



Media release
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Drive safe this Easter weekend

Selwyn drivers are being urged to show patience and avoid taking chances when travelling on our roads over Easter weekend.

Many families travel over Easter. Selwyn District Road Safety Coordinator Ngaire Tinning has some advice for drivers to ensure they stay safe during the long weekend.

Share the road. Traffic volumes increase significantly during long weekends. You will have to share the road with other cars, as well as heavy trucks, buses, campervans, cyclists and vehicles towing boats or caravans.

Keep the following points in mind:

- remember that if you are towing a trailer your maximum speed limit on the open road is 90 kilometres per hour. Keep left and pull over when it is safe to let other vehicles pass
- keep a safe following distance between yourself and the vehicle in front. This gives you a safe stopping distance should the vehicle in front of you stop suddenly
- always watch for pedestrians and cyclists, particularly young children as they can be very unpredictable. Make sure you give them plenty of space when passing.

Driver tiredness. Holiday driving often means spending several hours behind the wheel. Long journeys can be tiring, and tiredness can affect your ability to react to unexpected events. There are simple ways to avoid fatigue and improve your alertness:

- get plenty of sleep before your journey, and try to drive at times of the day when you are normally awake
- plan for rest breaks from driving every couple of hours. If you are driving alone get out of your vehicle and even take a short walk to improve alertness

- if possible, share the driving
- use air conditioning if your vehicle has it. Cool air will keep you more alert and will help avoid frustration and stress, which is a major cause of fatigue.

Be patient on busy roads. Busy holiday weekend traffic can test your patience and it's important not to let this lead to making unsafe decisions. Stay safe by:

- being courteous – let others merge into traffic and use your indicators before turning or changing lanes
- allowing extra time for your journey during the holiday weekend
- keeping left unless passing. If you're a slower driver, or towing, pull over in a safe place to let others pass.

Buckle up. If a crash does occur and you or your passengers are not restrained the chances of suffering a serious injury or dying are high. It's the driver's responsibility to make sure that all passengers under 15 years are restrained either in a seat belt or an approved child seat suitable for their size and weight. There is a \$150 fine for each person not buckled up.

"By following this advice people will be able to safely enjoy the Easter break and reduce the amount of stress associated with travelling," says Mrs Tinning.

For more information, please contact:

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