



SAFE DRIVING

TOOLBOX TALK SERIES – DEFENSIVE DRIVING

August 2025

Video Link: [Construction Safety: Safe Driving](#)

After the video, we'll discuss how this applies specifically to your roles in the Town of Perinton.

Why Safe Driving Matters

Driving on the job is one of the most dangerous activities public employees perform. Whether operating a dump truck, pickup, van, or utility vehicle—road conditions, weather, equipment, and other drivers can turn routine travel into a high-risk task.

Accidents don't just lead to property damage—they can cause injury, loss of life, environmental impact, and liability for the Town. This toolbox talk reinforces best practices and habits that protect everyone on the road.

Key Principles of Safe Driving

1. Defensive Driving

- Always be on the lookout for the unexpected: anticipate the mistakes of others.
 - Maintain **360-degree awareness**: check mirrors, blind spots, and intersections constantly.
 - Keep at least a **3-second following distance** (increase in rain, fog, or when towing equipment).
 - Approach all intersections slowly, even if you have the right-of-way.
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2. Work Zone Awareness



- Use **amber warning lights, cones, and signs** to set up a safe perimeter when stopping or working.
 - Wear high-visibility clothing when exiting vehicles on or near roadways.
 - Stay alert to changing traffic conditions and pedestrians around your vehicle.
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3. Eliminate Distractions

- **No phone use** while driving. Texting, calls, or even hands-free conversations divide attention.
 - Avoid eating, adjusting radios, or reaching for items while in motion.
 - Program your GPS and set music or climate controls before driving off.
 - Secure tools and loose items to prevent distractions or injuries during sudden stops.
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4. Adjust for Conditions

- **Slow down** during rain, snow, fog, or icy conditions—leave extra room for braking.
 - Use **low beams** in fog or heavy rain to avoid glare.
 - Clear off **snow, ice, and mud** from all windows, mirrors, and lights before driving.
 - Avoid cruise control on slippery roads—this can reduce control during hydroplaning.
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5. Pre-Trip Vehicle Inspection

Before operating any vehicle:

- Walk around the vehicle to check for **damage, fluid leaks, and obstacles**.
 - Test **brakes, horn, turn signals, emergency lights, and wipers**.
 - Ensure mirrors are clean and properly adjusted.
 - Check that all cargo or tools are **properly secured** and not obstructing your view.
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6. Ergonomics and Comfort

- Adjust your **seat** so you can reach pedals without stretching.
- Sit upright with your **back supported** and headrest adjusted properly.
- Keep **hands at 9 and 3** on the wheel for maximum control.
- Use lumbar support or cushions to reduce fatigue on long routes.



7. Use Proper PPE and Safety Protocols

- Always wear your **seat belt**—no exceptions, even for short trips.
 - Wear appropriate **safety gear** if exiting the vehicle in a hazardous or traffic-exposed area (e.g., high-vis vest, gloves, boots).
 - Use **spotters** when backing near people, vehicles, or structures.
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8. Impairment and Fatigue

- Never drive under the influence of **alcohol, drugs, or prescription meds** that impair your abilities.
 - If you feel **fatigued**, pull over and rest. Fatigue can impair you as much as alcohol.
 - Schedule regular **breaks** during long shifts or repetitive driving tasks.
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9. Emergency Preparedness

- Know the location of **emergency equipment**: fire extinguisher, first aid kit, flares or triangles.
 - If involved in a collision:
 - Ensure everyone's safety first.
 - Contact your supervisor and 911 if needed.
 - Safety and Security or your supervisor will ensure the incident is properly documented.
 - **Never leave the scene of an accident** without reporting it—even for minor damage.
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Quick Review Checklist

Do This	Don't Do This
Buckle up every time	Use your phone while driving
Use signals and mirrors	Follow too closely
Perform a pre-trip inspection	Drive when drowsy or impaired
Slow down in poor conditions	Rush to beat lights or traffic
Use spotters when backing	Assume other drivers will yield



Discussion Questions

- Have you had any near-misses while driving a Town vehicle? What did you learn?
- What are some ways you stay alert during repetitive or long drives?
- Do you know where the emergency equipment is in your vehicle?

