

TAKE ACTION

to prevent motor vehicle collisions



Most collisions are preventable!

Driver error causes most motor vehicle collisions. Do your part to prevent such crashes:

- Drive defensively.
- Be aware of what's going on around you.
- Obey the rules of the road.

Quick Facts

- In Alberta, a traffic crash occurs every 5 minutes costing us about \$12 million every single day.
- On average there is one death per day related to motor vehicle crashes in Alberta.
- Most crash deaths occur on rural roads.
- Motor vehicle crashes are Alberta's number one killer of young people.

Buckle up

In a crash, using seatbelts is the best way to protect yourself and others.

- *Everyone* should use a seatbelt *every time* they ride in a motor vehicle.
- Wear seatbelts properly. Put the lap belt low over the hips, not over the stomach. Place the shoulder belt across the chest and over the shoulder. The belt should fit snug.
- Children 8 years of age and younger should be in car seats or booster seats. This depends on their age and weight. Call your local health unit or Health Link (1-866-408-5465) for details.
- Children under 13 should always sit in the back of the vehicle.

Drive sober

Drinking and driving causes about 25% of deaths in motor vehicle crashes.

- Make a plan to get home before going out.
- If you have used alcohol or drugs, don't drive. Don't be a passenger of someone who has used alcohol or drugs.
- Can't find a safe ride home? Call family, a friend or a cab for a ride. Or, stay overnight.
- Remember, only time will sober you up. Food and coffee won't do it.
- Look after family and friends. Don't let them drive after they use alcohol or drugs.

Slow down and drive safely

Speeding is dangerous. Just driving a few kilometers per hour over the speed limit greatly increases the risk of death.

- Obey all traffic signals and signs including speed limits.
- Pass safely and don't weave through traffic.
- Allow other drivers who are signaling to pass into your lane.
- Don't run red lights or stop signs.
- Check for oncoming traffic at intersections. Check even if you have the right-of-way.
- Do you see an aggressive or rude driver? Take a deep breath and keep driving safely.

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Keep your brain and hands focused

- Don't use a cell phone when driving. Even hands-free cell phones are a problem. Pull over and park the vehicle in a safe space before taking a call. Activate your phone's message system while driving.
- Make sure you're well rested. Drive only when you feel alert.
- Falling asleep on the road? Park the vehicle in a safe place and take a nap. Take a break if you notice warning signs like:
 - You yawn a lot.
 - You can't remember anything about the last few kilometers.
 - You have blurred vision.
 - You drift out of your lane.
- Adjust the radio or CD player *before* you start driving.
- Fuel up your body before your trip. Don't drink or eat while driving.
- Park the vehicle safely before attending to kids or reading a map.
- Avoid being distracted by road-side attractions.

Keep Young Drivers Safe

Young and new drivers need help. One in every five new drivers is involved in a crash during their first two years of driving. Maximize experience and minimize risk to keep new drivers safe.

- Learner drivers should get at least 60 hours of practice. That should include 10 hours of winter conditions.
- Parents should model responsible, safe driving. Enforce the rules about zero alcohol/drug use and driving.
- Restrict your teen's driving during certain times, until they get more experience. There is a higher risk of serious crashes when teens drive between 9 PM and 6 AM without adult supervision especially on Friday and Saturday nights.
- Crashes are more likely to happen when new drivers travel with other teens in the vehicle. Teens should travel alone or just with family members for the first 6 to 12 months.

Do you need more information on how to prevent vehicle collisions? Contact:

Alberta Office of Traffic Safety: www.saferoads.com

Traffic Injury Research Foundation: www.tirf.ca

In your community contact:

 **Learn more about injury prevention.** Learn how to prevent injuries from affecting you and your family. Call us at the *Alberta Centre for Injury Control & Research*, at 780-492-6019. You can also send us an e-mail at acicr@ualberta.ca or visit our website at www.acicr.ualberta.ca.