



PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION REPORT

Issue 4//2013



Once in a **BLUE MOON**

Navigating less common road hazards

Every day bus drivers share the road with other vehicles as they attempt to safely navigate their route. Drivers are used to looking out for automobiles and adjusting their driving behavior accordingly to avoid collisions. However, there are other types of vehicles and hazards on the road that may not be as common but require similar focus. Share the following information with your drivers to help them avoid collisions with these less common road hazards.

Motorcycles

It is important to remember that motorcycles are smaller than cars and can very easily hide in blind spots, even with the best mirror systems. Drivers should be aware of their vehicle's blind spots and check them routinely as they do their mirror scans. Signaling their intentions well in advance will allow the motorcyclist to recognize bus drivers' intentions and find themselves a safe lane position. Leaning into the mirrors and moving their head side to side will help bring blind spots into view. Keeping windows and mirrors clean, especially during inclement weather and nighttime hours, also helps drivers more clearly see what is around them.

Road conditions that are minor issues to other vehicles can be major hazards to motorcyclists. They may change speed or adjust position within a lane suddenly in reaction to conditions such as potholes, wet or slippery surfaces and pavement seams. Drivers should leave plenty of space between their vehicle and the motorcycle so they have time to react to these adjustments accordingly. Motorcycles can also stop much quicker than most vehicles on the road, especially buses, so extra following distance behind them is necessary.

Farm equipment

If your drivers are in rural areas, they may approach slow-moving farm vehicles and equipment, which may enter the roadway from side roads that are hidden from the bus driver's view. Drivers should slow down as soon as equipment is spotted. They should not attempt to pass farm equipment as they are often wide and hard to see around, making it difficult to spot oncoming traffic or traffic coming from side roads. Farm equipment typically doesn't stay on the road too long so drivers should remain patient and maintain an increased following distance until the farm vehicle is off the main road. ➤➤

>> Animals

Deer, livestock or other animals might run onto the road without being seen, especially at night. Collisions with animals tend to happen in rural areas just after dusk and just before dawn, when visibility is low. Drivers should look for “animal crossing” or other signs posted in areas with a high volume of animals. If they see one of these signs, drivers should slow down and be on the lookout. Dead animals along the road are an indication that animals are present and caution should be practiced.

Honking a horn can sometimes prevent deer or other animals from running into traffic but remember that animals are unpredictable. Braking firmly and not swerving is the best course of action. If the driver does strike an animal, he or she should be careful when exiting the vehicle. The animal could still be alive and charge at the driver and passengers. It’s safer to stay in the vehicle and call 911 to report the collision.

Horse-drawn vehicles

In addition to farm equipment and animals, bus drivers may also encounter horse-drawn vehicles like buggies in rural areas, particularly near Amish communities. Normal speeds for horse-drawn buggies range from 5 to 8 mph. Keep in mind, rural roads are often narrower in width than city streets so passing these vehicles can be dangerous. Drivers should only pass when it’s legal and safe to do so. Slow down and give the horse-drawn buggies plenty of room when passing. The horses are normally accustomed to traffic, however drivers should be aware that their vehicle can spook the horse at any time, causing them to instantly change their behavior. Horse-drawn vehicles can be difficult to see on rural roads due to curves, hills and crops. ■



Keep your drivers safe on the road with our “Stay Alert for Animals” poster. To request copies, email lossprevention@protectiveinsurance.com.



ALERT FOR ANIMALS AT

DUSK & DAWN



PREVENT COLLISION WITH ANIMALS

- Be particularly alert during the peak hours of dusk and dawn and during the fall months.
- Pay attention to the proper signs.
- When traffic permits, use high-beam headlights to spot deer and other animals along the roadside.
- If you see an animal on the road, honk your horn with one long blast to frighten it. Watch for the shine of eyes along the roadside and slow down immediately.
- If you see an animal near the roadway, slow down and alert other motorists with 4-way flashers.
- If you cannot avoid a collision, keep your vehicle in the proper lane. Do not swerve!

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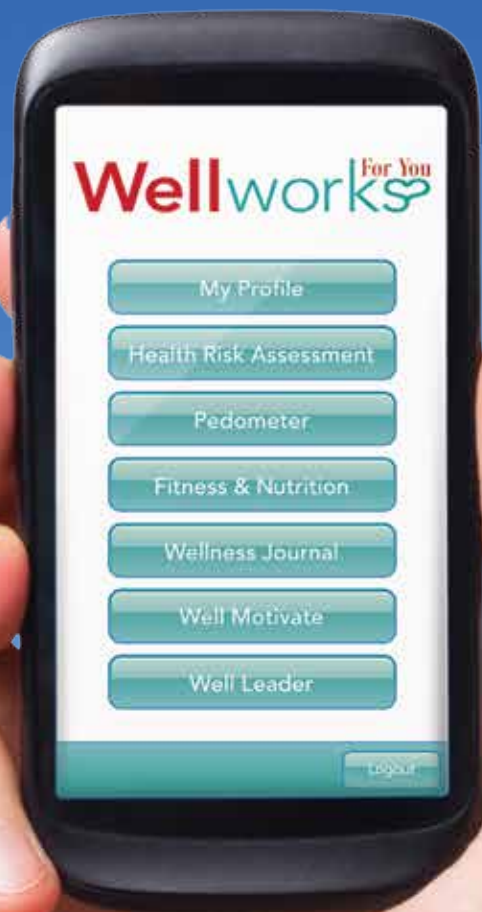
PROMOTING DRIVER WELLNESS

We're excited to announce a new partnership between Protective Insurance Company and **Health Promotion Solutions**. We are connecting fleets interested in promoting driver wellness to this service.

With this program, your drivers will have access to a personal wellness portal, available online and as a smartphone app, containing interactive and educational tools, including:

- pedometer tracking program
- health coaching dashboard
- fitness and nutrition planner
- health risk assessments
- weekly recipes

For more information about this program and pricing, contact our Loss Prevention Department at **800-644-5501 x7431** or lossprevention@protectiveinsurance.com. ■



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Protective Insurance Company



Welcome U.S. DOT Secretary **Anthony Foxx**

Anthony Foxx was sworn in as the nation's 17th secretary of transportation on Tuesday, July 2. During his remarks, he shared that his great-grandfather was a driver and used his career in the transportation industry to raise his 13 children and put them through college. He also reiterated his commitment to safety and improving the efficiency and infrastructure of the transportation industry.

Prior to his confirmation, Foxx served as the mayor of Charlotte, NC, and focused his efforts on major transportation investments. He has a law degree from New York University's School of Law and a bachelor's degree in history from Davidson College. You can read his full biography online at www.dot.gov/secretary. ■