

Non-Emergency Medical Transport

Transporter Safety Guide and Tool Kit



Non-Emergency Medical Transport

This safety guide provides a broad description of common exposures in the Non-Emergency Medical Transport (NEMT) industry and the controls used to help minimize or eliminate losses associated with crashes.

Crashes and passenger injuries can be reduced by implementing effective preventive measures through policies and procedures designed to control all types of exposures. This guide includes some of the critical program components needed for a comprehensive prevention plan for paratransit or non-emergency medical transportation fleets.

NEMT Fleet Safety Program

Management commitment and leadership

A non-emergency medical patient transport operation is most effective when managers and owners understand how employees determine what safety behaviors are expected of them. Employees learn about safety expectations from policy statements, management support of those statements, and the safe behaviors managers encourage. For example, many fleet owners have a policy that empowers drivers as 'Captains of their Ship' when driving company vehicles. The rule implies that what happens while an employee is driving is their responsibility; including taking themselves or their vehicle out of service if not doing so would create an unsafe condition. Company officials apply proven driving performance management and improvement measures to all employees engaged in driving company vehicles. Many NEMT operators, who are successful in managing their fleets safely, efficiently and profitably, have created a company safety policy that includes the following critical fleet program elements:

- Clear communication of the purpose and importance of safe transportation policies and procedures
- Documentation of the action management will take to ensure policies and procedures are understood and followed
- The belief that all accidents are preventable and require determination of contributing factors causing injuries or property damage
- A requirement that all employees, including managers, are expected to observe safety practices
- A culture that recognizes management commitment as the measure of organizational commitment to safety practices

Driver hiring criteria and procedures

Organizations operating commercial fleets safely have found it important to select the best qualified drivers both from a perspective of experience and previous driving performance. Due to the fact drivers leave an employer's direct observation and control as soon as they start their day or their trip, having this information allows fleet owners to project the future driving behavior of applicants. Here are some important items to consider adopting as official driver qualification standards and practices. These practices should be reviewed on a regular basis to determine compliance with company policies and any applicable government laws or regulations. The driver selection criteria and hiring process may include, but are not limited to:

- Minimum age restriction of 23 years of age
- State driving history free of serious violations. No more than two moving violations or combination of one moving violation and one accident within a three year period
- Application providing previous employment and experience driving a commercial vehicle for a minimum of two years
- Thorough background check including credit and criminal background check
- Develop a profile of critical values and skills needed to successfully and safely perform job duties and meet their safety related responsibilities
- Conduct interviews to ensure applicants have compatible safety values, work ethic and interpersonal skills needed to interact with fellow employees and passengers
- Confirmation of employment, qualifications and safety record with previous employers utilizing all available information for all previous employers
- Pre-employment physicals and controlled substances testing
- Conduct meaningful road test to evaluate skills and knowledge related to safely perform vehicle inspections, knowledge of defensive driving techniques, operation of passenger entry/exit devices, especially lifts and restraint systems

Employee safety training

Once an applicant completes the hiring process, it is time to begin in-service training. In-service training allows the company to prepare new employees to begin to adapt the company's safety culture. This is an opportunity to explain what safety means in an organization. It allows the employee to learn:

- The company's expectations regarding safe driving
- Employee accountability measures
- That they have the authority to ensure a safe environment

For NEMT drivers, this means they have been given the knowledge and tools to do their work safely, the responsibility to notify management of unsafe conditions and the personal authority to act if they, their passengers or others are in imminent danger.

