Safety Tips for Driving in Fog

We all need to be very cautious while driving in fog. More than 30 vehicles were damaged and 26 victims were involved in Wednesday's (1/9/08) pileups on Interstate 4 north Polk County. The accidents were attributed to morning fog mixed with smoke from a nearby wildfire.

Driving in heavy fog is like driving with a blindfold on!

Statistically, it is the most dangerous driving hazard in existence.

Fog is just a thin layer of cloud resting on the ground, but it can cause major problems because it reduces the distance we are able to see.

When the weather is foggy, the safest thing to do is to not to drive. You should call off your trip or delay it until the fog lifts. If you run into fog while driving, the safest action to take is to move off the road to the shoulder and wait for it to lift. A crash, injury or even death is not worth the trip, no matter how important it is.

If you decide to stop, never stop in the middle of the road. Stopping on the road increases your chances of being hit because others have no way of seeing or avoiding you until it is too late.

If you choose to continue, lower your speed. Studies show that some drivers drive faster in fog. Drive with your low beam lights on, even if you feel they affect your ability to see. The headlight is the only part of your vehicle that oncoming drivers can see at a distance. Do not drive with your parking lights on during daytime hours. They do very little to make you more visible to other drivers, and they are intended to indicate that your car is parked.

Do not turn on your emergency flashers. Drivers can be attracted to flashing lights and could drive into them. If you drive with your hazards on, or if you constantly tap your brake pedal, you will make the driver behind you nervous and he may try passing you. This action puts lives in danger. Hazard lights should only be used when you pull over to show that you are parked on the side of the road.

If you decide to drive in the fog consider using a road with less traffic. Be sure to use the right edge of the road as a guide instead of the centre line. This way you will not run into oncoming traffic or become bothered by their headlights. Always use your defroster and windshield wipers.

Safety Tips for Driving in Fog:

- Delay or postpone your trip. Let someone know you will be late.
- Always use your low beam headlights. High beams reflect off the fog making it even harder for you to see.
- Your lights help other drivers see your vehicle, so be sure they all work. As part of your upkeep routine, make a practice of walking around your vehicle to check your lights. Replace burned out bulbs right away, ensure headlights are aimed properly and keep them clean.
- Only use parking lights or hazard lights while parked on the side of the road.
- Reduce your speed to give yourself more time to react to possible dangers that appear suddenly.
• Do not pass other vehicles. It is easier to see when you follow another vehicle, but be sure you are not too close in case you need to stop quickly.

• Maintain a safe driving distance away from vehicles around you.

• Drive with the radio off and with the window partly open to better hear other vehicles; especially at intersections.

• Be patient.

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Subpart 3 - Your Driving, Part 3.8 - Turn Signals and Emergency Signals
You must use hand signals or directional signals to show that you are about to turn. Turn signals are required when changing lanes or overtaking a vehicle. It is against the law to use your directional signals to tell drivers behind you that they can pass. Four-way emergency flashers should only be used while your vehicle is legally stopped or disabled on the highway or shoulder.

Subpart 3 - Parking, Part 3.10. - Parking Lights
Parking lights must be used at night on any vehicle parked on a roadway or shoulder outside of cities and towns. vehicle should be centered inside the space with no part of the vehicle extending out into the traffic lane. Driving with parking lights only (in place of headlights) is against the law.

Subpart 3 - Your Driving, Part 3.12 - Reduced Visibility
You must turn on your low beam (dim) headlights when driving between sunset and sunrise, including the twilight hours between sunset and sunrise or between full night and sunrise. You must also use these lights during any rain, smoke or fog. Parking lights do not meet requirements of this law.