

Operation Safe Driver 2016



Over 20,000 citations and warnings were issued to commercial motor vehicle (CMV) drivers and private passenger-vehicle drivers during the Commercial Vehicle Safety Alliance's (CVSA's) annual enforcement campaign against unsafe driving behaviors.

CVSA's Operation Safe Driver Week took place October 16-22, 2016, at locations across the United States and Canada.

In 2017 as an industry we will see safety blitzes come and go followed by the published statistics. Do you have something in your safety plan to keep your fleet from being a statistic?

A few suggestions are to talk with your drivers. It may consist of short conversations in the drivers room over a cup of coffee. A one on one conversation out in the yard with the driver discussing a safety subject, it could be in general vehicle inspections, to being specific about brake checks.

We have all heard it at one time or another that safety starts at the top down. To me that is one of the most important messages that a fleet owner or a manager can send to the employee's.

Share your victories with your drivers. Such as clean inspections, miles or kilometers of collision free driving. At the same time share with your drivers the stats(drivers) that were cited for violations in the last month.

$$6+3=9$$

$$\text{So does } 5+4=9$$

The way you do things is not always the only way to do them.

Respect other people's way of thinking.

Author Unknown

**TS&CS is your
formula for safety
519+748+4420**

Safety Responsibilities

Preparation is always the key to success, Leaders, Managers; Supervisors need to gain an understanding of roles and responsibilities of their position.

*Check out our website
www.transportationsafetycs.ca
for past issues on the
Safety Lane as well as
many other interesting
articles.*

If you have an industry article to share please forward it to
mike@transportationsafetycs.ca

High Risk Drivers

The subject of high risk drivers to me is an interesting topic and unfortunately something that I believe not enough fleets take seriously.

I am sure that when people in the transportation industry including enforcement and insurance for the most part think about the driver that is high risk first off because of the numbers of collisions, maybe it is those little dingers. Is it the number of moving violations? With the internet and other technology it is simple to initiate a driving complaint against a driver of a commercial motor vehicle. Those are all items that can point to a driver being a high risk driver.

Before I jump into this I want to go back to the driver that reports the little dingers. It is nice to know that this driver is responsible and reports those dingers to his/her company. I do not have statistics but I would guess for every reported dinger there is more than one dinger that has not been reported in the fleet.

The other day I read an article (from Fleet Owner February 3, 2017 on high risk drivers that looked at it from totally another perspective and that is from the medical aspect. Being part of the aging work force I can attest that as we age our reflexes are not the same. We tend to take longer to mend. Some will suck it up and report to work with an injury that slows the reaction time to a dangerous situation. Maybe there is some medication involved the delays the perception time of a hazardous situation.

Drivers with several Health issues as obesity, diabetes, heart disease and high blood pressure are more likely to be involved in a crash than truckers with only one condition, according to research titled "Multiple Conditions Increase Preventable Crash Risks among Drivers" While this conclusion may seem obvious, the numbers are striking. Of about 38,000 drivers whose medical and crash records were studied, those with three or more ailments had a crash frequency of 93 incidents per million miles compared to 29 per million miles for all drivers.

I cannot recall if mental illness was addressed in the article. Yes it is something that should be part of the list. In some of these cases an employer is often times not aware of health conditions. With Human Rights and Privacy it can be a slippery slope and a line most HR people are afraid to cross. The unfortunate part of all this is the fleet operator has a huge investment in rolling asset and customer service which boils down to the cost of insurance, due diligence. Or what is reasonable. This is something that must be discussed at top management level and with some legal advice.

Seat Belt Law & the Story of Barb Burke 41 years ago

In the 2016 Winter Newsletter I had a trivia question in regards to the anniversary of the Ontario Seat Belt Law. Much to my surprise I received this message back in regards to the article.

Dear Mike,

I was just reading your Winter Safety Newsletter and I found the trivia question very interesting and here's why:

My sister (Barb, 18 at the time) was the first fatality after the law came into effect and there was much ado about the whole law and whether or not it caused her death.

To give you some background information; my sister worked both full-time and part-time. She was attempting to pay off the loan on her car. Saturday March 13, 1976 she was to attend a McDonald's crew meeting (a staff meeting); so my Mom (who didn't drive at the time) went with her to go grocery shopping and after the meeting my sister would pick her up. The weather at the time was typical for March – warm up during the day and then dropping below freezing at night.