Training should be developed to teach new skills or knowledge during in-service or periodic refresher classes, including but not limited to:

- Company safety and health policies and procedures review
- Defensive driving training course
- Passenger safe handling procedures, including:
 - Use of specialized equipment such as wheelchair lifts
 - Ramps
- Seatbelts or wheelchair securement
- In-transit passenger monitoring procedures
- Emergency procedures for accidents or injuries
- Testing to ensure effectiveness of training programs
- Drug and alcohol testing

Monitoring and measuring driving performance

After in-servicing is completed, the new employee is placed into the next phase of employment, on-the-job-training (OJT), including employee observation and feedback. Management is responsible for monitoring individual and group driving performance. Some effective policies and procedures include:

- Supervising employees to ensure drivers follow company policies, applicable laws and government agency regulations
- Establishing a process to identify employees engaging in at risk driving behaviors and unsafe patient handling
- Conducting driver interventions to prevent unsafe driving

Effective policies and procedures include, but are not limited to:

- Develop initial evaluation of driving skills and knowledge during the hiring process

- Provide effective training to address any known deficiencies
- Follow-up coaching sessions
- Ongoing performance evaluation process based on clearly defined and communicated driving performance standards including:
 - Minimum of annual review of moving violations and accident involvement
 - Customer feedback on driving behaviors
 - Observations conducted both announced and un-announced by supervisors/managers
 - Quality of pre/post trip vehicle inspections
 - Use of onboard telematics devices to track driving behavior

Maintenance inspection and repair procedures

Commercial fleet managers successful in maintaining their vehicles in good operating condition typically implement a comprehensive set of vehicle inspection and repair procedures. The benefits generated from this are safe transport of employees and passengers while minimizing maintenance and operating costs. Some important vehicle maintenance inspection and repair procedures should include:

- Vehicle specifications designed to meet the requirements of fleet operations
- Establishing vehicle inspection intervals based on manufacturer's recommendations or more frequent if needed to operate safely for specialized vehicles and equipment (i.e., securement devices, seat belts, lifts and ramps)
- Requiring drivers to conduct daily pre and post trip inspections and submit a driver vehicle condition report to maintenance or supervisory personnel
- Maintaining inspection and repair files for the life of the vehicle or while owned or leased.
- Periodically evaluating maintenance records to identify component failure or life cycle trends useful in future vehicle component and parts purchases as well as evaluating the effectiveness of current inspection/repair procedures



Common Commercial Fleet Exposures

The Big Three Crashes and Safe Driving Tips

The most common crashes involve rear end collisions, intersection collisions and sideswipe or lane change collisions.

1. How to avoid intersection crashes

When approaching an intersection drivers are entering an area with multiple hazards and risks. Often referred to as an interactive rich environment, decision making is critical. Here are some tips on how to reduce your chances of being involved in an accident at intersections.

- Observe all traffic control devices as you approach an intersection. Follow right-of-way rules for intersections and yield
- No matter which vehicle has the right of way or must yield, never proceed until other vehicles have entered and cleared the intersection no matter who has rules of the road priority. Always look left, right and then look left again before proceeding
- Be aware of pedestrians who might be or are already crossing the road
- Drivers turning left must yield to on-coming vehicles going straight ahead
- At a four-way stop, the driver reaching the intersection first has the right of way, after coming to a complete stop
- Drivers entering a road from a driveway, alley or roadside must yield to vehicles already on the main road

2. How to avoid lane change collisions

Two lane highway dangers are usually caused by excessive speeding, lane change and passing maneuvers

Follow these steps to reduce the chances of being involved in an accident

- Extend your field of vision by looking 20 or 30 seconds ahead if possible, at least as far as the next hill or curve
- Drivers must exercise caution as they meet on-coming traffic. Look for any signs that another vehicle is drifting out of their lane and mentally prepare for your escape route
- Maintain a safe speed, not just the posted speed. If you detect a potentially hazardous situation developing, slow your speed to allow time to react and make a safe driving maneuver

3. How to avoid rear end collisions

One of the most common and potentially serious types of collisions involves crashing into the vehicle ahead. Though many of these are low speed events at stoplights or in parking lots, crashes with the most severe consequences happen on busy streets and highways. When the vehicle ahead suddenly and unexpectedly brakes hard it is unlikely a crash from behind can be avoided if a sufficient cushion of space does not exist. Not only is the likelihood of a crash increased but passengers can be injured from the sudden deceleration and hard steering attempting to avoid the collision

The simple solution is to allow a distance between you and the vehicle ahead to give you time to slow or stop. The key is to know how much distance and how to measure it depending on the speed of your vehicle.

