

Sergeant Bob's R.I.D.E. Safety 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."



R.I.D.E. Spot Checks

As the Holiday Season approaches, it's a good idea to begin making transportation plans, and thinking about a safe approach to R.I.D.E. (Reduce Impaired Driving Everywhere) spot checks.

The now-familiar R.I.D.E. spot checks have been an effective enforcement, education and public awareness tool in Ontario since 1977. R.I.D.E. is popular with many police services across Canada, particularly in drinking and driving "hot spots" during the Holiday Season.

Since most drivers are likely to approach a R.I.D.E. spot check this season, here are a few tips that will make the check effective and as safe as possible for you, other drivers, and the officers involved.

Please keep in mind that most R.I.D.E. programs are conducted in low light / no light conditions and in a cold, wet environment.

- Drive carefully at all times and don't panic when you see the flares, emergency lights and flashing lights. If you're not speeding, tailgating or going too fast for environmental conditions you will have no problem gradually slowing and stopping. If you're being tailgated, consider activating your emergency flashers for a few seconds.
- If convenient, turn on your interior lights as the officer approaches your vehicle. Police officers can work quickly and safely when they get a reassuring look at the interior and the occupants.
- To further assist the police officer, consider placing your hands momentarily in a stationary position near the top of the steering wheel. Having your hands in clear view allows the officer to work a little more quickly by reducing the threat level and making everyone involved more comfortable.
- Simply respond to a few basic questions and you're normally on your way in a few seconds.

Remember: if you don't drink and drive, you'll have no problems during the R.I.D.E. spot check. Alcohol related crashes continue to be a huge and tragic problem across Canada. A brief interruption in your journey is a small price to pay if police R.I.D.E. officers prevent an impaired driver from injuring or killing a loved one.



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