They were driving on Fourth Line Road outside of North Gower ON (within 10 miles of home) when my sister; hit a patch of black ice and the car spun around 360 degrees and slid off the road; flipped over and went into a ditch with approximately 4 feet of icy, dirty water. The crash into the ice broke the glass and the vehicle filled with water. Surrounded by ice; my Mom and Barb couldn't get the car doors opened.

My Mom attempted to get out of her seat; however couldn't figure out what was holding her in. She came to realize she had her seatbelt on. She had difficulty finding and removing her seatbelt. While attempting to get out of her seatbelt she kept telling my sister to keep her head above the water. When my Mom got her seatbelt off she moved around the vehicle and my sister took her hand. With her free hand my Mom kept pounding on the car, in hopes that someone would hear her. Every time she stopped pounding she started to freeze because she was submerged in the cold water. By now my sister had either put her body onto the horn or as she drowned her body just fell onto the horn. When my sister let go of my Mom's hand; my Mom knew she was gone.

At some point during this the local township grader operator (Bob Pratt) went past them and Mom could hear the sound of the road slush and snow. Mr. Pratt decided that morning to turn around and go back down Fourth Line Road and he would complete the next secondary road later.

Mr. Pratt could hear the horn and because he was sitting up higher on the grader he could see the wheels of the vehicle. He stopped and went into the ditch to assist. When he got the ice away from the driver's door he pulled my Mom from the back seat. She had maneuvered herself to the back seat. She doesn't know how as it was so dark, wet and cold. It is my understanding that Mr. Pratt broke two jackknives cutting my sister out of her seatbelt.

We received a call at our home notifying my brother and I that they had been involved in an accident. We went to the scene. They wouldn't let me see anything. A neighbour to the scene attempted to calm me; repeating over and over that my Mom was fine and when I asked about my sister she wouldn't answer me. CONTINUED ON PAGE 4

My brother went to speak to my mother who was in an ambulance and my sister laid on the shoulder of the road in a body bag. What seemed like a life time of time passed before my brother came back to his car to tell me; Barb had died.

Because this was the first fatal accident after the seatbelt law came into effect; there was a Coroner's Inquest into her accident in an attempt to determine whether or not the seatbelt caused her death. The MTO also completed an investigation. As part of their investigation the MTO completed a re-enactment of the collision. The goal was to get out of their seatbelts. Two MTO gentlemen were provided instructions; then strapped in; the vehicle turned upside down, the surroundings darkened; however they **did not** place them in 4 feet of ice water. Both gentlemen later testified at the Coroner's inquest that once turned upside down and the environment was turned black they too had some confusion and struggled to get out of their seatbelts. The Coroner discussed her autopsy and the MTO discussed their findings.

Due to the significance of this event; their accident became an episode on W5. W5 interviewed my Mom because she was the survivor in the car. The story went across the country; several different newspapers were running the story because it was the first fatality and it was up for determination as to whether or not the seatbelt took her life.

The MTO's conclusion was inclusive as to whether or not the seatbelt caused my sister's death and therefore the seatbelt law would remain in effect. Until the MTO started issuing fines for seatbelts it was very difficult to get my mother to wear a seatbelt.

It has taken me a long time to be able to share this story when I teach Defensive Driving. I share it now whenever I can because it helps make Defensive Driving more personal to those in attendance. If the statement that events in life "happen for you and not to you"; then this event would be in my life to help me assist drivers with driving defensively and staying alive. I would not wish this kind of tragedy on anyone.

Her name was Barbara Burke; she was my older sister; she enjoyed life and I still miss her today. Yes, 2016 is the 40th year for the seatbelt law.

By your question, you were (unbeknownst to you) remembering Barb. It is comforting to see and is greatly appreciated. Mike, Thank you.

Patricia Burke

When I received this e mail from Patricia back in December I was very choked up by what Patricia had shared with me.

I had never met Barb or her mother, however I am thinking my roots in Road Safety had just created a bond between us. Thank you to the Burke Family for sharing this story with myself and the readers of Safety Lane.