



# Idealease Safety Bulletin

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## Don't Crowd the Plow

During winter storms, snowplows work around the clock to make roads passable. These large vehicles can present a hazard for drivers who follow too closely. Observe these tips to stay safe while giving snowplow operators room to do their jobs.

- **Keep well back from snowplows**  
Plow drivers can't see directly behind their trucks. Sometimes they must stop or back up. Staying a safe distance behind a snowplow will protect you from possible injury and protect your car from sanding material that plows spread on slick roadways.
- **Know where the snowplow is on multi-lane highways**  
The plow could be in either lane, or on the shoulder. Watch for snowplows on interstate ramps and "authorized vehicle only" turnarounds.
- **Never drive through a snow cloud or whiteout conditions**  
You can't be sure if such conditions are caused by crosswinds or by a snowplow, so be patient. Snowplow operators periodically pull over to allow traffic to pass. Snowplow operators are extremely safety-conscious, but they need your help. Stay back and let them safely do their job of clearing the road for you.

*Don't take a chance.*

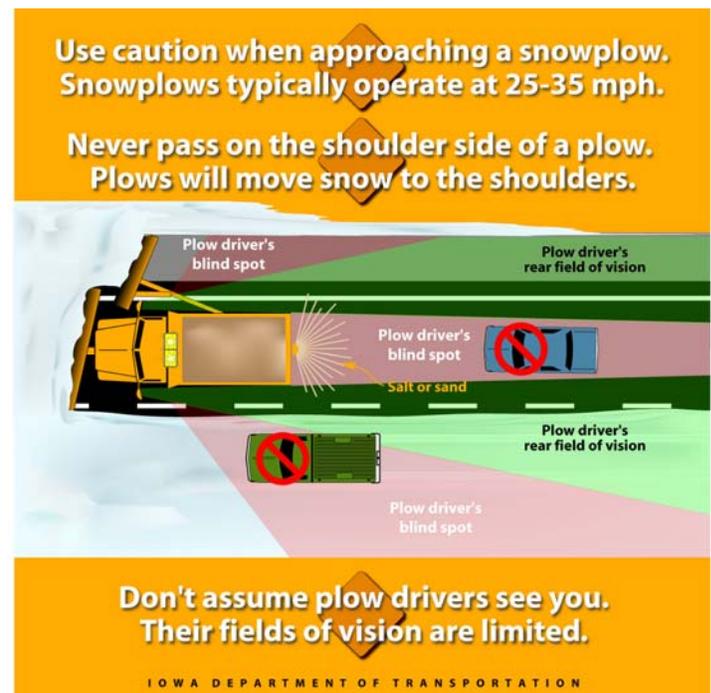
*Don't crowd the plow!*

## Holiday Driving Tips

Holiday events and celebrations can be exciting times for family and friends to get together. But, get-togethers with family and friends can turn into tragedies when people are killed or injured in traffic crashes. As the holiday season is approaching, motorists need to be mindful of actions that will make their holiday travel safer. Drivers can protect themselves and their passengers by following these holiday travel rules:

**-Before you start your trip, make sure your vehicle is tuned up and in good shape for travel.**  
This is especially important for winter driving conditions.

**-Restrain yourself and your passengers properly in seat belts and car safety seats.**  
Remember, the rear seat is the safest place for children of any age to ride.



**-Be flexible in setting your travel plans.**

Leave early if you can to avoid the peak traffic hours. If snow is predicted during the time you plan to travel, change your schedule. It is better to reschedule your get-together than to risk the lives of traveling family or friends.

**-Stay fresh and alert when driving.**

Take plenty of breaks and do not push yourself to meet an unrealistic schedule. If you get tired, pull off the road into a rest area or business, get out of the car for some fresh air and buy something to refresh you or just relax until you feel revived. If that doesn't work, find a motel or campground where you can spend the night.



Forty-one percent of fatal traffic accidents are single vehicle crashes. These crashes most often occur during the late night/early morning hours and the late afternoon hours to drivers who are tired, have consumed alcohol, or both.

**-Keep your speed down.**

Give yourself plenty of time and distance to react to the traffic around you. Let impatient and aggressive drivers pass you or go through the intersection ahead of you so that you control the situation. Do not pass if you cannot see enough clear road to pass safely.

**-If there will be drinking at your holiday get-together, choose a designated driver who will remain alcohol free.**

Because driving requires your full attention, pull off the road if you have to use your cellular phone.

The first parking lot in the world was created in Fort Wayne, Indiana no doubt just in time for holiday shopping. Parking lots at this time of the year can be especially dangerous for drivers making deliveries or just stopping for lunch. The exposure exists for a vehicle accident as well as being involved in an accident as a pedestrian. This holiday season pay special attention when operating in a parking lot and observe the following advice:

- ❖ Wear your seatbelt – even low speed collisions can throw you around the cab of your truck.
- ❖ Obey all traffic signs such as *Stop* and *Yield*.
- ❖ Drive slowly and use your turn signals and headlights – make sure your vehicle is seen and watch for distracted motorists who do not see you coming.
- ❖ Obey traffic lanes and do NOT drive diagonally across lots (watch for cars cutting diagonally across lots).
- ❖ Slow down for speed bumps as not to injure yourself or damage your cargo.
- ❖ Be extra careful at entrances and exits – motorists stop suddenly and for no apparent reason – tailgaters often end up in rear-end collisions, and rushing while turning into access road or side street traffic can also lead to collisions.
- ❖ Be especially careful in lots that contain Post Offices, package stores and other locations where people are prone to dart in and out hastily in a hurry to be on their way.
- ❖ Be extra careful during peak times when reckless drivers may speed through lanes while trying to get a “better spot” closer to the shops.



- ❖ Some drivers are on the “hunt” for an ideal parking spot and may drive erratically – watching for open spots rather than watching where they are driving! These drivers often circle the lanes nearest to their store – parking away from stores may make a longer walk, but prove less dangerous from a vehicle collision standpoint.
- ❖ Lock your truck at all times when not attended. Parking lots are very busy and are often targeted by thieves.

## **What the FMCSA says about Recreational Use of Marijuana**

Recently, some states passed initiatives to permit use of marijuana for so-called “recreational” purposes.

We have had several inquiries about whether these state initiatives will have an impact upon the Department of Transportation’s longstanding regulation about the use of marijuana by safety-sensitive transportation employees – pilots, school bus drivers, truck drivers, train engineers, subway operators, aircraft maintenance personnel, transit fire-armed security personnel, ship captains, and pipeline emergency response personnel, among others.

We want to make it perfectly clear that the state initiatives will have no bearing on the Department of Transportation’s regulated drug testing program. The Department of Transportation’s Drug and Alcohol Testing Regulation – 49 CFR Part 40 – does not authorize the use of Schedule I drugs, including marijuana, for any reason.

Therefore, Medical Review Officers (MROs) will not verify a drug test as negative based upon learning that the employee used “recreational marijuana” when states have passed “recreational marijuana” initiatives.

We also firmly reiterate that an MRO will not verify a drug test negative based upon information that a physician recommended that the employee use “medical marijuana” when states have passed “medical marijuana” initiatives.

It is important to note that marijuana remains a drug listed in Schedule I of the Controlled Substances Act. It remains unacceptable for any safety-sensitive employee subject to drug testing under the Department of Transportation’s drug testing regulations to use marijuana.

We want to assure the traveling public that our transportation system is the safest it can possibly be.