Here is a simple technique to use:

The 4 Second Rule:

- First, pick a focus point on the road (i.e., use a line, road sign, pothole, bridge, shadow, etc.)
- Begin counting slowly and steadily (One Thousand One, One Thousand Two, etc.) when the car ahead passes this focus point

If you did NOT reach 4 before the focus point passed your front bumper, then you are too close to the car ahead. At 55 mph, you should be almost 323 feet behind the car ahead.

Variation from the 4 second rule is needed when encountering inclement weather.

- Increase following distance to allow for greater stopping distance
- Being tailgated by another vehicle? Increase your following distance to prevent the driver behind from being surprised if you have to stop

NEVER slam on your brakes to discourage tailgaters.



Passenger Care

General passenger care exposures

Non-emergency medical transportation fleets service a wide range of customers. Many patients receiving outpatient medical services rely on community and privately funded passenger transporters. Often passengers are injured while in the process of entering or exiting the vehicle and while in transit.

Typical injuries that occur during loading/unloading and transport include slips, trips or falls, especially wheelchair passengers. Studies indicate wheelchair users injured within a three-year period showed three recurring types of accidents contributing to passenger injuries⁴:

- Using a lift improperly
- Entering or exiting the motor vehicle
- Using a ramp improperly

The primary contributing factors causing passenger-handling related injuries were:

- Unsafe vehicle maneuvering by the driver
- Inadequately designed wheelchair securement and other occupant restraint systems
- Ineffective training in the proper use of restraint and lift systems

Avoiding passenger injuries and discomfort while being transported to and from medical service providers is the primary concern and responsibility of the driver. Procedures must be developed to ensure all passenger needs are understood and communicated to employees with on-going monitoring of driver performance. Some prevention strategies to consider are: (see checklist in appendix)

- Prior to every trip, the driver must inspect the condition and operation of the lift, ramp and condition of the passenger before loading
- Each driver must ensure that wheelchairs, scooters and patients are secured before engaging the vehicle. (see complete procedure in Appendix)



Fragile patients care

Characteristics of Elderly and Disabled Individuals

Familiarize transit personnel with the special characteristics and needs of elderly and disabled persons. An effective driver training program is especially important for new employees. Some characteristics of elderly and disabled individuals (i.e., mobility, communications, and medical/physical/mental impairments) drivers should know are:

- Appearance of prosthetic, orthopedic, and sensory aids
- Methods of communicating with passengers who have visual, hearing, speech, and mental impairments (see Appendix A.);
- Medical conditions which may not be continuously disabling include epilepsy, diabetes, asthma and other respiratory ailments, arthritis, and heart disease
- Physical conditions include back or spinal conditions, degenerative muscle or bone conditions, cerebral palsy, nervous disorders, and missing or paralyzed limbs
- Mental conditions include memory loss, senility, retardation, and various degrees of psychological and psychiatric disorders, such as schizophrenia
- Passengers with respiratory conditions such as asthma or emphysema can be sensitive to extremes of heat and cold and should be monitored closely by the driver or helper while in transit
- Footing and movement becomes precarious, increasing the risk of falling and sustaining serious injury
- The collapse or fall of an elderly passenger is considered to be an emergency and should be addressed as such. Respiratory and heart conditions place many elderly and disabled (especially those with hidden impairments) in the group of people most susceptible to collapse. Stress, exhaustion, heat, humidity, and sickness could aggravate these conditions and cause an elderly or disabled passenger to collapse or fall while in a vehicle



- Visually impaired and mobility impaired passengers could also trip or be unable to maintain their balance and fall
- Many passengers take special medication but wear medical alert tags or bracelets and carry dosages of their medication

Wheel chair passenger handling

Wheelchair securement that is inadequate is the most common cause of injuries to patients.

