

# SMART DRIVER<sup>®</sup>

February 2022

## THOU SHALL NOT COMMIT TAILGATING

Tailgating in traffic is one of the deadliest sins out there on the road.

Most drivers are irritated by someone driving closely behind them. If the tailgater is pulling a fully loaded 18-wheeler, it not only causes anger, but also can be downright terrifying. Many motorists who have been tailgated by a truck driver spend the next several days cursing the whole industry to anyone that will listen.

As professionals of the trucking industry, Old Republic Canada wants you to keep in mind that tailgating is not just a public relations issue, it is also very dangerous and costly.



### A SAFETY GAMBLE

Some truck drivers believe they can “stop on a dime” since they have air brakes. However, they cannot. Some think that since they have 18 wheels, they have 18 sets of brakes. But they do not. The fact is that it takes longer to stop a tractor-trailer than a car, air brakes or no air brakes. Plenty of time is needed to perceive the problem, react, and then stop.

When a driver is getting his or her CDL, he or she should have been taught under ideal conditions that it takes over 300 feet (91 meters) to safely stop an 18-wheeler going 55 mph (88.51 kph) on dry asphalt. If the speed is 65 mph (104.6 kph), a driver needs 395 feet (120.4 meters) to reach the stopping distance.

Add in factors such as wet weather, ice, fog, ABS braking systems, downhill grade, or poorly adjusted brakes, and a driver may need a couple of football fields to stop, not just one.

### CREATING A SAFETY MARGIN

Drivers should give themselves a proper margin of safety by mastering the six-second rule and 7 is better. They should pick a fixed point, and count “one-thousand-and-one, one-thousand-and-two...” until they have counted to at least six. If a driver reaches the fixed point before he or she finishes counting, then her or she is too close.

It is not always easy to maintain the proper following distance, but if a driver travels slightly slower than the flow of traffic, the proper following distance should be attainable.

Speed makes a difference, too. Excess speed and tailgating go hand in hand. If drivers find themselves slipping into a pattern of speeding and tailgating, they should slow down.

We don't want tailgating to play any part in your travels. Don't gamble with your safety and the safety of others.

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# Knowledge Verification

Driver's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Driver's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Emp/Unit#: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Witness Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Please answer, and forward a completed copy to your Safety Department/Safety Representative.

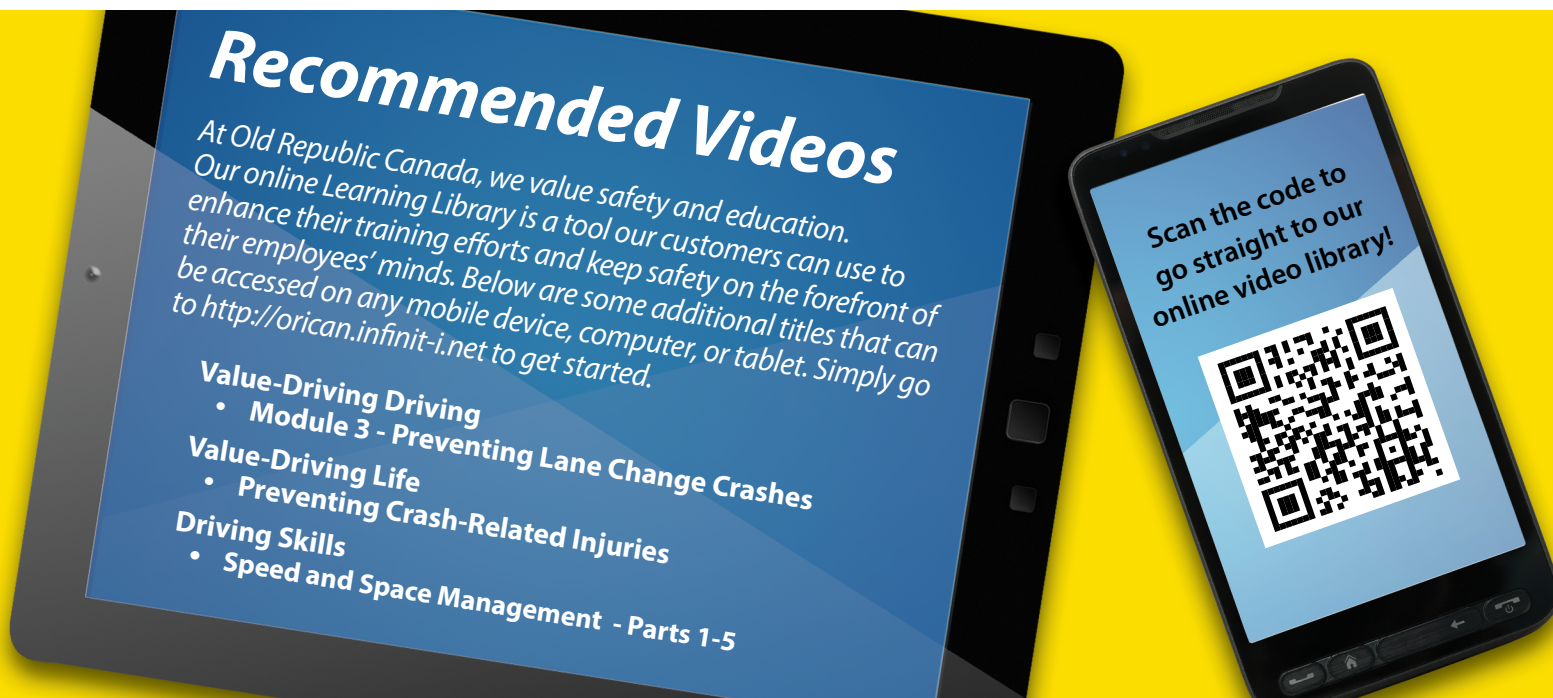
1. Excessive speed and tailgating are unsafe.
2. Using a five second following distance is safe.
3. Drivers who tailgate reflect poorly on the industry.

True False

True False

True False

Answers:  
1. True  
2. False  
3. True



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