

NEW DRIVERS
SHARING THE ROAD

KELLY MANNING: Welcome to DMV Infocast, an audio production of the Connecticut Department of Motor Vehicles. This is Kelly Manning, Infocast Editor.

Learning how to share the road with others is important. Today we are here with **Mark Silbo**, DMV's Program Coordinator of the Handicap Driver Training Unit. Mark is going to explain who we are expected to share the road with and how to do so safely.

KELLY MANNING: Mark, can you list other people or vehicles that we are expected to share the road with?

MARK SILBO: Yes. We are expected to share the road with motorcyclists, bicyclists, farm vehicles, like tractors, buses, trucks, pedestrians and sometimes even people riding horses.

KELLY: Beginning with motorcyclists, can you give us any tips on how to share the road safely with motorcycles?

MARK: The best advice is to treat motorcycles like a car or a truck. Give them the same amount of room or more room when following them or passing them. Be courteous and respectful of a motorcyclist just like you would with any other motorist.

KELLY: What about bicyclists? Do they have to follow the same laws as a car? Is there anything that people should be cautious of when they see a bicycle on the roadway?

MARK: When operating on the road, a bicyclist is supposed to follow the rules of the road, just like any other operator of a motor vehicle. This includes stopping at lights and stop signs and granting the right of way when appropriate. Motorists should be aware that many bicyclists are young and inexperienced. They may not know or always follow the rules of the road. So pay more attention and expect the unexpected when dealing with bicyclists, especially younger cyclists.

KELLY: Once in a while I'll come across a slow moving farm vehicle on the road. Do you have any tips for a situation like this?

MARK: Farm vehicles tend to be larger, slower moving vehicles like tractors. So the best thing is to basically treat them like you would a large truck. Give them a little bit more room and safely pass them at a time and place where the ability to pass them is safe. In other words, you want to make sure that you can be able to see around them and make the pass safely.

KELLY: Especially in urban areas, there are a lot of pedestrians crossing the street. Can you give us any advice on what we should do when we see pedestrians?

MARK: Yeah. Proceed cautiously. Although pedestrians are supposed to wait for walk signals and cross at crosswalks, and only cross at corners with a traffic light, this may not always be the case. In urban areas with a lot of pedestrians and congestion, do your best to keep an eye on the pedestrians, especially at lights with crosswalks. And be ready for a pedestrian to make an attempt to cross even at inappropriate times.

KELLY: Well, it's not very often I will see a horseback rider or a horse pulling a buggy on the roadway. How can a person safely handle a situation like this?

MARK: You don't want to startle a horse at any time. So the best advice is to treat the horse or horse and buggy like a motor vehicle and follow at a safe distance. If the horse or the buggy is moving at a slow pace, be patient and only pass when it's safe to do so. And when you do pass, pass very cautiously.

KELLY: I know sharing the road with trucks is a discussion in itself, but can you give us a brief overview on what to do when we approach trucks on the roadway?

MARK: First and foremost is to be aware that trucks are heavier, less maneuverable, and need more room to stop than cars. Trucks need to make wider turns, and it's harder to see around trucks. So give yourself more room behind a truck to see around it. And don't tailgate. In fact, stay out of all the truck's no-zones, which are indicated in the Connecticut Driver's Manual.

KELLY: Well, thank you, Mark, for being with us here today and helping us learn how to share the road.

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