to the property of another, such as a motor vehicle or structure expected to exceed \$500.
- Serious physical damage to our vehicle where damage is expected to exceed \$1,000.

Responsibility for Investigating Vehicle Accidents.

It is the Executive Director's responsibility to inform operators and employees of their expected conduct and responsibilities at accident scenes. Although our goal is no accidents, occasionally an accident will occur, even with the best precautionary measures in place. Once an accident occurs, its ultimate cost can vary greatly depending upon how it is handled. Quick and accurate implementation of the following procedures are necessary to insure the correct and fair settlement of a workers compensation, vehicle physical damage, and/or vehicle liability claim.

Five Basic Steps of Accident Investigation for Vehicle and/or Employee



Injury Accidents:

1. Manage the Accident Scene

Protect the injured - If possible, the operator should request medical assistance from authorized sources such as the police, fire department, or a hospital. The extent of assistance to the injured that can be provided will vary based on the severity of the accident. The goal is to keep the injured as comfortable as possible until qualified help arrives.

Preserve the accident scene - Eliminate and control remaining hazards to keep the effects of the accident from becoming worse by immediately placing warning signals, flares, reflective triangles or other devices to permit, as nearly as possible, the uninterrupted, normal traffic flow. Vehicle engines should be turned off and the emergency brake should be engaged. Vehicles should not be moved until instructed to do so by the law enforcement agency having jurisdiction. Ideally pictures and diagrams can be done before the vehicles are moved.

Determine the extent of damage - Is there fuel leaking from the vehicles? If so is their potential for ignition? Is a tow truck needed?

Notify appropriate parties

2. Gather Information

Get the facts - Who, What, When, Where, How – Use the Accident Investigation Kit

Physical Evidence

- Make sketches - a good diagram with measurements is very important
- Take photographs with landmarks that can be used as reference points - **take plenty of pictures** - they are cheap and can be very beneficial. Record the date, time, location, and name of photographer on the back of the photos. **Polaroid photos are not acceptable.** A 35 mm Camera with a date back using fast (400 ASA) film is ideal for most accident situations.
- Record weather conditions
- Examine equipment, materials, and the area around the accident scene

Taking Photos

Good photographs can be very valuable documents for an accident investigation. They can also be very helpful in the defense of a lawsuit. You don't have to be a professional photographer to take good accident scene photos if you follow these tips.

1. **Do not take Polaroids.** They are very poor and do not reproduce or



blow up well.

2. Use a 35 mm camera with properly set “date back” if possible.
3. Fast film (200 or 400 ASA) is good for most situations.
4. Hold camera steady with both hands.
5. Take pictures directly on subject, not at unusual angles.
6. Avoid taking pictures into the sun.
7. Get one picture of license numbers and ID numbers of all vehicles in the accident.
8. Do not take pictures of gory scenes.
9. Take pictures of all four sides of the accident at 90° angles.
10. The first set of pictures should take in all of the scene then move in closer for the 2nd set. Final set should be very close.
11. Skid marks should be photographed. You may have to crouch down to get the best angle and picture.
12. Take pictures of defective equipment, bald tires, beverage containers in other car, etc. Use caution in taking pictures of incriminating evidence on Agency vehicle.

Accident Sketching

A good accident sketch or diagram can be very helpful during your accident investigation.

Remember, you can do a rough sketch at the scene and then improve or redo it back at the office. Follow these tips for a good sketch.

1. Use graph paper if available.
2. Note the date, time, and preparer’s name.
3. Show directions – North, South, East and West
4. Clearly show location of vehicles, road signs, intersections, number of lanes, speed limits, etc.
5. Measure skid marks and show on diagram.
6. If possible, measure road widths, distance from intersections or other landmarks.

Witnesses

1. Explain the purpose of your conversation.
2. Listen - See “Active Listening During Accident Investigation”.
3. Ask open-ended questions to avoid yes/no answers. Let the witness describe the accident, do not describe the accident to the witness. - Ask, How did the accident occur? Instead of, Did the other vehicle come into your lane?
4. Summarize descriptions.
5. Obtain a written statement. If possible have the witness sign the written statement.
6. End on a positive note.

Documentation that may also be needed to complete your investigation



- Employee records
- Equipment maintenance records
- Job or task records
- Previous accident reports
- Operating procedures
- Training procedures and records

3. Analyze Information Purpose is to find the causes.

Superficial vs. Real or Root causes – for example the fact that it was raining and the road was wet is a superficial cause. Driving too fast for conditions or badly worn tires are root causes.

4. Recommend/Implement Corrective Actions.

Purpose is to eliminate the root causes.
Identify actions that need to be taken.
Assign the responsibility for implementation.
Set a target completion date.
Obtain management approval to implement changes.
Communicate the desired results of implementation.

5. Follow up and Monitor Implementation Progress.

Purpose is to monitor the actions taken.
Identify follow up activities.
Assign the responsibility for follow up.
Set a target date.

All vehicle accident investigation reports shall include the following information:

- Accident Report forms completed by the operator.
- A copy of the police accident report.
- Facts obtained while reviewing physical evidence.
- Witnesses.
- Information from documentation records.
- Pictures, sketches, operator and witness statements.
- Recommended corrective actions to be taken.

Active Listening During Accident Investigation

The following pointers will assist you in becoming an active listener. Active listening will result in more detailed, relevant information during the accident investigation process:



Want to Listen - Almost all problems in listening can be overcome by having the right attitude. Remember, there is no such thing as non-interesting people - only disinterested listeners.

