

# **Tipton Elementary School District Reduced Visibility Procedures**

## **LIMITED VISIBILITY**

### **What a Tipton Elementary School Bus Driver Should Know About Limited Visibility**

1. Limited visibility means that you can't easily see around you — in front, behind, or beside the school bus. Your visibility could be only slightly limited or it could be so bad that you see nothing at all.
2. These weather circumstances can limit your visibility.
  - ◆ Fog
  - ◆ Smoke
  - ◆ Dust
  - ◆ Snow
  - ◆ Rain
  - ◆ Sunlight
  - ◆ Dawn, dusk, and dark

### **How a Tipton Elementary School Bus Driver Should Respond to Any Limited Visibility Situation**

- ◆ Turn on your lights.
- ◆ Establish and maintain a safe following distance.
  - ◆ You need to be able to measure 4 seconds following distance to proceed at a speed of 40 mph or less.
  - ◆ If you can only measure 2 seconds, slow down.
  - ◆ If you can only see 15 feet or less, pull over and stop.

- ◆ If you need to stop:
  - ◆ Pull all the way off the roadway; onto a solid shoulder or a side road or a parking lot.
  - ◆ Never stop on the traveled portion of the roadway.
  - ◆ Turn off the regular lights.
  - ◆ Turn on your strobe lights and/or your 4-way yellow hazard lights.
  - ◆ Set the brake and take your foot off the brake pedal.
  - ◆ Put out triangles behind the school bus, if you have them
- ◆ If you can't stop safely:
  - ◆ Proceed slowly until you can stop.
  - ◆ Follow the center painted line and the painted lines on the side of the road.
  - ◆ Turn on all your lights including the strobe and hazard lights.
  - ◆ Sound your horn periodically.
  - ◆ Move students forward in the bus to protect them should you be hit from behind.
- ◆ Radio in to dispatch. You may be requesting help. You at least want to let dispatch know what situation you are in.
- ◆ Be alert to other motorists whose visibility may also be limited by snow on their vehicle or by un-defrosted windows.

<b>Particular Weather Conditions and How a Tipton Elementary School Bus Driver Should Respond</b>
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1. Fog
  - ◆ Anticipate fog when there is moisture in the air and there is a difference in temperature (between air and land or between 2 air masses). Common places to find fog are in low-lying areas or deep valleys, near bodies of water, and along a weather front.
  - ◆ Remember that fog can collect very quickly. Light fog can rapidly become thick pea soup fog and surround you.

- ◆ In addition to the general procedures:
  - ◆ Turn on the strobe light if there is **any** fog.
  - ◆ Remember to use low beams, not high beams.

## 2. Smoke

- ◆ Anticipate smoke when there are range fires or forest fires in the area. There may also be smoke from smaller fires (grass, house, car).
- ◆ Forest fires or range fires can spread quickly so smoke can develop quickly too. Smoke from these fires can cover a large area. Don't expect to be able to drive through it rapidly.
- ◆ For large fires, in addition to the general procedures:
  - ◆ Do not enter smoke if you see it ahead. There is a danger of smoke inhalation and damage to the lungs.
  - ◆ Close all windows.
  - ◆ Turn off vents that bring in outside air.
- ◆ You can drive by smaller fires when you can see past them.

## 3. Dust

- ◆ You cannot anticipate a dust storm. Dust or sand usually arrives without warning.
- ◆ A dust storm usually arrives in the form of a wall of dust and debris miles long and several thousand feet high. Visibility is quickly reduced to zero. Dust storms usually only last a few minutes.
- ◆ In addition to the general procedures:
  - ◆ Do not enter dust if you see it ahead and can avoid it. There is a danger of suffocation.
  - ◆ Close all windows.
  - ◆ Turn off vents that bring in outside air.
  - ◆ Pull off the pavement immediately. Turn on strobe and hazard lights. Set the emergency brake and take your foot off the brake pedal.
  - ◆ If you can't stop, proceed following general procedures.

#### 4. Snow

- ◆ Anticipate visibility problems with snow in blizzard conditions with heavy snow and high winds. In addition, some snow squalls can be very intense.
- ◆ In addition to the general procedures:
  - ◆ Keep going if at all possible since there is a danger of exposure to cold.
  - ◆ If you have to stop, stop where there is shelter.
  - ◆ Watch for snow drifts.

#### 5. Rain

- ◆ Anticipate visibility problems with rain in heavy downpours.
- ◆ In addition to the general procedures:
  - ◆ Pull over carefully, under an overpass if possible.
  - ◆ Watch for flooding conditions.

#### 6. Sunlight

- ◆ Sunlight can cause a visibility problem when the sun is low in the sky and ahead of you and when the sun reflects off the road or another vehicle and causes glare.
- ◆ In addition to the general procedures:
  - ◆ Always have sunglasses readily available.
  - ◆ When there is glare from the road, slow down or stop. Don't proceed until you are sure you can see in front of you. The condition can change quickly.
  - ◆ When there is glare from another vehicle, change your position relative to the other vehicle so that the reflection doesn't affect you.

#### 7. Dusk/dawn/dark

- ◆ While this is not a condition caused by weather, at dusk and dawn your visibility is reduced. However, you may not be aware that your visibility is limited.
- ◆ As a precaution, keep your headlights on. You can use the street lights as a guide to when your headlights should be on or off.

