

DEFENSIVE DRIVING III

Plan an Escape Route & Taking Decisive Action

This is the last tailgate in the series designed to ensure that all company drivers know and can apply the behaviors behind the principles of E.S.S.P.T. Today we're going to talk about the principles referred to by the "P" and "T" in E.S.S.**P.T.** – Planning an Escape Route and Taking Decisive Action. Remember to focus on the behaviors behind the principles.

Principle #4 – Planning an Escape Route requires creating "Decision Space" around your vehicle by constantly evaluating traffic patterns around you and **using visibility, time and space to avoid becoming trapped**. It is important that you are able to recognize traps in advance and can yield to other traffic if necessary.

Principle #5 – Taking Decisive Action is based on the use of the other four principles. The better you use the first four principles the more prepared you will be to take decisive action and avoid accidents. Each principle is dependent on the other

BEST PRACTICES

- ☐ *Keep a safe following distance and don't fall victim to tailgating*
- ☐ *Following Distance – 4 / 6 / 8 seconds of space between the front of your vehicle and the rear of the vehicle in front of you. 4 seconds for pickups, 6 seconds for large vehicles, and 8 seconds for vehicles with trailers.*
- ☐ *Use the "Liberty Wedge" when stopped behind other vehicles*
- ☐ *Only pass another vehicle if doing so will create a long-term advantage for you*
- ☐ *Recognize that other drivers must see your vehicle and know what you plan to do*
- ☐ *Try to have planned escape routes in all situations to avoid trouble*
- ☐ *Make sure escape routes provide adequate time and space to react*
- ☐ *Keep a full circle of clear Decision Space 360 degrees around your vehicle*
- ☐ *Yield to other vehicles, if necessary, to maintain that escape route*

TALKING POINTS

- ☐ *Speak with crews about what a "Liberty Wedge" is and why it's important to use*
- ☐ *Ask crews what the proper amount of following time would be when driving a truck and chipper*
- ☐ *Our trucks have had several incidents involving buses, and motorcycles are a warm weather hazard. Speak with crews about increasing following distances when following these vehicles.*