

**WHAT DO I DO IF I
COME UPON AN ACCIDENT?**

SLOW DOWN: Start slowing down well in advance. Be prepared to stop well short of the accident scene, if necessary.

BE CAREFUL WHEN GOING AROUND AN ACCIDENT SCENE: Don't put yourself or anyone else in danger by needlessly driving into the oncoming traffic lane to go around an accident scene. If that becomes necessary, use extreme caution. If you go around the scene on the right-hand side, be careful of traffic moving up behind you. And, no matter which side you go around, be alert for the parties involved in the accident walking around. Their attention will be focused on their autos, not on you.

SUMMONING HELP: If the parties involved in the accident ask you to do so, drive to the nearest phone and call for either the police or an ambulance, whichever is needed. If you come upon a serious accident scene, telephone for help as quickly as possible.

LEAKING FLUIDS: Do not drive through fluids leaking from the wrecked autos. The heat emitted from your car's exhaust pipes could ignite gasoline fumes. If you drive through oil or antifreeze, it could coat the road surface area of your tires and reduce or eliminate traction, causing YOU to have an accident.

Remember, whether you are involved in an accident or just a witness to one, use caution and good, common sense. Be part of the solution, not part of the problem.

*For ALL Ambulance, Fire, and
Police Service,*

**DIAL
9-1-1**

**Telephone Device for the Deaf
444-0107**

For
**GENERAL INFORMATION
DIAL 444-5555**

St. Louis Metropolitan Police Department
*Designed and written by
District One Public Affairs*

What do I do if . . . ?



**A Citizen's Guideline for
Auto Accidents**

KEEP THIS IN YOUR CAR
Record this information if you
are involved in an accident:

Other Driver's
Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

Driver's License
Number _____

License Plate # _____

Year, Make, Model, Color of other car:

Date and time of the accident:

Other Driver's Insurance Company:

Traffic accidents happen every minute of every day, somewhere in the United States, with some being more serious than others. Most people know what actions to take when they are involved in an accident or witness one. But, many people don't know how to properly react when accidents occur.

Since not every situation can be addressed in exactly the same manner, the following information is designed simply as guidelines to help you better react to an accident scene situation.

WHAT DO I DO IF I'M INVOLVED IN AN ACCIDENT?

CHECK FOR INJURIES: After your car comes to a stop, sit still for a few seconds to collect your wits. Slowly check to see if you have any obvious injuries. Remember, you don't always feel pain right away, even, in some cases, when bones are broken. Make sure your passengers also check for injuries.

- If anyone in your car is injured, consider staying in your car with as little movement as possible until an ambulance or EMT arrives.
- If no injuries are present, exit your auto, when it is safe to do so, and quickly assess the damage. If possible, move your car to the side of the roadway. Do not leave it in the traffic lanes, unless absolutely necessary. An auto sitting in the middle of the roadway is more likely to cause another accident than one parked on the side.

- Don't worry if your insurance agent has told you not to move your auto until the police arrive. The officer makes his reports from statements made by the drivers and witnesses, anyway, not necessarily from the position the cars ended up in after the accident. If necessary, the accident scene can be reconstructed by specially trained officers.

EXCHANGE INFORMATION: Most states require drivers involved in an accident to exchange driver's information with each other, even if a police report is made. The information exchanged should include:

- Name
- Way of contact (phone # or address)
- Driver's license #
- License plate #
- Year, make, model, color of car
- Date and time of accident
- Insurance company

If you feel the other driver is being dishonest with his information, or if he doesn't have insurance, call the police.

WITNESS INFORMATION: Get names and way of contact of any witnesses. Many citizens are willing to bear witness, if they are asked; however, they are not required to.

CONTACT INSURANCE COMPANY:

After the immediate business of exchanging information has taken place, contact your insurance agent and report the incident to him (assuming that a claim will be handled by an insurance company). If

the agent has any questions beyond the information that you can supply to him, have him call the other party involved, or refer him to the police report, if one was made.

WHAT DO I DO IF I WITNESS AN ACCIDENT?

PULL TO THE SIDE OF THE ROADWAY: Do not stop in the street, even if you put your emergency flashers on.

CHECK FOR INJURIES: Ask the parties involved if they need any medical help. If medical help is needed, offer to call an ambulance. Don't call an ambulance or police officer if the parties do not want one.

DO NOT HELP WITH TRAFFIC: At no time should you try to direct traffic, even if the cars are blocking the entire street. Do not set up road flares without the approval of a police officer. Flares burn at an extremely high temperature and could ignite the fumes from spilled gasoline.