- The driver must ensure that wheelchairs, scooters and patients are secured before beginning to move the vehicle
- One of the most important aspects during transit is to drive in a manner to avoid hard turns, sudden stops or accelerations, driving over curbs or through potholes and most of all being involved in a collision. All of these situations have the potential to dislodge the patient and/or wheel chair
- Wheelchairs should be secured with a minimum of four anchor/strap points, the patient passenger secured by shoulder/seat belts
- Scooters and wheelchairs have basic similarities but the driver must ensure they can identify differences that might cause a dangerous securement situation
- Carefully select lift and ramp equipment and ensure that employees are thoroughly trained on use of and securing the equipment
- Procedures must be developed to ensure both drivers and helpers are familiar with the variety of wheel chairs and scooters used by passengers

Employers with aging drivers

Encourage employees to maintain their health can help them be better able to drive, both for personal and business use. Use various strategies including frequent communication concerning the importance of regular medical checkups, healthy diet, regular exercise, and mental activities to keep their mind and body in good condition to handle driving tasks.

Vision is the major area of concern for aging drivers, the following should be considered:

- Require drivers to get regular vision exams
- Require wearing glasses with the correct prescription, choose glasses that allow them to see the sides, avoid sunglasses or tinted lenses at night, and avoid car windows that are darkened or tinted
- Coordinate drive schedules so that drivers only drive during the day if possible. Find alternative routes with less traffic, and avoid rush hour to better handle the demands of high speed and heavy traffic
- Train your drivers to be prepared before heading out to drive. This includes adjusting mirrors properly before driving, checking the mirrors every 10-20 seconds, and turning their head and looking when changing lanes or merging with traffic. Require drivers to pre-trip inspect visions related items, windshield, mirrors, and headlights for clean lenses and proper operation
- Encourage all drivers to get a hearing test if they have trouble hearing over the telephone, find it hard to follow conversations when two or more people are speaking, need to turn up the TV volume so loud that others complain, or sense that others seem to mumble
- Sleep is a physical function that can present many problems for many drivers. By increasing flexibility through exercise, drivers can help prevent fatigue while driving and make steering, backing up, checking mirrors, and looking to the sides easier

Some tips to help promote good fatigue management of all drivers include:

- Encourage drivers to get adequate sleep every day
- Encourage drivers to quit smoking
- Provide information on the how to maintain a healthy diet and exercise regimen
- Consider offering a sleep apnea detection and prevention program

Cognition and mental vitality

Distractions can affect all drivers. Encourage drivers to eliminate as many distractions as possible. Turn the radio or music to a lower volume or off if they are having a difficult time mentally focusing on proper driving. Drivers can help minimize the effect of diminished cognitive skills while driving by using familiar roads to reduce stress and create confidence in knowing when to signal for a turn.

Ergonomics and adaptive equipment

The driving task can be enhanced by ergonomically making the vehicle better fit the driver. This includes some adjustments to the existing vehicle controls and changes in the way the driver approaches the driving task.

- The vehicle's seat can be best fit to the driver by making sure the driver can reach the center of the brake and gas pedals with the ball of their foot
- The driver's chest should be at least 11 inches from the air bag located in the center of the steering wheel
- Make sure the seat is high enough for your driver's line of sight to be three inches above the steering wheel
- Seat belt adapters can make belts easy to reach, improve fit, and make release buttons easier to operate by arthritic hands

The operating controls in vehicles can present problems for drivers. To counter these problems, adaptive equipment may be utilized. These include:

- Scooter- and wheelchair-loading devices, transfer assists to help the person in and out of the vehicle
- Keyless ignition
- Doors that automatically lock and open
- Visor extenders
- Steering wheel covers to improve grip on the steering wheel
- Seat and back support cushions to relieve back pain or improve line of sight



Weather, road and traffic

Weather changes affect driving environments by affecting road surface conditions, reduced visibility and impairing driver's mental and/or physical abilities. The most important decision is to determine if it is safe to make the trip. Driving in severe weather conditions should be avoided or delayed until the weather and conditions improve. The first step for any driver is to determine what the weather forecasts are prior to the start of a trip.

