

Sergeant Bob's Safe Driving Tips

Retired Police Sergeant Bob Paterson works with The McLennan Group Insurance Inc. to develop practical safety tips for CARP members.

"Don't gamble with your safety. The stakes are too high."

Safe Driver Back-to-School Refresher Course

Avoid a costly traffic violation or school bus related collision by reviewing some basic traffic regulations.

Travelling by school bus is the safest form of student transportation in Canada but the continued success of this delicate system relies on your understanding of local traffic laws.

- Stop in both directions when approaching a school bus with activated overhead flashing lights. Do not proceed until the bus moves, or the overhead flashers are turned off.
 - This seems simple enough, but is the most critical area of concern for students, bus drivers and anxious parents. When approaching the bus from the front you **MUST** stop before actually meeting the front area of the bus. When approaching the bus from the rear you **MUST** stop 20 metres behind the bus.
- The only exception to stopping in both directions is where a permanent median (traffic separating barrier) exists. This applies to quiet neighbourhood streets and busy multi-lane roadways. Stay alert and come to a safe stop for the school bus with overhead flashing lights, even on busy multi-lane roadways.
- Don't be a "creeper". This is the inconsiderate driver who refuses to completely stop and slowly creeps towards the school bus or passengers. The creeper puts the bus driver in a very risky situation and prolongs the traffic disruption. Should the bus driver open the door or delay in case the creeper bolts past endangering the young passengers? Stop means STOP.
- Expect the school bus driver to stop at railway crossings. The school bus driver is obligated by law to stop five metres from the rail, open the door, look and listen for a train and then proceed. In this situation the bus driver may activate the emergency 4-way flashing amber lights that are mounted low but not the overhead flashing red lights.

Summary for Drivers

- This September be extra careful when close to a school bus or children waiting to be picked up. Many youngsters are travelling by school bus for the first time; they are going to be excited and they are going to be relying on you to do the right thing.



- If a driver is not motivated by safety and concern for vulnerable school bus passengers, they should be aware that school bus traffic convictions are costly and have a lasting negative impact on drivers licence records.
- Failing to stop for school bus offences are so important that some provinces now allow for the vehicle owner to be charged. If the police can be supplied with reliable information concerning the location, time, vehicle and license plate number the owner of the vehicle can receive the charge for the offence, even if the driver cannot be identified. This provision means that parents should be discussing the law with young drivers and fleet owners ensuring their drivers are aware. Be careful who's driving your vehicle!

School Bus Passenger Safety Tips for Passengers, Parents and Grandparents

School bus passengers can make their journey safe and secure by following four simple steps. Parents and care givers are encouraged to review these life saving guidelines.

- Wait for the bus well back from moving traffic, especially in icy conditions.
- Step towards the school bus only when it has completely stopped and the door has been opened.
- Board the bus and follow the driver's instructions. Supervising misbehaving children is not the bus driver's priority. Safe operation of a very large vehicle is the first order of business for a well trained bus driver.
- Children should repeatedly be reminded that they should NEVER try to retrieve a dropped item from beside or under the bus. No matter how important the item seems (school work, clothing, lunch box, back pack, toy, etc.) it can be replaced. Speak to the bus driver and never move towards the underside of the bus.



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