

Driver Letter

A MONTHLY MESSAGE FOR DRIVERS
FROM THE [LOSS CONTROL DEPARTMENT OF THE HARTFORD](#)

April 2006



Speeding.....

Dear Driver:

Speed is a causative factor in **1 out of 8 collisions** and results in killing about **12,000** people every year. The number one unsafe driving behavior is speeding.

How many times have you exceeded the speed limit or driven at a speed that was too fast for the existing conditions such as in rain, snow or fog in the last month? If you are honest, you have probably driven too fast for conditions more than once. Normally, you speed because you truly believe you can get away with it, and because of your "skill", you won't get into trouble. Most of the time it works out but every now and then, the odds and circumstances are stacked wrong, and you end up in a preventable collision.

Higher speeds increase the likelihood of being involved in a collision. The faster your speed, the less time you have to react to developing traffic conditions in the driving environment. It takes longer to stop a vehicle that is traveling at a higher rate of speed than a slower one. When you are involved in a collision, this kinetic energy must be dissipated – and the more there is, the harder this is to accomplish. Consequently, higher speed collisions result in more severe injuries and fatalities.

Driver behaviors that effect driving at a safe and reasonable speed include:

- Being late for an appointment
- Failure to allow sufficient driving time for the trip
- Keeping up with other fast moving traffic
- Being on medication
- Stress

If you are tired, under stress, or on medication, recognize that your reaction time may be longer than usual and consequently, you need to adjust your speed and space cushion accordingly. One of the most common reasons for speeding is being late. Being late causes drivers to "*take chances*". Trying to make up for lost time while driving is a poor decision.



Speeding is a conscious choice. Drivers who choose speeding think they are in control when in fact the opposite happens. According to the [National Safety Council](#) for every 10 miles per hour over 50 mph, the risk of death in a traffic crash is doubled. At 75 mph your risk of death in a crash is six times as great if you were going 50 mph. At 85 mph it is 12 times as great as at 50 mph.

As a defensive driver, make a conscience decision not to speed. Follow these tips:

- Allow an adequate and honest time to reach your destination. Allow time to arrive early so you don't have to speed or rush.
- Check your speedometer – know exactly how fast you are going.
- Be dependable and make a commitment to drive the speed limit and not exceed a safe speed for the conditions.
- Drive in the right lane where other vehicles are more likely driving the proper speed or within the speed limit.
- Don't speed in school or work zones.

Be a Dependable and Defensive Driver

Slow Down

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