

Driving Safety Remember the 3-second Following Rule



Motor vehicle accidents are one of the leading causes of workplace injury in Maryland. IWIF, together with Maryland's T-SAFE project, offers these important driving safety tips:



How Does the 3-second Following Rule Work?

- Tailgating and following too closely is the primary factor in rear-end vehicle collisions.
- You as a driver cannot control the actions of other drivers, but you can control your driving decisions and actions, including increasing your following distance.
- The 3-second Following Rule reminder gives drivers the added following distance and safety cushion to observe traffic conditions, react, brake and avoid a collision.
- Glance quickly at a fixed object ahead of the car in front of you. The object may be a sign, light pole or, for this example, a tree.
- As the car in front passes the tree, begin counting 3 seconds (one-thousand one, one-thousand two, one-thousand three).
- If **you** pass the tree when you finish counting off 3 seconds, you have enough braking distance to react and stop. You are now traveling at the proper following distance.
- After you practice this driving technique a few times, you will see how far 3 seconds traveled in distance can be, and it will become more of an instinctive driving skill.
- In heavier traffic, you can still adjust your following distance. Even 2 seconds of following distance will give you added braking distance. At night time and in bad weather you should increase your following distance even more.

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