



## Defensive Driving

- ☛ Defensive driving is important for the protection of both fellow employees and the general public.
  - It is best to take a defensive approach when driving. Be one step ahead of the other drivers on the road.
- ☛ Always be alert. This is especially important on the way back to the yard or home after a long day on the job.
  - Keep away from those drivers who are driving unsafely.
  - Do not tailgate or speed.
- ☛ Part of defensive driving is taking driving conditions into consideration.
  - Slippery or icy conditions will require longer stopping distances, so increase the distance between your vehicle and the vehicle in front of you.
  - Bad weather conditions create havoc when towing trailers or kettles. Again, increased following distances and slower speeds are key.
  - Daytime driving in the sunlight can also create problems for some drivers. Make sure your windshield is clean, and wear sunglasses.
- ☛ Your personal vehicle and your company vehicle probably react differently.
  - Chances are, you are carrying heavier loads than you would in your personal car. Vehicles with heavier loads require longer stopping distances.
  - Increase your stopping distance even more if you are trailing a kettle, full or empty.
  - Pick-up trucks can be light-ended, especially when they're empty. Be prepared to compensate for rear-wheel "lock-ups" and skids, especially when road conditions are less than ideal, such as rain, snow, and ice.
- ☛ Defensive driving hinges on the driver's mental state.
  - Make sure you are well rested and in good mental and physical health.
  - Do not drive if you are under the influence of alcohol or drugs. Prescription or over-the-counter drugs can also make you drowsy, so be careful.
  - Avoid aggressive drivers. Keep your temper in check, even when you feel you are right.
  - Be prepared to yield the right of way even if the other driver is wrong.

### *Defensive Driving Training Tips*

- Encourage employees to discuss some accidents they have been involved with, including those at work.
- Discuss how those accidents could have been avoided.
- Ask the crew the following questions:
  - What are some signals of aggressive driving exhibited in other drivers?
  - What are some other conditions that warrant the need for slower driving?