



Press Release

For Immediate Release

June 17, 2008

Contact: Pamela Bush

508-475-0032

pbush@biama.org

Summer Driving Tips from the Brain Injury Association

The Brain Injury Association of Massachusetts wants to help keep you safe on the roads this summer. Car crashes are a leading cause of traumatic brain injury, and reckless driving behaviors are a major contributor to vehicle crashes.

Here are a few things to think about before you hit the road:

- Summertime volume is much heavier than at any other time of year. There are simply more travelers sharing the roads, especially afternoons and weekends. The nicer the weather, the heavier the traffic.
- Wear your seat belt, without exception. In the summer, more people drive convertibles, or drive with their windows down and sunroofs open. Safety belts provide the greatest protection against ejection in a crash. Seventy-five percent of people ejected from cars are killed. Make sure you and your passengers are buckled in at all times.
- School is out. Be aware you may encounter more inexperienced teenaged and young adult drivers on the roads, so use caution. Motor vehicle crashes are the number one cause of death for 16 to 24 year olds.
- Be cognizant of out-of-state drivers who may be unfamiliar with Massachusetts highways. Give them room. They may be more distracted by road signs, change lanes more often, and be prone to last-minute exit ramp maneuvers.
- When traveling for a vacation, pack smart. Don't pile your items so high that they block your outward visibility. This is especially important when changing lanes and backing up.
- Don't drive while tired. Make several stops along a multi-hour drive to stretch.
- Don't speed. Driving the speed limit saves lives and gas.
- Don't tailgate. Follow the three-second rule. When the vehicle in front of you passes an object on the roadway, count three seconds before your car passes the same object. If you can only count to one or two, you are following too closely.
- Don't have too much fun at that summer party. Never drive under the influence of alcohol or drugs. Choose a designated driver before the event.
- Don't drive while distracted. GPS systems can help you navigate your way, but can also be distracting. Check your route beforehand and don't rely blindly on the GPS's routing. Bring maps as well. Leave the cell phone talk for emergencies only.

The Brain Injury Association of Massachusetts, a private, non-profit organization, provides support services to brain injury survivors and their families, offers programs to prevent brain injuries, and educates the public on the risks of irresponsible behavior and the impact of brain injury.

###