Trip planning ensures the appropriate measures have been taken including:

- Foul weather gear is available
- Pre-trip vehicle inspection and in-route vehicle monitoring to prevent unexpected delays
- Ensuring communications devices are working, i.e., extra cell phone battery in case of breakdown

Driver experience

Studies conducted on vehicle accidents have shown a direct correlation between past driving performance and accident involvement. Drivers who have experienced moving violations and accidents are more likely to be involved in future crash activity. Obtaining and reviewing the current Motor Vehicle Record (MVR) of the driver is one of the best indicators to help determine if the driver is qualified to operate a motorized vehicle for your organization. MVRs should be ordered for each state in which the applicant has held an operator's license in the previous three years. The check on MVRs should go back at least five years or requesting all previous driving history available. MVRs should also be ordered and reviewed at least annually for all drivers. Drivers who have been identified as having poor driving histories should have more frequent MVR reviews.

How to review a motor vehicle record

Acceptable motor vehicle record criteria should be established in conjunction with the Department of Transportation or other jurisdictional requirements (applicable state-specific guidance), union agreements, review by legal counsel, and discussions with your insurance agent and underwriter.

To assist your organization in establishing basic MVR criteria, Zurich has developed a Best Practice Guideline. There are many other violation types that are not included here that an organization will need to consider based on severity.

First review the MVR to determine how many of each violation categories the driver has experienced.

Minor incidents

How many "minor incidents" are shown within the past 3 years? _____

- Minor moving violations, such as minimal speeding (<15 mph over the speed limit), failure to stop at a stop sign, improper passing, improper backing, failure to pay toll, etc.

Major incidents

How many "major incidents" are shown within the past 3 years? _____

- Major incidents include excessive speeding (between 15 mph to 25 mph over speed limit), improper lane change, failure to yield, running red lights, careless driving, etc.

Accidents

How many "accidents" are shown within the past 3 years? _____

- Accidents – any accident that appears on the MVR; consider both at-fault and not-at-fault accidents

Serious incidents

How many "serious incidents" are shown within the past 5 years? _____

- Serious incidents such as driving while intoxicated (DUI, DWI), refusing substance abuse testing, homicide or assault with a vehicle, leaving the scene of an accident (hit and run), speeding 25 mph or greater over the speed limit, license suspension due to moving violations, driving while license suspended, etc.

Example of a driver guideline

Driver is deemed acceptable if:

- 3 or less minor violations and no other violations of any type
- 1 accident and no other violations of any type
- 1 major violation plus 1 minor violation and no other violations of any type

Note: If the driver has any serious violations, they are not acceptable. See 'Follow-up and intervention' section below for suggested actions to address drivers who do not meet the acceptable criteria.

Review examples Example 1:

If a driver had two minor incidents in the past three years, no major incidents in the past three years, no serious incidents in the past five years, and no accidents in the past three years, he/she would be an acceptable driver according to the acceptable driver MVR criteria.

Example 2:

A driver could have no minors, majors or accidents in the past three years, but if they had one serious event in the past five years, then they would not be in the acceptable driver category according to the acceptable driver MVR criteria.

Follow-up and intervention

An organization should have written criteria to address any identified drivers who do not meet the acceptable criteria. This should include retraining and progressive discipline, up to and including rescinding of driving privileges. A driver who has their driving privileges revoked by an organization may continue to work in a non-driving capacity for that organization if business needs and policies allow for this. Keep in mind that additional training and coaching may be appropriate for drivers who are considered acceptable but have some violations on their motor vehicle record.

