FFE TRANSPORTATION Services

Speed Management

ALERT= SAFETY

Speed Management is adjusting speed to the conditions around you.

All drivers must adjust their speed to the condition of the road, weather and traffic. Speeding is risky and often leads to crashes. The faster you go, the longer it will take to stop. Managing speed is a big part of driving safely.

Speeding is defined as exceeding, or driving faster than, the legal or posted speed limits. You can also be speeding when driving too fast for current road, traffic and weather conditions. During adverse conditions you do not have to be going faster than the posted speed limit to be speeding. It takes longer to stop a vehicle the faster you go due to decreased reaction times and increased stopping distances.

Empty trucks will take longer to stop than a loaded truck. This is due to the vehicle having less traction. Road surfaces and weather conditions have a big effect on traction. When adverse conditions are present, adjust your speed to be able to control the vehicle.

Some road surface conditions that may be present are:

- ✓ Wet—reduce speed by 1/4
- ✓ Packed snow—reduce speed by 1/2
- ✓ Ice—reduce speed by 2/3

Sometimes it is hard to tell road conditions. Some areas to watch closely are:

- ✓ Shaded area—stay icy long after areas that are sunny.
- ✓ Bridges—tend to freeze more quickly than the roadway. This is due to air circulating over and under the bridge.
- ✓ Black ice—a thin layer of ice that is clear enough to see the road beneath. Causes the road to look wet instead of icy.
- ✓ Rain—causes hydroplaning (loss of traction). Also after a long dry spell, the beginning of rain will cause the road to be slippery. This is due to oils rising to the surface of the road because of the rain.

Hydroplaning can cause you to lose control of your vehicle. Water and slush may cause this to happen. Speeding during these conditions will increase the chance of hydroplaning. If you find yourself hydroplaning—gradually decrease acceleration, do not brake and do not turn the steering wheel.

Speed affects your field of vision which consists of front and both sides. The faster you go, the less you can see to the sides. So as speed increases, field of vision decreases. Field of vision is decreased also with certain weather conditions (rain, sleet, snow, fog and smog). When these conditions are present, reduce your speed. You must adjust your speed to how far you can see ahead of the vehicle.

On upgrades and downgrades gravity affects the speed management of the vehicle. To maintain speed on an upgrade you must increase pressure on the accelerator. To maintain speed on a downgrade, you must slow the vehicle to a safe speed in order to keep it under control.

Continual visual search will make driving safer and more efficient. The safest speed in traffic is usually the same speed as other vehicles—as long as posted speed limits are not being exceeded. Accidents happen more often when vehicles are traveling at different rates of speed. If you drive faster than other traffic:

- ✓ You will have to pass other vehicles (each time you change lanes to pass, there is a risk of an accident).
- ✓ You will tire from driving faster.
- ✓ You will waste fuel and increase wear on the brakes (going with the flow is not only safer but also easier and cheaper).

Safely maneuvering on a curve or ramp requires speed adjustments as necessary. The center of gravity will determine the speed used when entering a curve or ramp. The load distribution will determine your center of gravity. Posted speeds for curves and ramps may still be too fast for your vehicle. The higher the center of gravity, the more you need to slow down. Do not brake during a curve, instead slow down prior to entering the curve.

There are three distances to take into consideration when stopping a vehicle:

1. Driver reaction distance—distance traveled during the time you identify a hazard to the time you apply the brakes.
2. Vehicle braking distance—distance your rig travels from the time you apply pressure to the brake pedal until the rig stops.
3. Total stopping distance—driver reaction distance plus the vehicle braking distance.

Remember:
There is no speed that will always be a safe speed. Speed must be adjusted to the conditions. And conditions can and do change often during a trip.