

North Dakota State University

Driving After Dark

I. Introduction

The intent of these guidelines is to establish proper safety procedures and practices, as well as to promote and provide for a safer environment for students, faculty and staff. Ninety percent of a driver's reaction depends on vision, and vision is limited at night. Depth perception, color recognition and peripheral vision are all compromised after sundown.

Fatigue is another factor to consider when driving at night. The body reacts to darkness as the time to rest, so you may become increasingly tired while driving at night.

II. Purpose

To reduce the risk of a work related injury or death by maximizing personal safety while driving after dark.

III. Goals

To ensure that all faculty, staff and students know and understand the safe operating procedures involved with driving after dark.

IV. Procedures

The following are guidelines to minimize the risks of driving at night.

1. Prepare your car for night driving. Clean the headlights, taillights, signal lights, and windows at least once a week.
2. Have your headlights properly aimed. Misaimed headlights blind other drivers and reduce your ability to see the road.
3. Never drink and drive. Not only does alcohol impair your driving ability, it also acts as a depressant that may lead to fatigue. See Policy 155- Alcohol and Other Drugs-Unlawful Use by Students, Faculty and Staff.
4. Avoid smoking while driving. Smoke's nicotine and carbon monoxide hamper night vision. Smoking is not allowed in State Fleet Vehicles.
5. Reduce your speed and increase your following distance. Judging other vehicle's speed and distances is more difficult at night.
6. Don't overdrive your headlights. You should be able to stop in the illuminated area.
7. Make frequent stops for light snacks and exercise. If you are too tired to drive on, stop and rest a while.