In addition to minor incidents, major incidents, serious incidents and accidents, organizations should consider non-moving violations (e.g., illegal parking, vehicle defects, driving without insurance, unregistered vehicle, administrative suspensions) as a part of its overall driver evaluation criteria. Such violations may indicate a driver's tendency to disobey company policies and rules.

Emerging mobile phone business liabilities

Mobile communications

With the growing use of cell phones and other mobile communication devices for business purposes, employers are facing an emerging threat of vicarious liability for automobile accidents caused by distracted driving of their employees. In many states, court verdicts have ruled that employers might be held vicariously liable if they permit employees to use cell phones for business purposes while driving.

Corporate Policy - Mobile Communication Device Use Guidelines

Having a cell phone usage policy in place does not necessarily guarantee a successful defense in every case, but it does send a clear safety message to employees. Experts believe that a company with a well written policy is in a much better defensive position than a company with no policy at all.

It is important to develop a policy that balances business needs with realities of driving safety and potential for high legal liability risks. A proactive, balanced policy will demonstrate a company's commitment to safety and prevention of accidents and will help with a defense in case of litigation. The policy should be clearly articulated, broadly communicated and uniformly enforced. Here are some possible approaches and options to consider when developing a corporate policy on cell phone use by employees:

- Total ban on all cell phones and communication devices while driving, with a broad restrictive policy on business use of company-issued cellular phones and wireless devices (even in personal vehicles) and permitting only emergency use with a statement for safety- such as pull over safely, etc. This policy is a recommended best practice
- Ban on hand-held phones but permit use with "hands free" devices (many U.S. cities and municipalities such as New York and Chicago have passed such laws) Although experts are divided on the specific provisions and enforcement of such company policies, many experts are suggesting consideration of the following points when developing a corporate policy on in-vehicle cell phone usage

Road risks

Following the rules of the road may seem an obvious safety expectation, however, it is good practice to assess a driver's experience using a road safety checklist.



Driver Road Safety Evaluation Checklist

- Stops at all stop signs and looks both ways to check for cross traffic
- Stops at red lights
- Appropriately yields the right-of-way
- Responds properly to other vehicles, motorcyclists, bicyclists, pedestrians, and road hazards
- Merges and changes lanes safely
- Stays in own lane when turning or driving straight
- Does not slow or stop inappropriately, such as at green lights or in intersections
- Does not drive too fast for road conditions
- Does not drive so slowly as to impede the safe flow of traffic
- Does not drive aggressively
- Does not get lost routinely on routes that should be familiar for the driver
- Strength and flexibility can also play a part in whether the driver has the physical capabilities to safely operate a vehicle. Employers should help identify the driving routes that have the most physical risk to the soft tissue groups

Wheelchair and Scooter / Lift Training

- Wheelchair goes on lift backwards / unless requested to go forward
- Wheelchair power off on lift
- Brakes on chair need to be applied on the lift and in the bus
- Make sure lift is in the up position to unload wheelchair
- Knowledge of wheelie bar usage / DO NOT LIFT CHAIR
- Wheelchair always faces forward in bus for transport
- ABC's of wheelchairs
 - Arms (make sure arms are close to their sides)
 - Belts (all belts secured)
 - Clicks (listen for click on everything for securement)
- Position wheelchair in bus for the best securement
- Wheelchairs must have 4 point tie down
- Use a 3 point seat belt securement for wheelchair passengers. If a passenger refuses, call base and document
- Respect passenger's wheelchair as their personal property
- Knowledge of all tie down operation/pick up straps
- If transferring a passenger, wheelchair still needs to be secured
- Ask scooter passengers if they are able to transfer to a seat. Do not force a scooter passenger to transfer



