

# FIELD RESEARCH SAFETY HAZARD GUIDELINE

## Vehicles/Driving

Hazards	<b>Potential Hazards</b>	<p>Vehicle safety is essential to protect drivers, passengers, and pedestrians. This fact sheet provides guidelines and safety measures to promote safe driving practices, helping to prevent accidents, injuries, and potential hazards on the road.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Distractions:</b> Avoid activities that divert your attention from driving, such as texting, talking on the phone, eating, or adjusting electronic devices.</li> <li>• <b>Impaired Driving:</b> Never drive under the influence of alcohol, drugs, or medications that impair your ability to operate a vehicle safely.</li> <li>• <b>Adverse Weather Conditions:</b> Adjust driving behavior for adverse weather conditions, such as rain, snow, fog, or ice.</li> <li>• <b>Road Hazards:</b> Be cautious of potholes, debris, construction zones, uneven surfaces, and other potential hazards on the road.</li> <li>• <b>Reckless Driving:</b> Avoid speeding, aggressive driving, tailgating, abrupt lane changes, or failure to follow traffic rules and signals.</li> <li>• <b>Fatigue:</b> Avoid driving while fatigued, as it can lead to reduced reaction time and impaired decision-making.</li> <li>• <b>Pedestrians and Bicycles:</b> Stay alert for pedestrians and cyclists, particularly near crosswalks, intersections, and residential areas.</li> <li>• <b>Wildlife:</b> Be cautious of wildlife crossing roads, particularly in rural areas, and take appropriate action to avoid collisions.</li> <li>• <b>Vehicle Malfunctions:</b> Regularly maintain your vehicle to prevent mechanical failures such as tire blowouts, brake failures, or engine problems.</li> </ul>
Hazard Controls	<b>Personal Protective Equipment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Always wear your seatbelt and ensure all passengers are properly restrained.</li> <li>• Use appropriate child safety seats and booster seats for young passengers (if applicable).</li> <li>• If vehicle is parked near an active roadway, when outside the vehicle, wear reflective or high-visibility clothing to enhance visibility to other drivers.</li> <li>• Warning triangles for vehicle breakdowns.</li> </ul>
	<b>Preparation and Training</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure you possess a valid driver's license appropriate for the vehicle you are operating.</li> <li>• Seek driver education courses to enhance your knowledge and skills.</li> <li>• Understand the operation and features of your vehicle before driving.</li> <li>• Learn defensive driving techniques to anticipate and respond to potential hazards on the road.</li> </ul>
	<b>General Work Practice Procedures</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Vehicle Maintenance:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regularly maintain your vehicle according to the manufacturer's recommendations to ensure its safe and reliable operation. This includes checking the engine oil, coolant, and brake fluid levels, as well as inspecting the tires for proper tread depth and inflation.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Speed Management:</b></li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Observe speed limits and adjust your speed according to road conditions, traffic, and visibility. Slowdown in areas with heavy pedestrian activity or in adverse weather conditions.</li> <li>• Following Distance: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain a safe following distance behind the vehicle ahead, allowing sufficient time to react and stop if needed. The general rule is to keep a minimum of a two-second gap, increasing it to four seconds or more in adverse weather or when towing a trailer.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Lane Discipline: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Observe proper lane discipline by using the appropriate lanes for your intended direction of travel. Signal your intentions when changing lanes and always check your blind spots before making any maneuvers.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Intersection Safety:</li> <li>• Obey traffic signals and signs at intersections. Yield the right-of-way when required, and proceed with caution, scanning for pedestrians and other vehicles. Do not block intersections or crosswalks.</li> </ul>
Other	Waste	Containerize, remove, and properly dispose all generated waste when you leave the area.
	Emergencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emergency Kit: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Keep an emergency kit in your vehicle, including items such as a first aid kit, flashlight, warning triangles, spare tire, jack, and basic tools. Additionally, consider including extra water, non-perishable food, and a blanket.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Vehicle Breakdown or Accident: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ If your vehicle breaks down or is involved in an accident, move your vehicle to a safe location, if possible, activate hazard lights, and set up warning triangles to alert other drivers. Contact appropriate authorities or roadside assistance for help and follow their instructions.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Vehicle Fire:</li> <li>• If your vehicle catches fire, pull over to a safe location away from traffic, turn off the engine, and evacuate all occupants. Contact emergency services immediately and stay at a safe distance until help arrives.</li> </ul>
	Reference and Additional Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PennDOT: <a href="#">General Driving Safety</a></li> <li>• National Institute of Health: <a href="#">Safe Driving</a></li> <li>• I Drive Safely: <a href="#">PA Defensive Driving Course Online</a></li> </ul>
	Questions	Contact Environmental Health and Radiation Safety (EHRS) at (215) 707-2520