Controlling the Consequences of a Crash

Fact Sheet 10.5
Content Information

Evasive Maneuvers

Avoiding a collision

To avoid a collision, you may have to make a sudden change in the vehicle's speed and direction.

Deciding which maneuver to use

It is usually better to use evasive steering than braking because a driver can steer the vehicle quicker than s/he can stop it. Although to use evasive steering, the driver must have identified an alternate path of travel.

Evasive steering

Quick steering is often preferable to a stop when:

- There is space to the side – a paved shoulder is safest
- Stopping distance is questionable
- There are cars close behind

The driver should have a good grip with both hands on the steering wheel at the 9 and 3 o'clock or 8 and 4 o'clock hand position. Drivers need to:

1. Turn the wheel 180 degrees (a half circle) in the direction of the turn.
2. Counter-steer immediately by turning the wheel as much as possible in the opposite direction to turn the vehicle back toward the original lane.
3. Turn the wheel back to the original straight-ahead position as the vehicle begins to return to the intended lane. These three movements must be made as one continuous, smooth steering response.

Controlling the Consequences of a Crash

Fact Sheet 10.5 continued
Content Information

Evasive Maneuvers

Evasive braking

If there is no space to the side or the driver has not identified a space, a driver must brake to avoid a collision. In many cases, the best action is a combination of braking and evasive steering.

If the vehicle has ABS:

- Firmly press the brake pedal until the vehicle stops or the proper speed is reached.
- If a driver puts on the brakes hard enough to engage the ABS, he/she will feel the brake pedal pulse back against his/her foot. This sensation is normal and indicates the system is working properly.
- The driver should not pump the pedal or remove their foot from the brake.

If the vehicle does not have ABS:

- The driver can cause the vehicle to skid if s/he brakes too hard.
- Apply firm, steady pressure on the brake pedal just short of lockup – the point at which the wheels stop turning.
- If the wheels do lock, the driver must ease up on the brake pedal slightly and quickly to get the wheels to begin rolling again, then apply the brakes again, just short of lockup.
- As soon as the vehicle stops skidding, push down on the brake pedal again. Keep doing this until the vehicle has stopped.

Evasive acceleration

This emergency technique is used less frequently mainly because the dangerous event that drivers have to respond to is in front of them. However, the accelerator can be used to avoid crashes at intersections and in merging situations.

The driver may not be able to get completely out of the way, but acceleration may move the point of impact to the rear of the vehicle, away from the passenger compartment. Be sure to slow down once the danger has passed.

Controlling the Consequences of a Crash

Fact Sheet 10.5 continued
Content Information

How to Minimize the Consequences of a Collision

Controlling consequences

- Avoid head-on collisions
- Drive off road rather than skid off road
- Hit something soft rather than something hard
- Hit something going your way rather than something stationary
- Hit stationary object with glancing blow or at an angle
- Hit stationary object rather than an approaching object
- Steer to avoid oncoming traffic
- Avoid direct impact

Hit from the rear

If a driver is about to be hit from the rear, the driver should press him-her-self against the back of the seat and put his/herhead against the head restraint to avoid being thrown forwards. The driver should be ready to apply his/her brakes so s/he will not be pushed into another vehicle.

Hit from the side

If a driver is about to be hit from the side, the driver should get ready to steer or brake to prevent the vehicle from hitting something else.

Hit from the front

If a driver is about to be hit from the front it is important to try to have a "glancing blow" rather than being struck head on. If a collision is about to happen the driver should try to turn the vehicle. At worse, the vehicle will be hit with a glancing blow or might miss it.