- If someone transfers from a scooter or wheelchair, the scooter or wheelchair must be tied down using the 4 point tie down system. It does not matter which way the scooter or wheelchair faces for tie down
- Passengers are permitted to stand (Standee) on the lift (ADA)
- Wheelchair/passenger safety concerns (trainer will emphasize)
- Folded wheelchairs can be secured behind a seat or between seats with seat belt around it
- Passengers cannot be lifted if they fall. If a passenger falls, call base immediately, base will call EMT

Three-Wheeled Scooter (TWS) Securement Training

- Determine if the scooter driver can safely use existing passenger seats in vehicle
- If scooter driver cannot use existing passenger seats, advise the scooter driver not to ride in the vehicle and arrange for other travel alternatives
- If the fleet operator policy allows TWC driver to transit on TWC seat, special securements may be needed in addition to TWC installed driver securement restraint belts. Each transporter should establish a policy concerning transportation of TWSs
- Place the TWS in the securement area
- Turn off TWS power
- Lock wheels
- Use a minimum of three TWS securement straps, one at each corner and lower rear mid-point of the TWS
- Use a minimum of one securement strap for the front wheel.
- Lock the wheels if equipped

Driver accident scene management

Despite best efforts to prevent accidents, accidents still may occur. To help minimize injury and protect the organization, establish driver protocols for managing the scene of an accident.

Don't let it get worse

- Stop immediately
- Remain calm and courteous
- Secure the scene: e.g., turn off ignition, set out warning devices and turn on emergency flashers, ready your fire extinguisher
- Stay out of harm's way, move to a safe place to avoid being struck by oncoming vehicles, encourage others to do the same. Watch for fuel leaks and spills
- Don't move the vehicle from the final resting point unless it presents a hazard to others, or until directed to do so by the investigating officer

Aid the injured

- Determine if you or anyone else needs medical attention and obtain appropriate medical services
- Never move an injured person unless there is a danger of fire or other imminent hazard

Call it in

- Contact the police and emergency services
- Be ready with pertinent information (e.g., injuries, spills, damage, location)
- Contact your company representative

Collect info

- If possible, exchange insurance and other vehicle information with the other parties involved
- Secure names and pertinent information of other drivers, vehicle occupants, and others involved
- Get witness information, including names and phone numbers
- Take photographs if it is safe to do so
- Complete the accident report form and record relevant details (e.g., whether citations were issued, responding emergency services, road conditions, and signage)

Make no statements

- Make no admission of fault and do not discuss blame
- Do not sign anything or make any statements (other than to police, company officials and/or company insurance representatives)
- You need to check on the other people, but do not talk about what you think happened until the police or company officials arrive on-scene
- If a witness or someone else at the scene wants to talk to you, do not volunteer information to them about the facts of the accident

Photo Documentation - Taking Accident Scene Pictures Preparation for taking accident scene photos:

- Use caution when doing so
- Don't be "pushy" about taking photos
- If you are injured, you might ask another person to take pictures for you
- Visually inspect the scene, and note circumstances that contributed to the crash (such as road conditions, traffic signals, lane markers, skid marks, tire marks, indication of prior damage)
- Plan your shots to get pictures from all angles. Capture what each driver would see approaching the scene
- If possible, take photos from 20 – 50 – 100 steps from the crash scene
- Remember that a flash is only effective for about 10 feet
- Take too many pictures instead of too few (use the whole roll of film)

Photo documentation of the scene

- Take at least four photos of the area by turning in each direction
- Take pictures of roadway, street markers, traffic signals/signs, lane markers or road marks
- Take photos of skid marks or gouge marks left on pavement, sidewalks or in dirt.
- Photograph marks from both directions, and use a tape measure, ruler, note pad or other object to give "scale"

Photo documentation of people

- Take pictures of the driver/passengers involved without being intrusive (try to capture them in other shots you are taking)
- DO NOT take pictures of people who have been injured or killed. Avoid shots of blood or gore
- Take pictures of other people involved without being intrusive

Additional references and resources are available from Zurich Risk Engineering consultants and resources website at www.zurichna.com/TransportationSafety and in the appendix included with this guide.

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