



Autumn Driving Advice

As the nights begin to draw in we tend not to adjust too well to the changing conditions and there becomes a significant increase in road incidents throughout the autumn and winter. Darker nights and low sun bring their own hazards as does the start of the new school term. The following tips should help you stay clear of trouble this autumn.

- Don't wait until it's fully dark to turn your lights on, let other drivers see you and ensure you can be seen. Think *"never be the last to turn your lights on and never be the first to turn them off."* If you need to use your wipers then you should consider turning on your headlights and finally, it is good practice to drive on headlights not sidelights.
- Don't be tempted to drive with your front or rear fog lights on unless the conditions dictate. The Highway Code Rule 236 states: "You MUST NOT use front or rear fog lights unless visibility is seriously reduced (see Rule 226) as they dazzle other road users and can obscure your brake lights. You MUST switch them off when visibility improves." Rule 226 states "You MUST use headlights when visibility is seriously reduced, generally when you cannot see for more than 100 metres (328 feet). You may also use front or rear fog lights but you MUST switch them off when visibility improves."
- Note the changes in temperature, which can be quite wide ranging at this time of year and can catch you by surprise, be prepared by carrying appropriate clothing.
- Beware of leaves causing slippery road surfaces on country lanes, especially under trees and when blown into verges by the wind. Braking and cornering can be severely affected in these conditions.
- As the nights draw in, take particular care to identify drivers in your blind spot and recognize that in the earlier darkness you may have difficulty judging distance and speed. Take particular care in town especially at junctions and roundabouts where motorcyclists, pedal cyclists and pedestrians are harder to spot in low light conditions, especially if wearing dark clothing. To help with this, you need to ensure your windows (inside and outside), lights and mirrors are all clean and in good condition. Check and clean them now and every time you fill up with fuel (as well as your daily/weekly check!).
- Although there has been some flash flooding, on the whole we have had quite a reasonable summer, we now need to be prepared for what the autumn has in store for us. This could mean quite a lot of fog! Crash statistics go through the roof in these conditions so make sure you do not add to these. Always drive so you can stop in the distance you can see to be clear, don't just 'blindly' follow the tail lights of the vehicle in front, and ask yourself "if the vehicle in front runs into the back of a stationary queue of traffic, can I come to a halt before running into him?". If the answer is "no" or "not sure" then increase your following distance!



Driver Safety Policy Reminder – Speed

Staff driving for work must never drive faster than conditions safely allow and must obey posted speed limits at all times. Exceeding the speed limit is against the law. Persistent failure to comply with the law will be regarded as a serious matter, and speeding while driving for work may be regarded as a serious disciplinary matter.

Staff which gain penalty points on their licence for speeding must inform the Co-ordinator or Supervisor without delay and may be required to take further driver training or assessment. Vehicle user allowance may be withdrawn from staff which attain 9 or more penalty points and will be withdrawn from staff disqualified from driving.

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