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SAFE DRIVING TIPS: FOLLOWING DISTANCE

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A large percentage of traffic collisions could be avoided if drivers used one simple rule more regularly: increase following distance on the road.

In NYC Fleet CRASH reporting, rear-end events are the leading cause of collisions that result in injuries, with rear-ends involved in 28% of these events last fiscal year.

These events are preventable and largely result from being too close to the vehicle in front of you. Also known as tailgating, this practice does not give

drivers enough time to react to sudden changes on the road such as other vehicles merging or stopping short.

As a general rule, at least **2 seconds** following distance should be given on any type of roadway. Choose an object near the road such as a tree or light pole. As the vehicle ahead passes this landmark slowly count aloud, “one-one thousand, two-one thousand.” If you reach the object before you finish the count, you are following too closely.

In specific circumstances, it’s recommended to increase the following distance even further:

- **3 seconds** when passing into a lane of moving traffic or following large trucks.
- **4 seconds** when behind a motorcycle, in poor visibility conditions, or when towing.
- **5 seconds** when crossing intersections or driving in snow or rain.

Please also brake early and gently if you need to stop and turn. It gives vehicles behind you warning that you are slowing down. By focusing on following distance, we can make important steps toward Vision Zero.

FLEET SPOTLIGHT: JOSEPH FIGURELLI OF FDNY

MAHANTH S. JOISHY

NYC spends over \$300 million a year for new fleet units. Behind the scenes of our fleet acquisition program are the critical staff who help prepare the technical specifications for the contracts bid by DCAS.

Associate Staff Analyst Joseph Figurelli is the only contracts specifications writer for FDNY and works on some of the most complex and critical specifications in the City fleet. All FDNY vehicle specifications, including for ambulances, Chief’s vehicles, ladders and other fire apparatus are completed by Figurelli. He played a lead role in the recent large upgrade program for City ambulances which was a partnership between FDNY, OMB and DCAS. Individual specifications can run up to 230 pages long.

Figurelli joined FDNY Fleet Services in July 2005. Prior to City service, he worked at Standard Motor Products for 11 years in marketing and product management. A native and still resident of Staten Island, Figurelli completed both undergraduate and Master’s work at St. John’s University in business. “I’ve been fortunate that all of my jobs, particularly at Fire, have blended my hobbies, education, and experiences all together,” says Figurelli.

FDNY has provided Figurelli the chance to work on light-duty and heavy-duty specialty equipment specs. He also enjoys working on classic cars, especially Trans Ams, in his spare time. Figurelli is extremely meticulous and detail-oriented and a valued part of the FDNY fleet team. “I’d be dead without him,” says Assistant Commissioner of Fleet Services Mark Aronberg. Please stay and keep up the good work.

