

Elderly drivers reviewed

"We can't and won't arbitrarily set an age limit at which one would not be allowed to continue driving," said Ed Fulton, Minister of Transportation, at the first national seminar on Strategic Directions for Elderly Driver and Pedestrian Safety.

"While it has been proven that

both physical and mental abilities decline with age, the rate varies widely from person to person."

Fulton was addressing the issue of elderly drivers and how to cope with the increasing numbers of them.

The percentage of Ontario's population in the over 65 category

is rising rapidly. It now stands at 11 per cent and is expected to reach 25 per cent by the year 2026 -- about six per cent higher than the projected national average.

Fulton said seniors are leading more vigorous lives and as a result consider their cars to be

indispensable. "However, their increased dependence on the automobile often comes at a time in life when they are beginning to find driving more difficult," he said.

No matter how hard we try, we cannot restore the quick reflexes or 20/20 vision they had as teenagers. We can, however, work toward reducing the external pressures they must cope with on the road.

Drivers in the 65 to 74-year age group are involved in a lower percentage of accidents than any other group of registered drivers. This percentage remains low right into the upper 70s.

Of course, seniors drive less than other adults. But even with limited distance and time on the road, the accident rate of senior drivers begins to rise sharply in their 80s until it rivals that of drivers 16 to 24 years of age.

"Contrary to the popular belief that expressways and poor weather conditions pose the greatest threats to older drivers, we have discovered that the typical accident happens on a straight, dry road, on a clear day, within 24 kilometres of home. And it happens at a lower speed than other accidents," said Fulton.

Seniors are more often killed or seriously hurt in accidents than younger people...and when they are injured, take longer to recover.

North American highway signs are designed for drivers with 20/25 vision...who can pick out one-inch letters at 50 feet. That exceeds the visual ability of about 40 per cent of drivers between the ages of 65 and 74.

At night, the problem is compounded, as night vision and glare resistance decline sharply with age. Even a 45-year-old needs more light than a 19-year-old to see at night...and takes much longer to recover from the glare of oncoming lights.

Experts agree that eyesight is the most critical faculty for both drivers and pedestrians. Moreover, studies have shown a direct correlation between poor vision and poor driving performance, based on the rate of accidents per kilometres driven.

This growing store of knowledge already suggests some of the things we can and cannot do to help seniors adjust to the demands on them as drivers.

We can't improve their vision. But we can help them see better, sooner, by changing the design and placement of road signs.

We can't make them less vulnerable to injury. But we can reduce the severity of those injuries by stressing the proper adjustment of seat belts and placement of headrests.

Older drivers are often the best judges of their own capabilities. Many have stopped driving at night, in rush hour or on freeways, of their own volition.

For those who aren't prepared to limit their driving, we can make them aware of refresher courses available to upgrade their skills. Driver retraining programs like the Canada Safety Council's "Fifty-Five Alive" program are an excellent way for seniors to pick up new techniques.

More cars could, and should, have those large-digit speedometers. An option to increase the volume of the turn signal indicator would also be a big help to the hearing impaired.

"In Ontario, we subsidize special equipment which makes it easier for seniors and ambulatory disabled persons to use the conventional transit services," said Fulton.

He concluded by saying there are a variety of transportation options which allow seniors to maintain their dignity, independence and self-reliance. All these options must be protected... including the option to continue driving as long as they are capable of doing so.

NOTICE/AVIS

NOTICE TO PUBLIC UNDER THE FOREST FIRES FOREST FIRES PREVENTION R.S.O. 1980, as amended

The period from April 1 to October 31 in each year shall be a fire season.

Fire permits are required for all burning except for cooking or obtaining warmth.

Every person who starts a fire or causes a fire to be started out of doors shall:

- take all reasonable steps to keep the fire under control;
- ensure that a responsible person tends the fire;
- extinguish the fire before quitting the site of the fire; and
- where the fire is started under a fire permit, extinguish the fire or cause the fire to be extinguished on or before expiration of the permit.

Every person who has started a fire outdoors, or is in charge of a fire outdoors, that is not kept under control shall report the fire without delay to a MNR fire officer.

No person shall smoke while walking or working in a forest or woodland during the fire season.

Except under the authority of a Work Permit, no person shall, in or within 300 metres of a forest or woodland:

- carry on any logging, mining, or industrial operation;
- clear lands
- construct a dam, bridge or camp;
- operate a mill for the purpose of manufacturing timber; or
- carry on any operation liable to cause the accumulation of slash or debris.

Any person convicted of an offence under this Act is liable to a fine up to \$1,000.00 or imprisonment to a term of up to three months or both and any costs incurred by the Ministry of Natural Resources to control or extinguish the fire.

Work Permits and Fire Permits may be obtained from your local Ministry of Natural Resources office.

Fire Permits are also available in Marathon at the Ministry of Northern Development and Mines.

AVIS PUBLIC CONFORMÉMENT À LA LOI SUR LA PRÉVENTION DES INCENDIES DE FORÊT L.R.O. 1980, telle que modifiée

La saison des feux débute le 1er avril et se termine le 31 octobre.

Il est nécessaire de se procurer un permis pour allumer un feu à des fins autres que pour se nourrir ou se réchauffer.

Toute personne qui allume ou entraîne l'allumage d'un feu par un acte quelconque doit:

- faire tout en son pouvoir pour maîtriser le feu;
- s'assurer qu'une personne responsable surveille le feu;
- éteindre le feu avant de quitter les lieux; et
- éteindre le feu ou faire en sorte que le feu soit éteint au plus tard à la date d'expiration du permis.

Toute personne ayant allumé un feu en plein air, ou étant chargé de le surveiller et n'arrivant pas à le maîtriser, doit en aviser immédiatement un agent de lutte contre les incendies du MRN.

Il est interdit de fumer en marchant ou en travaillant dans la forêt pendant la saison des feux.

Personne ne doit, à moins de détenir un permis de travail, effectuer les travaux ci-dessous dans un périmètre de 300 mètres d'une forêt ou d'un terrain boisé:

- opérations de coupe du bois, exploitation minière ou exploitation industrielle;
- dégager des terres;
- construction d'un barrage, d'un pont ou d'un campement;
- exploitation d'une scierie en vue d'apprêter le bois de coupe; ou
- opérations susceptibles d'entraîner l'accumulation de débris.

Toute personne contrevenant à cette loi est passible d'une amende pouvant atteindre 1 000 \$ et(ou) d'emprisonnement pour une période allant jusqu'à trois mois, et devra assumer les frais encourus par le MRN pour maîtriser ou éteindre le feu.

Les permis de travail et de feu sont disponibles auprès du bureau du Ministère des Richesses naturelles de votre localité.

Vous pouvez également vous procurer un permis de feu au bureau du Ministère du Développement du nord et des mines à Marathon.



Ministry of
Natural
Resources

Vincent G. Kerrio
Minister



Ministère des
Richesses
naturelles

Vincent G. Kerrio
Ministre

RESCUE BREATHING: 6 BASIC STEPS

1 Shake and shout gently.

Shake the person to see if he is conscious. Ask, "Are you OK?" If there is no response:

2

Call for help and tilt the head back gently, lift the chin to open the airway.

3

Look, listen & feel. Look at the chest to see if it is rising and falling. Listen for the sound of breathing. Feel for air escaping the mouth with your hand or cheek. If you cannot see, hear or feel breathing:



4

Pinch the nose and make a seal with your mouth on the victim's mouth and give two full breaths.



5

Turn your head and look, listen and feel.



6

Give a breath every 5 seconds. Continue until someone takes over from you.

