



Providers of Commute Options for Middle Tennessee



OCTOBER 2007
Volume 2, Issue 7

Inside this issue:	
On the Road	2
Defensive Road Rules	2
Meet MiMi Lee	2

HYDROPLANING 101

Hydroplaning occurs when the tread on your tires cannot channel all the rain-water out from under your tires - or, from under each patch of tire that is supposed to be resting on the road and providing you with traction. When hydroplaning, those tire patches are riding on a layer of water instead of pavement. Many different factors can affect the speed at which a tire will hydroplane, such as water depth, speed, weight of the vehicle, width of the tire, depth of tread, and tread pattern, but all tires will hydroplane with the right combination of speed and water depth. It's a good idea to slow down before hitting a puddle. Other times, when rain is pouring down in sheets, there can be enough water on the roadway to cause a vehicle to hydroplane (without apparent puddles).

Be an attentive driver and recognize the potential for hydroplaning and slow enough to prevent the problem. If not, the first indication will be when the vehicle pulls suddenly in deeper water and begins to slide out of control. Or, you

may be approaching a curve and discover that your vehicle doesn't respond to your steering input. On a straight stretch, a slight "wiggle" of the steering wheel can give you immediate information on whether you are hydroplaning or not. I wouldn't try this on a curve, however. Another possibility is to check out your tire tracks in the rear-view mirror (if you can clearly see them). You should be able to see distinct tracks on the wet surface behind you, and even see your tread pattern on the pavement for a few seconds before water covers it again. Remember that not hydroplaning means your tread is removing all of the water that gets between your tires and the road surface. If you cannot see your tracks and tread pattern distinctly on the road surface behind you, slow down, because you may be waterskiing on four wheels!

If you find yourself hydroplaning, do not touch the brakes. Slow down by smoothly lifting your foot from the accelerator, engage your clutch if you are

driving a standard-shift vehicle, and let it coast down to the point where the hydroplaning stops. Remember that smoothness is very important -- you don't want to make any sudden moves. You will not be able to steer while the vehicle is hydroplaning.

You can prevent hydroplaning. Keep good tires on your vehicle. Keep your speed down in the rain (slow by at least 1/3) and if you are following another vehicle, try to drive in their tire tracks -- let their tires displace some of the water so yours don't have to work so hard.

-Road Trip America



REPORT ACCIDENT CLAIMS IMMEDIATELY TO:

First Horizon Insurance Group
615-385-8341
(Kay Biggs)
-and-
MiMi Lee
615-790-4005 or
After Hours:
615-517-6321

Van Voices is a joint publication of **The TMA Group** and the **Regional Transportation Authority**

For more information about our services contact:
The TMA Group
(615) 790-4005
www.tmagroup.org

Regional Transportation Authority (RTA)
(615) 862-8833
www.rta-ride.org

DEFENSIVE ROAD RULES

Welcome to "Road Rules" *Van Voices* newest segment which will address defensive driving practices that every driver and passenger should know.

TAILGATERS = TROUBLE!

We've been taught to not tailgate other vehicles for several reasons. Following too closely is a factor on a lot of collisions, and often they are not minor in terms of injuries and fatalities. Following too closely often restricts your vision, making it likely your reaction time will be slower if something happens ahead. What is following too closely? If you are so close that you cannot stop without hitting something, that's too close! Remember to use the two-second-plus rule to keep a safe distance.

If you are being tailgated, remember this is a dangerous situation for you. It is important to get the guy behind you "off your back". Keep these tips in mind: 1) add their following distance to you. Follow the vehicle ahead of you no closer than 4 second so that if you have to react, you've got the extra time and space to slow or stop without the tailgater hitting you; 2) the best thing to do is get the tailgater safely around you. Do this by slowing slightly below the normal flow of traffic speed. This allows him more room to pass. This is what you want him to do! Tailgaters typically exercise poor judgment and endanger you and others trying to pass when it is not safe. If they still cannot pass after you've slowed down a bit, then change lanes or pull off to the side and let them go by.

Just as important, here is what not to do: don't hit the brakes suddenly, and do not tap your brake lights to warn the other driver to back off. Slamming on the brakes to get rid of a tailgater is against the law in most states. Do not irritate a person who already appears impatient and agitated. Remember you need to arrive at your destination safely!



YOU NEED TO KNOW MIMI!

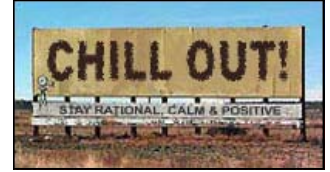
In 2005, MiMi was named Program Coordinator for The TMA Group. She is responsible for the administration of the vanpool program and support for grant management and administration. MiMi is always happy to answer any questions about The TMA Group and the Regional Transportation Authority's regional vanpool program. She is a former driver for the Franklin Transit Authority. MiMi can be reached at: 615-628-0261 or mimi@tmagroup.org



CHILL OUT!

Driving safely, as with a lot of things is all about attitude.

Think about it—you've been driving for a while, you know most of the rules, and you know how to drive defensively. What each of us often loses sight of are the dangers of driving—it is such a routine part of our day, we don't consciously think about how dangerous it really is.



In Ohio in 1895 there were only two motorcars. Guess what happened? Times have changed. Today if you drive, you will be involved in conflicts on the road. You cannot control them, but you can control how you react to them. What makes the difference, and what you need to do to remain safe in today's traffic circus, is to keep a calm, positive and detached attitude. This is something that you can learn to do.

Most of the time when tickets or mishaps have happened, the driver or drivers were upset or angry about something. When your emotions are running high, your judgment fails and you may not notice otherwise apparent, even obvious, dangers. If you find yourself driving while emotionally stressed or upset, it is important that you pull over, take a few breaths and calm down.

Remember three important words: "It doesn't matter." When other drivers make mistakes, or are rude, what do you gain by letting it affect your attitude or behavior? It doesn't matter. In ten minutes you won't even remember that it happened. Don't let the error the other commits be the reason you lose control (one way or the other) and have a collision, or worse. Many collisions occur when a driver is mad, upset, stressed, or distracted in some way. Try to keep your attitude rational, calm and positive.

EPA EXAMINES GROUND OZONE

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is proposing a plan to strengthen the limit on ground level ozone – the smog that envelops large cities particularly during the summer months. However, scientists believe the proposed limits should be even stronger. You are welcome to [e-mail the EPA](#) through October 8, 2007 to provide feedback on the ground level ozone limits. Reference Docket ID: EPA-HQ-OAR-2005-0172.

