Driving in Rural Areas

82 percent of a miles of roadways are rural roads.
Different types of Roadways

• Rural roads are constructed of many different types of materials.
• Some are paved
• Others are not.
Different types of Roadways

• Road side shoulders can be wide or narrow paved or gravel.

• Road surfaces may be smooth or in poor condition.
Speed

- Determining a safe speed is critical for safe rural driving.
- Speed will affect...
  - Line of sight
  - Stopping distance
  - Vehicle control
- The amount of damage and injury in a collision.
Speed

- Many rural roads have speed limits of 55MPH.
- Some states allow speeds greater than 55mph.
Speed

• Posted speeds are the maximum speeds allowed under ideal conditions.

• When not ideal…

• Safe speeds should be used

• That means driving slower!!!
Speed

• Always use your common sense and never drive faster than conditions permit.
Traffic Controls

- Pay attention to traffic...
- Signs, signals and markings.
- They provide advance information and warnings of...
- Hazards you cannot yet identify...
- Major intersections ahead...
- Unusual/hazardous conditions
Roadside Hazards

- Shoulders may be uneven with the edge of roadway soft or narrow.
Curves

- Rural roads typically have many curves.
- Collisions occur at curves because the speed on the approach is too great.
- Before approaching a curve you will likely notice a yellow warning sign.
Hills

- Unless they have very steep slopes…
- Hills are usually not marked.
Rural Situations You Might Encounter

- Slow moving vehicles
- Animals
- Railroad crossings

Much farm equipment is wide and ungainly, so be extra careful.
Slow Moving Vehicles

• Some of the possible slow moving vehicles you will encounter on rural roads.
Mountain Driving

- Presents more problems and special situations than driving in flatter areas.
- Effects of gravity are constantly at work.
- Mountain roads often zigzag across a mountain...
- Called switchbacks.
Driving up a Mountain

• Accelerate steadily to maintain speed...gravity is constantly pulling your vehicle downhill.
• If the slope is steep you might have to downshift to a lower gear.
Driving down a Mountain

• Gravity will pull your vehicle faster and faster if you don’t resist it.
• Adjust speed with an occasional use of the brakes.
• DO NOT RIDE THE BRAKES!!
• They will overheat and make them fade.
• Keep speed low enough to maintain your car in your lane
Weather in Mountains

- Weather conditions can suddenly change in the mountains.
- Some mountains become blocked with excessive snow.
Weather in Mountains

• Fog, snow and ice can make mountain driving more difficult.

• Tune into radio frequencies with weather updates
Effects of altitude on drivers

- Shortness of breath,
- Faster heartbeat,
- Headache,
- Reduction in concentration
- Drowsiness.
- Effects worst if you are tired.
Effects of altitude on Vehicles

- Thin mountain air can affect your vehicles engine.
- Climbing power is reduced.
- Acceleration becomes sluggish.
- Temp of the water in your radiator increases…
- May cause car to overheat.
- If A/C is on…turn it off.
Effects of altitude on Vehicles

• Check your gauges and warning lights often.
• If car starts to get hot turn on heater.
• Anyone know why?
• Get car serviced regularly if you do a lot of mountain driving.
Driving in the Desert

What are some of the effects the heat can have on a driver?

On a vehicle?
Effects of heat on driver

• To reduce effects of hot desert driving you should…
• Wear good quality sunglasses.
• Plan more frequent stops
• Change drivers if possible
• Carry extra water.
Effects of heat on driver

- Glare from the intense sun can reduce you’re your vision.
- Heat can cause great stress on you when your driving long distances.
Desert driving

- Deserts are hotter than most drivers imagine.
- Always prepare yourself and your vehicle in advance.
Effects of heat on vehicles

- The more desert driving one does the more frequent service their vehicle will need.
- Coolant levels
- Tire pressure
Flash Floods

• A Flash flood is a sudden unexpected rush of water from heavy rain.
• In the desert it’s especially dangerous because the ground washes away easily.
• Seek higher ground.
Flash Floods
Flash Floods