

Driving the speed limit protects your business and drivers

Driving at higher speeds makes it easier to lose control of a vehicle, harder to recover control and robs a driver of critical reaction time. While exceeding speed limits gets less attention than other road safety issues, like drunk driving or texting while driving, it too is dangerous.

Drivers should embrace responsible speeds

- **Higher risk of collision:** The greater the speed, the greater the stopping distance, the greater the chances of a crash. This translates to a higher risk of more severe injuries and property damage from an accident.
- **Equipment fatigue and failure:** At higher speeds, seatbelts, airbags, anti-lock brakes, traction control systems or other safety devices may not be effective enough to save a life.
- **Violations cost money:** Most states add extra penalties (points, fines) for speeding violations of more than 15 mph above the posted limit. For the speeding employee, this could affect future job prospects or cause increases in personal insurance costs. For commercial driver's license (CDL) holders this is a serious traffic violation which can affect their ability to retain their commercial motor vehicle license.
- **Higher costs for your business:** It takes a greater amount of fuel to maintain elevated speeds, and more fuel means more money spent. Plus, because engines are increasingly inefficient at higher speeds, this can mean more wear and tear on your vehicles.
- **Reduced driver reaction time:** Speeding drivers rob themselves of time needed to diagnose proper steering and braking reactions to unexpected problems (e.g., sudden animal crossing, tire blowout). Speed also increases the chances for a rollover when swerving.

Coach your drivers to slow down

While many varied factors contribute directly to a driver's choice to break the law by speeding, there are highly practical ways for businesses to increase driver and vehicle safety. Consider the following:

Create realistic timeframes according to the distance to be traveled: When a driver feels pressure to arrive at a destination quickly, the prospect of undue stress from an employer can carry more weight than the potential for an accident.

Dispel the myths: Some believe that driving a little faster can make a substantial difference in their arrival time. The increase in speed from 65 mph to 70 mph gains less than four seconds per mile, or about 15 minutes per 150 miles - hardly a coffee break's difference.

Feedback is fuel: Provide constructive feedback during coaching sessions with your drivers so they know their efforts are translating to effective action. This motivation will help them continue to renew their commitment to avoid speeding over the long term.

Educate supervisors and drivers: Discuss the benefits of obeying speed limits and driving slower when weather, traffic or other factors demand it. Driving at an appropriate speed enables drivers to do the following:

- Have more reaction time
- Gain stopping distance and exert more control over the vehicle
- Improve fuel economy
- Decrease premature wear and tear
- Reduce risk of rollover or other compounding problems during vehicle collisions

Most importantly, establish, enforce, and revise your safety policies, as needed. Investing time to explain and educate why these policies are critical helps ensure that more drivers will understand and voluntarily obey the rules of the road.

Innovative technology for better safety management

Owners should consider technological aids to assist drivers and to enforce policy. Nationwide's Premium Partner Program with Razor Tracking provides industry-leading telematics and dash camera services for Farm and Commercial Agribusiness customers. More information about Razor Tracking's telematics and fleet management solutions can be found here.

References

Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration, "CMV Safe Speed Campaign," November 2023.

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, "Risky Driving: Speeding," July 2022.



For assistance with risk management services or safety resources, contact us at RMSolutions@nationwide.com or 1-800-260-1356.