# SECTION M

## SAFE DRIVING PROCEDURES

1.0     Purpose

Laws and procedures are designed to make driving safer. However, many drivers become more relaxed as they drive. As driving becomes second nature, drivers often pay too little attention to the driving task. Defensive driving is minimizing the odds of an accident occurring. This protocol is designed to assist employees in using defensive driver tactics to be safe while driving.

2.0     Policy

2.1     Only drivers possessing a valid driver's license and authorized by the employer shall be permitted to operate a district vehicle.

2.2     Operators will comply with state and local laws governing the safe operation of a motor vehicle.

2.3     Santa Barbara County Education Office delivery drivers should complete a drivers training course as part of their job. This course is provided by SIPE either online or a hands-on driving training course.

2.4     When parking a district vehicle, a traffic cone should be used. The traffic cone should be placed at the rear bumper near the traffic lane. This procedure requires the driver to visually inspect the surrounding area around the parked vehicle before backing.

2.5     Follow defensive driver recommendations.

2.6     Maintain adequate insurance on the personal vehicle used for company business.

3.0     Procedure

As with many other things in life there is a science part and an art part to driving. Things like checking tire pressure or consulting a map in advance definitely go to the science part and can be taught and reproduced easily in no time. On the other hand anticipating other drivers' moves cannot be digitized, and depends heavily on your experience. Still, this is a skill that one can acquire. It just takes some time and dedication, and the time is in the order of years rather than weeks or months.

3.1     Anticipating other drivers' moves: Try to anticipate the worst in others.

3.2     Clearly communicating your existence and intentions to other drivers.

3.2.1     Make signaling a habit

3.2.1      Let other drivers know of your intentions early

3.2.2      Being predictable helps. Having all your indicators in good working order is great, but they won't help much if you can't be predictable.

3.2.3      Warn others as your stop or slow down

3.3      Leave yourself room for error. An experienced driver maintains enough distance on all four sides of his car to allow him to safely react to the changes on the road.

3.4      Courtesy goes a long way in reducing the level of anxiety around you, thus reducing the odds of an accident.

3.5      Know where you want to go. The first rule of defensive driving is know where you want to go.

4.0      Leading causes of traffic accidents

4.1      Speeding

4.2      Driving while intoxicated

5.0      Road Rage

5.1      Road rage happens when one driver reacts angrily to another driver. Angry drivers may lash out by deliberately braking suddenly, pulling close to another car, or taking more violent steps such as coercing a driver to pull over to "settle" the dispute. Many drivers make a habit of driving with road rage. Here are some suggestions to help you avoid provoking other drivers:

5.1.1      Don't cut off other drivers: When you merge, make sure you have enough room and always signal before you merge.

5.1.2      Don't drive slowly in the left (fast) lane: Avoid using the fast lane except for the brief time it takes to pass another driver. Driving slowly in the fast lane frustrates other drivers.

5.1.3      Don't tailgate: Many drivers get angry when they are followed too closely. Remember to keep the appropriate following distance between your car and the car ahead of you.

5.1.4      Don't signal gestures to other drivers: Keep your hands on the steering wheel. Making obscene gestures to other drivers may provoke them.

5.1.5      Use your horn for emergencies only: Even a polite tap of your horn may be enough to provoke another driver.

6.0     Motorcycle Operation

      6.1        Possess a valid license.

      6.2        Drive with head lights on.

      6.3        Wear approved helmet and visible protective clothing.

      6.4        Always allow other drivers to see you.