

As a parcel delivery driver, you spend a great deal of time every day driving. Because of that, you are prone to see more than your fair share of aggressive driving. Because of the nature of your job, you are also prone to fall into the trap of aggressive driving. The intent of this Safety Minute is to both help you recognize and respond to aggressive driving exhibited by others and to avoid aggressive driving yourself.

So what does aggressive driving look like? Some of the signs of an aggressive driver include a person who changes lanes abruptly to pass a slower driver, a driver who tailgates in an attempt to get another driver to speed up, and a driver who curses at other drivers. Aggressive drivers put themselves and others at risk on the roads. Aggressive driving is also distracted driving because the focus is shifted from driving defensively.

A variety of studies have revealed certain traits common in aggressive drivers. Not surprisingly, many aggressive drivers display risk-taking behaviors. In addition, people who are experiencing a great deal of stress are more likely to overreact to a simple incident on the road such as being cut-off on the highway. Also, people who are in an extreme hurry on the road may exhibit aggressive driving behavior.

A person who finds him or herself passing cars aggressively in order to get somewhere or feeling extremely angry at other drivers may be an aggressive driver. Recognizing that behavior is an important part of changing it. One effective thing a person can do to avoid aggressive driving is to avoid driving when he or she is upset. Taking a few extra minutes to calm down may help a person avoid an accident and arrive safely at a destination.

A person who encounters an aggressive driver should not react in-kind but should let the person drive on. Not engaging in an argument or an exchange of gestures with an aggressive driver often is all that is needed to avoid a road-rage incident. If pursued by an aggressive driver, drive to a nearby police station or public area.

Finally, people who engage in aggressive driving behaviors take the chance of injuring or killing themselves and other drivers. The legal penalties for aggressive driving vary from state to state. In many states, aggressive driving is a misdemeanor and an offender can be ticketed. Aggressive driving may earn a person a large fine and in some states even jail time. As a parcel delivery driver, you are a professional, and you have the responsibility to travel in the safest way possible.

4 Ways to Tell if you are an Aggressive Driver

- You hit the gas when the light turns yellow
- When someone tries to merge at the last minute, you "teach them a lesson" by not letting them in
- You lay on your horn when someone is slow to respond to a green light
- You're frustrated by a slow driver in the left lane, so you ride their bumper or zoom past them on the right

7 Ways to Avoid Road Rage

- Move over if someone is tailgating you
- Use an "I'm sorry" gesture (e.g. wave) to attempt to defuse the situation
- Plan ahead; allow time for delays during your journey
- Consider whether you've done something to annoy the other driver and adjust your driving accordingly
- Listen to music you enjoy
- Use your horn sparingly
- Avoid eye contact with angry drivers and give them plenty of room