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Take it easy around big rigs – be patient when trying to pass

Edmonton... Commercial vehicles require more space to maneuver. Whether accelerating, braking, climbing a hill, switching lanes or turning onto a side street, big trucks must perform maneuvers that are different from those of passenger cars. Big rigs also have larger blind spots and need more time to brake. Be patient when trying to pass them, and give them the room they need on the road.

As a passenger or driver, you are more likely to be seriously injured or killed in a crash with a big rig because of the physical differences in weight, stopping distance and rollover potential. In fatal crashes involving big rigs, more than 75 per cent of drivers of the other vehicle made a driving error that contributed to the collision. When it comes to injury collisions, almost 50 per cent of drivers of the other vehicle made an error.

Here are some safe driving tips for motorists and commercial vehicle operators to remember when sharing the road.

For drivers of passenger vehicles:

1. Stay out of blind spots! Stay far enough behind big trucks so that you can see both side mirrors on the truck. If you can't see the truck driver, he can't see you either!
2. Never cut in front of these vehicles.
3. Allow yourself extra time to pass a big rig.
4. Give lots of notice when signalling to turn or change lanes.
5. If you are driving beside a truck – watch for turn signals because many trucks require a wide turning radius.

For drivers of commercial vehicles:

1. Pull over when feeling tired – it could save your life or someone else's.
2. Be alert to the actions of oncoming drivers and other drivers at intersections.
3. Complete proper pre and post trip inspections to ensure your vehicle is operating properly.
4. Ensure your vehicle is within the allowed weight limit to prevent damage to roads and bridges. This also helps you operate your vehicle more efficiently when stopping or braking.
5. Give lots of notice when signalling to turn or change lanes.

For more information, contact the Office of Traffic Safety at 780-422-8839 or your Regional Traffic Safety Coordinator. To find your local coordinator, visit www.saferoads.com and click on Contact Us, then the [Regional Traffic Safety Coordinator](#) on the left-hand side.

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