

Staying Safe

A Program of the Racine County Traffic Safety Commission and...



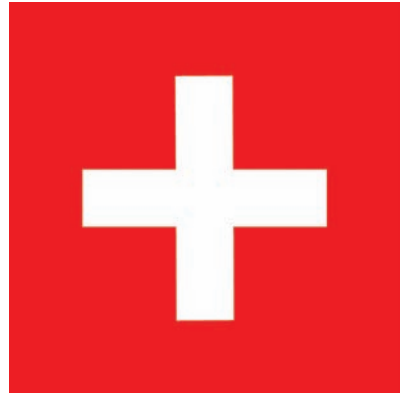
Safe Sober



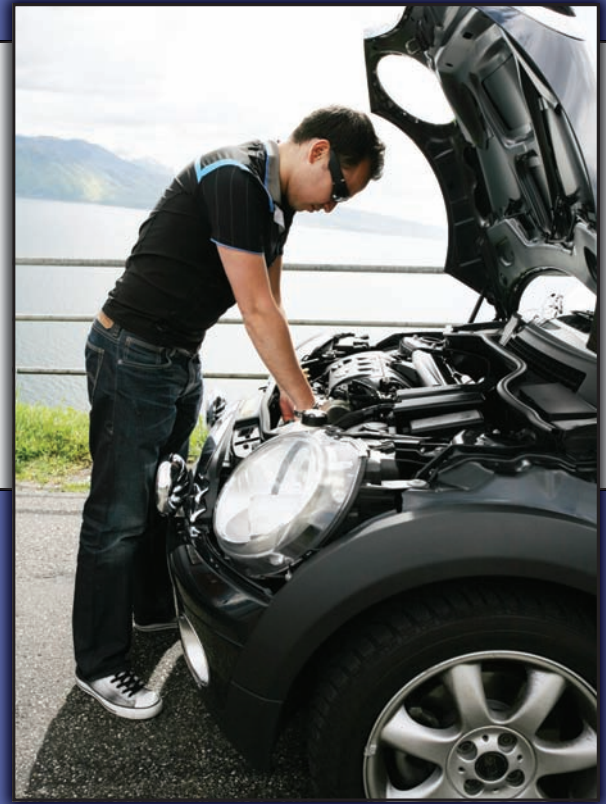
Wisconsin Department of Transportation



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VEHICLE ROAD EMERGENCIES



Don't make a simple problem worse. Stay in your vehicle until help arrives.

Information sources: www.aaexchange.com & www.nhtsa.dot.gov

IF YOUR VEHICLE BREAKS DOWN...

- Don't panic! Carefully steer your vehicle to the far right-side of the road, keeping your eye on traffic around you. Stop your vehicle as far away from other traffic as you can.
- If you're traveling on an Interstate or another heavily traveled highway, try and exit the roadway if at all possible.
- If your vehicle is too distressed to make it to the next exit, move as far to the right as possible. Remain alert to traffic around you at all times.
- If you've called a tow truck to assist you, stay inside your vehicle until help arrives. Keep the doors locked and your safety belts buckled. Use your cellphone to call for help.
- Try and make your car as visible as possible by turning on the hazard lights. If it's dark you can also turn on the interior dome light.
- If a stranger stops to offer assistance, roll down the window slightly to talk to them, but don't open the doors. While it's up to you whether or not you accept their help, it's safer to wait for law enforcement or a tow truck driver.
- It's very dangerous to walk along a busy highway especially during inclement weather. With that being said, if you can safely walk to a gas station or another location to get assistance, exit your vehicle on the right-side, away from traffic, and walk on the right-side of the roadway. If there are guardrails use them as a barrier between you and traffic. Never try to cross multiple lanes of highway traffic.



YIELD TO EMERGENCY VEHICLES

Wisconsin State Law requires motorists to yield when approached by an emergency vehicle. In an emergency, minutes can mean the difference between life and death and critical seconds can be lost if drivers don't make way for emergency vehicles. Take sirens seriously. Make way for an ambulance, fire truck or police vehicle. Someday you may be the one calling for help, or the life on the line might be a friend, neighbor or someone you love.

For more information see Wisconsin Statute 346.169(1).

WHAT TO DO WHEN APPROACHED BY AN EMERGENCY VEHICLE

- Remain calm and maintain control of your vehicle without jeopardizing the safety of others.
- Pull to the right and come to a stop. With few exceptions, moving your vehicle safely to right is the best action when approached by emergency vehicles.
 - When traveling at greater speeds or when there is no room to stop, slow down as much as possible.
 - When in the left lane, pull over into the right lane as the traffic in the lane to your right moves to the shoulder.
- If you cannot move to the right because of an obstacle or other vehicle, slow down, signal to the right and continue until it is safe to merge. Your prompt action will let the driver of the emergency vehicle know your intentions and choose a safe path around your vehicle.
- When an emergency vehicle approaches you from behind while your vehicle is stationary at an intersection, stop sign or red light, do not move unless you can safely move to the right.
- When traveling on a one-way street, moving to the right is best, but sometimes due to traffic, you may move to the left curb and yield to the middle lanes. This is one of the appropriate exceptions to the "pull to the right" rule.

WISCONSIN'S MOVE OVER LAW

When approaching an emergency vehicle, tow truck, road machinery or highway maintenance vehicle parked within 12 feet of the roadway and displaying visual lights, Wisconsin Law requires drivers to reduce speed and provide ample room prior to passing the stopped vehicle. For more information see Wisconsin State Statute 346.072(1).

WHAT TO DO WHEN APPROACHING A STOPPED EMERGENCY VEHICLE

- When traveling on a roadway with multiple lanes in the same direction, merge into the lane away from the stopped vehicle providing an open lane as a buffer to the vehicle stopped on the roadside.
- When traveling on a roadway with a single traffic lane for each direction of travel, reduce and maintain a safe speed until your vehicle is completely past the stopped vehicle.

WHAT TO DO WHEN FOLLOWING OR PARKING NEAR EMERGENCY VEHICLES

- Maintain an interval of at least 500 feet when following an emergency vehicle responding to a call.
- Avoid parking within 300 feet or the length of a city block of an emergency vehicle that has stopped for an emergency.

CELL PHONES



Photo by Timothy J. Stein

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