

Homeward Race Should Start With Driving Hints Survey

By RICHARD DAERR
Christmas is the time of the year for joy and happiness, not tragedy and sorrow. Every year half a thousand people die on the highway en route or returning from the happy holidays of the yuletide. There are countless others who are injured in Christmas highway accidents.

Dec. 18 at Aggrieland, earlier than that for some, is a day looked to with great anticipation by all, for on this day farewells will be bid and the race for home will be on. The excitement will be immense. The trip will be quick, but will it be tragic?

Many students will be driving long distances straight through at Christmas time. Some tips and cautions, as suggested by Sgt. Paul L. Allen, of the Highway Patrol in Bryan, might help to make Christmas driving safer.

Have the car routinely serviced before the trip. Make sure brakes and tires are checked. These two items account for most of the fatal accidents that result from mechanical failure. Most service stations will check wheel balance and alignment free.

Many blowouts and resulting accidents result from overloading. Don't overload the car if at all possible. (A car is overloaded when five men with normal baggage are loaded into it.) Adjust the speed of the car to compensate for the load.

Sixty per cent of all fatal rural accidents are one car accidents. If you run off the shoulder of the road, don't jerk the car back onto the road. Hitting the edge of the highway could turn the car over. Let the car coast to a slower speed, and then ease it back on the highway.

Don't take any drugs to stay awake. Many people have fallen asleep at the wheel with their eyes wide open due to drugs.

Keep at least one other person besides the driver away. On a lonely road with no one to talk to, the driver could easily dose off and drift off the road and overturn the car.

If everyone is asleep and the driver is sleepy don't force yourself to continue driving. 15 minutes of sleep will help a tremendous amount when you're fatigued.

Curves account for about thirty per cent of all accidents so compensate for them. If a curve isn't marked for safe speed, slow down for it. You might be approaching an unmarked 30 mile per hour curve at 70 miles per hour.

If you drift into the oncoming traffic's lane and a car is approaching try to get back to the right lane rather than heading for the shoulder.

If a car is passing in your lane and you see he isn't going to make it, move to the shoulder. If time permits, put your right turn signal on so he will know you are going to the shoulder. The

situation could present problems if he heads for the shoulder also. If you see him moving for the shoulder, stay on the highway. But don't sway undecidedly between the highway and the shoulder. Such action will almost inevitably lead to an accident. Most important of all, do not panic.

The first part of a holiday is relatively accident free. The excitement keeps the individual alert. It is the returning trips after the holidays that brings in the greatest fatalities. The unexciting task of getting "back

to the old grind" leads to drifting thoughts and falling to sleep at the wheel. Therefore, on the return trip change drivers more often, stop more, keep a conversation going, or keep the radio turned up loud. Be extra cautious of the "other driver."

The greatest number of accidents occur between five in the afternoon and two in the morning. This is the time of day when the most cars are on the road. Everyone seems to be trying to get just a few more miles before stopping for the night. Make special efforts to stay alert

during these hours and drive at a slower speed.

Maintain as near a constant speed as possible. If you drive 80 you're just going to have to slow down all the time. This is dangerous. Just about as much distance is covered if an average of sixty-five miles per hour is maintained rather than speeding up and slowing down all the time. A steady speed also increases gas mileage.

If these suggestions are followed, a safer and more relaxing trip home and getting back to school should be the result.

Holiday Driving Rules Set By Campus Security Head

By IDA BRYANT
Special Writer

If you knew that you were the one who was going to be killed or badly injured in a traffic accident, wouldn't you slow down and observe safety rules?

This was the question of Ed E. Powell, chief of campus security. "Too many students fail to relate safety rules to themselves," Powell said. "Each student should regard himself as one who may be killed."

Powell named several factors which could help keep A&M's

traffic record clear during the holiday season:

1. Don't pass on hills or in no passing zones. Powell said perhaps more students were killed this way than any other. "Students are young and in a hurry to get home, so they take more chances."

2. Drive posted speeds—especially in towns and on curves. Powell pointed out that the people who posted the signs are the ones who know what the safe speeds are.

3. Don't overdrive lights. Two cars may need to drive at differ-

ent speeds in order for their lights to shine ahead adequately. Weather and road contour should be taken into consideration also.

4. Buckle seatbelts.
5. Don't mix alcohol and driving. "The most dangerous drinking driver is not the one who is real drunk," said Powell. "He will drive slow and pull to the right. But one who has had just a few drinks thinks he is the best driver on the road."

6. Be courteous. Powell cited this point as a big safety factor in preventing traffic deaths.



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Students Urged To Set Pace For Safety

The Texas Safety Association Thursday called on university and college students to "set-the-pace" for traffic safety during the Christmas holiday period.

"Thousands of young drivers in the state will be starting 'back home' prior to the weekend traffic rush at Christmas," J. O. Musick, TSA General Manager said. "These drivers can set an example for other holiday travelers by reaching their destinations safely."

Musick pointed out that the college-driver is well-equipped physically for driving. He can react faster in an emergency situation than an older driver. His vision is better and usually he has a better knowledge of his motor vehicle and its performance.

However, he warned that the "well-equipped" driver can get into trouble in traffic because of his lack of driving experience.

"The ability to handle an automobile safely where bad road or weather conditions exist is important and frequently it demands a great deal of driving experience," he explained.

Musick suggested the safest way to deal with inexperience on the road is to cut down speed. Speed that is too fast for existing conditions is one of the major factors contributing to fatal accidents.

He also advised students to get plenty of sleep before starting their trips and to take several rest stops along the way.

"If possible, alternate with other drivers. It's much less tiring and a great deal safer," he concluded.