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## SAFETY BULLETIN



July 27, 2018

### An Invitation for a Roadside Inspection



Year after year, one of the top violations for commercial motor vehicles is having inoperable lighting. An inoperable vehicle lamp gives the appearance that a vehicle is not being optimally maintained. Lamp failures are easy to spot, even from afar, and while a vehicle is stopped for the lighting infraction, a more thorough Compliance, Safety, Accountability (CSA) roadside inspection is likely to happen.

Hours may go by as your driver waits to get back on the road, even longer if a service call is required. A lamp that costs dollars can quickly end up costing hundreds, if not thousands of dollars in service fees, lost vehicle and driver productivity, fines for violations and points against the driver's and fleet's CSA scores.

Remember, based on U.S. DOT weighted guidelines, infractions dealing with defective or inoperable lighting ranks higher than brakes and carry higher CSA point penalties in relationship to other infractions. This means that taking the time to perform a thorough pre-trip inspection is critical to keeping you and other drivers safe, while avoiding penalties within your CSA score.

### Navigating Safety and Compliance in 2018

Idealease and the National Private Truck Council NPTC will again be hosting safety seminars in 2018. The one day seminar this year will focus on the new Electronic Logging Device (ELD) regulation, basic



## Safe Driving at Night

Although only 15% of vehicle miles are clocked between 7pm and 7am, according to a recent study, they account for almost a third of road injuries and deaths. There's no doubt that driving in the dark is more dangerous, than during daylight hours. In fact, it has been estimated by the U.S. National Safety Council that traffic death rates are three times greater at night than during the day.

Many drivers believe there is safety to be found in the reduced traffic of night driving and may be unaware of how to deal with the many other challenges of driving at night.

Depth perception, color recognition and peripheral vision can be compromised in the dark, and the glare of headlights from oncoming vehicles can temporarily blind a driver.

Even with high-beam headlights on, visibility is limited to about 500 feet (250 feet for normal headlights) creating less time to react to something in the road, especially when driving at higher speeds.

## Seeing at Night



Night vision is the ability to see well in low-light conditions. As we age, we have greater difficulty seeing at night. A 50-year-old driver may need twice as much light to see as well as a 30-year-old. At age 60 and older, driving can become even more difficult, according to the American Optometric Association. Some older drivers also may have compromised vision due to cataracts and degenerative eye diseases.

The AOA recommends all drivers, and particularly older drivers:

- Reduce speed
- Dim your dashboard lights
- Avoid using any other lights in your cab
- Look away from oncoming lights
- If you wear glasses, make sure they're anti-reflective
- Clean the windshield to eliminate streaks
- Slow down to compensate for limited visibility and reduced stopping time
- Minimize distractions, like talking with passengers or listening to the radio
- Check with your doctor about side effects of prescription drugs

### More Critical Tips for Safe Driving at Night

- Headlamps should be on about an hour before dusk. This makes it easier for you to see as the sun sets, but also makes you more visible to other drivers. Of course, during times of bad weather, consider using your lights regardless of the time of day. Thunder storms, for example, can bring in dark clouds that turn the sky almost as dark as night. You should be courteous enough to make it easier for others to see you. If it is even questionable, why not use your lights? It can't do any harm, unless it's a case of using your high beams and making it difficult for drivers you are sharing the road with to be able to see anything.
- Avoid following too closely, especially during dark hours and when weather is bad. There are several reasons this is a terrible rule to break during night driving. One is that you make the other driver nervous, which makes him or her more likely to react badly to something in the road and cause a wreck. Also, the closer your headlights are, the brighter they can seem and more distracting they can be. Again, this makes the driver ahead of you nervous and can also limit his or her visibility and end up causing problems. Another reason you should try to increase the following distance between you and the car in front of you is that during the dark, night hours, your visibility in front of the car in front of you is lessened. During the day, you can see and, therefore, react better to things that may be a problem ahead on the road or off to the side. With limited sight distance, you are setting yourself up to have problems.
- The best way to avoid an incident at night is to watch for lights and movement and keep checking your mirrors. It is as important to keep an eye out for other cars' headlights as it is to spot other things, such as cars without headlights. At night it is harder to see animals on the side of the road, children still playing in the street or debris that could already be present or become a problem. Stay alert by checking mirrors regularly enough to be aware of what is happening all around you. That also means being at the top of your game for defensive driving skills. Sometimes, especially at night, it's more about watching for other driver's mistakes than having to worry about your own. That said, also make sure you keep your mirrors clean and have them pointed in a direction that will make it easier for you to see but also lose any glare, if possible.



safety and compliance, regulation changes and CSA. The seminars will be provided to all Idealease customers, potential customers and NPTC members at no charge. The seminar provides important information applicable for both the novice and experienced transportation professionals. To register for an upcoming seminar in 2018, [Click Here](#).



### Fall Seminars (Sept-Nov)

8/9/2018	Santa Rosa, CA
9/19/18	Fort Wayne, IN
9/25/2018	Dallas, TX
9/26/2018	Houston, TX
10/4/2018	Moncton, NB
10/10/2018	Nashville, TN
10/16/18	Kansas City, MO
10/24/2018	Modesto/Turlock, CA
10/25/18	Oklahoma City, OK
11/7/2018	San Leandro, CA

### Is Your Vehicle Roadworthy for Night Driving?

A properly performed Pre-trip Inspection will allow the driver to verify their vehicle is safe for driving at night and reduce the risks of getting stranded alongside the road! Here is some advice to consider before turning the ignition:



- tank
- Adjust outside mirrors so that the bodywork of the vehicle is just outside of the driver's view. Exterior mirrors that are properly aligned not only reduce blind spots, they also reduce glare from vehicles behind you

Properly aligned headlights will help you see the road better and prevent you from blinding oncoming drivers  
 Check that all exterior lights work properly - front and rear, brake lights, turn signals and high beams  
 Lighting must also be clean as dirty headlights can greatly reduce effectiveness  
 Ensure your windows are clean (inside and outside). Dirty windows can add to glare and impair vision, making it more difficult to see  
 Your windshield wipers must be fully functional as risks increase driving in bad weather at night  
 Check that there is enough windshield washer fluid in the

## Defensive Driving at Night

Driving at night requires defensive and thoughtful driving! Here is some advice on safe driving techniques:

- Plan your route so you're aware of any steep descents, sharp corners and other hazards specific to that route
- Remain very alert to vulnerable road users such as pedestrians and cyclists and avoid any distractions when driving
- Avoid looking directly into oncoming headlights. Look at the right-hand side of the road and drive well to the right
- Adjust your speed and be ready to slow down - allow yourself the time and space to react to whatever comes out of the dark
- A safe speed should enable you to brake or maneuver to avoid a hazard without endangering those around you, and to stop within the distance you can see to be clear
- On rural and less well-maintained roads a slower speed is necessary to spot pot-holes and to evade driving through them
- Increase following distance to increase crash avoidance space
- Keep your eyes moving and watch for flashes of light - at the top of hills, at road bends and intersections - that may indicate the headlights of other cars
- Remain cautious to animals on the road – you may see the eyes of the animal reflect in the headlights long before you see the animal
- Swerving is no guarantee that you'll miss the animal, and creates a much more dangerous situation for everyone. Hold your lane, keep the wheel straight, and apply the brakes as firmly as possible while still maintaining control
- Be extra cautious at all intersections when driving at night – watching for vehicles that drive through stop lights
- Approach slowly, look both ways and proceed with caution - do not assume safety!
- Do not use cruise control when driving at night – keep both hands on the steering wheel and all your focus on steering the vehicle safely!



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