Act Like a Good Listener - Be alert, sit straight, lean forward if appropriate, let your face radiate interest.

Listen to Understand - Do not just listen for the sake of listening; listen to gain real understanding of what is being said.

React - The only time a person likes to be interrupted is when applauded or complimented. Be generous with your compliments. Make the other person feel important. Show your gratitude with nods, smiles, comments, and encouragement.

Stop Talking - You cannot listen while you are talking. Communicate; do not take turns talking.

Empathize with the Other Person - Try to put yourself in the other's place so that you can see that point of view.

Ask Questions - When you do not understand, when you need further clarification, when you want the other person to cooperate, when you want to show you are listening, ask questions. However, do not ask questions that will embarrass or "put down" the other person.

Concentrate on what the Other Person is Saying - Actively focus your attentions on the words, the ideas, and the feelings related to the subject.

Look at the Other Person - Face, mouth, eyes, and hand gestures are used by the other person to communicate with you. Eye contact with the other person helps you concentrate, too. Shows you are listening.

Leave Your Emotions Behind - Try to push your worries, your fears, and your problems away. They may prevent you from listening well.

Get the Main Points (the big story) - Concentrate on the primary information and not the unrelated comments; examples, stories, etc. are important, but usually are not the main points. Examine them only to see if they prove, support, define the main information.

Share Responsibility For Communication - Only part of the responsibility rests with the speaker; you as the listener have an important part. Try to understand, and if you do not, ask for clarification.

React to Information, Not to the Person - Do not allow your reaction to the



person to influence your interpretation of words. Good information can come from people whose looks or personality you do not like.

Do Not Argue Mentally - When you are trying to understand the other person, it is a handicap to argue while you are listening. This sets up a barrier between you and the speaker.

Use the Difference in Rate - You can listen faster than anyone can talk, so use this rate difference to your advantage by trying to stay on the right track, think back over what the speaker has said. Rate difference: speech rate is about 100 to 150 words per minute; thinking: 500.

Do Not Antagonize Speaker - You may cause the other person to conceal ideas, emotions, or attitudes by being antagonizing in any number of ways: arguing, criticizing, taking notes, not taking notes, asking questions, not asking questions, etc. Try not to judge and be aware of the effect you are having on the other person. Adapt to the speaker.

Avoid Hasty Judgements - Wait until all facts are in before making any judgements.

Accident Investigation Kit

The following items will provide adequate tools to perform a well documented Accident Investigation:

- 35 mm camera with date back and flash
- 12 exposure rolls of 400 ASA film
- Safety Reflective Vest
- Measuring wheel
- 100 foot tape
- Yellow Lumber Crayons
- 12" ruler
- Clipboard
- 8 2 x 11 paper and graph paper
- Pencils/sharpener and pens
- Rubber bands
- Flashlight
- Spare batteries for flashlight and camera
- Photo Labels
- Traffic Template
- Satchel to store equipment
- Inventory



Reconstruction & Analysis

Accident reconstruction and analysis will generally be required when a serious accident takes place involving personal injury. This is a specialized skill and will involve the hiring of an outside expert. Agency personnel can aid this process by following steps shown in the accident investigation section above.

Well documented sketches and clear, properly labeled photographs will aid the accident reconstructionist in determining critical factors contributing to the accident.

Drug and Alcohol Tests

These will be performed as soon as possible after an accident but in no case later than the time limits specified in state and federal regulations. Specific information will be found in the Agency Drug and Alcohol policy.

Media Relations and Crises Communication After an Accident

After a serious accident, it is likely that you will be contacted by the media. There is also a possibility that they will respond to an accident scene while emergency personnel are working.

The job of the media personnel is to gather newsworthy matters for their newspaper, radio or TV stations. A bad accident involving a highly visible public transit vehicle is a very newsworthy story for most local news media organizations. With proper preparation a moderately skilled agency representative can use the occasion to improve agency image or at the very least control damage.

The following guidelines should be followed:

Media Relations – At the Scene

1. All Agency personnel should be instructed that all questions are to be referred to the Agency representative, normally a member of senior staff.
2. The designated representative should be available to the media as soon as possible. They have deadlines and will not wait for you to tell your side of the story, no matter how good.
3. Do not panic – be under control.
4. Never say “No Comment”. It makes you look like you have something to hide. It is better to say that “the cause of the accident is unknown at this time and is under investigation”.
5. Control the interview as much as possible. Insert information about positive



safety activities and other good things that your Agency does.

6. Be prepared for tough questions or questions that cannot be answered without incrimination.
7. Be aware of liability issues. Do not admit anything that could come back to haunt you or be used as evidence in court.

Media Relations - After the Accident

1. Control entry to your premises.
2. Meet with media promptly.
3. Instruct employees not to talk to media.
4. If a press conference is necessary:
 - a) Choose the venue carefully.
 - b) Prepare a written statement in advance.
 - c) Consider consulting a media expert if the accident and resulting situation is bad.
 - d) Have a media kit that includes an Agency fact sheet, positive articles and good things that your Agency does for the community.
 - e) Do not reveal confidential information “off the record.” Do not legitimize negative, incorrect or hearsay information.
 - f) Always be friendly, brief, positive, composed and stick to your side of the story. Do not argue with reporters. Remember that your image may be seen by thousands on the 6:00 news tonight.