

Minor Driving Errors May Cause Major Wreck

At least one official of the Department of Motor Vehicles believes that many one car accidents happen when drivers do the wrong thing in an emergency.

Captain Ed Jones, the high-

way patrol's expert on police pursuit driving, said that physical evidence and statements by witness indicate that minor driving errors often lead to a major wreck.

"It's not uncommon for even



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a good driver to occasionally let his wheels drop off onto the shoulder," Jones said. "It is what he does next that counts. If he follows a natural impulse to jerk the car back onto the pavement, chances are good that he will lose control and have an accident."

Jones described the correct procedure for overcoming such an emergency.

"Concentrate on your steering," he emphasized. "Take your foot off the gas and let the car slow down of its own accord. Or apply the brakes very lightly."

"When speed is sharply reduced, watch for a place with the smallest drop off and steer back onto the pavement."

Jones, whose textbook on pursuit driving is standard fare for rookie state troopers, also warns against excessive speed in entering a curve which can literally throw you into an accident.

"Your best bet, of course, is to slow down before getting into the curve and apply power coming out, but if you've erred at this point, don't make it worse by slamming on brakes."

"Doing that will lock the wheels; you lose directional control and centrifugal force will take over and sling you off the road."

"If your speed isn't too great, easing off the gas may be enough to regain control. If brakes are needed for more slowdown, hit them in short, fast jabs to keep the wheels from locking."

Jones went on to say blow-outs are another emergency which calls for concentration on steering and a gradual slowdown. He reminded drivers that in such situations any braking effort will tend to pull the car sideways.

"A light brake application can be helpful," he said, "if you are prepared for the unnatural pull it creates."

"Keep these emergencies in mind because they can happen to anyone. Remember what you have to do to keep control so you won't turn a bad predicament into an accident."

MORSELS

The only faith that wears well and holds its color in all weathers is that which is woven of conviction and set with the sharp mordant of experience.--Lowell.

An enduring fame is one stamped by the judgment of the future. That future which dispels illusions, and smashes idols into dust.--Gladstone.

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