



# PEACOCK GROUP SAFETY MEETING

## Don't Be An Aggressive Driver

### Take Your Good Office Manners on the Road

You're walking along a crowded sidewalk. Someone in front of you is moving slowly and you're in a hurry. Do you scream at them to get out of the way? Follow within inches of their heels until they move aside? Dart around them without warning and immediately slow down in front of them? Odds are, you'd simply wait for a break in the crowd and step around them. Why, then, don't we behave as courteously when we're driving?

Inside our cars, under the cloak of anonymity, we're different. We yell, make rude gestures, blast our horns, flash our high beams, and sometimes make risky maneuvers just to teach someone a lesson. Our behavior becomes beastly - and that's when disaster can occur.

In the suburbs of Washington, D.C., three people were killed during the morning commute. One car cut off another and a speed duel ensued, resulting in a terrible crash. Two of the victims were not even involved in the duel. They were on the other side of the road.

A recent study of Washington, D.C. area drivers showed that more people feel threatened by aggressive drivers than by drunk drivers! What causes this dangerous behavior?

Aggressive driving doesn't just happen. It's the result of a buildup of stressors. We're late for a meeting. We had a bad day at work. We're in a rush to pick up our kids at day care. We're stuck in traffic. All this leads to stress and frustration and even the politest person can become possessed! What can you do to keep yourself - and your car - under control? Here are a few ideas:

Drive courteously! Signal when you want to turn or change lanes. Use your horn sensibly. Don't swerve between lanes, tailgate or speed. Give a friendly wave when someone allows you to merge.

Be tolerant. Remember that other drivers feel stressed, too, and may sometimes exhibit rude behavior. Avoid reaction. Don't let the poor behavior of others affect your skills as a courteous driver.

Allow plenty of time for your trip. Instead of trying to "make good time," try to "make time good."

Make your car a peaceful place. Keep tapes or CDs of soothing music on hand for a relaxing ride.

Avoid the frustration of unexpected mechanical troubles by getting your vehicle serviced regularly.

Remember that driving is not a contest.

Always share the road with pedestrians and bicyclists.

Don't let the beast in your car. Before you start your car, take a minute to relax, let go of stress, and concentrate on the job at hand - driving.

Lead by example. Ensure that the roads of tomorrow will be filled with friendly drivers. Set a good example for your kids.

The best way to tame the beast is not to be one in the first place. Stay calm, stay cool and treat people on the road the same way you would in person - with courtesy!

#### WHAT TO DO IF YOU ENCOUNTER AN AGGRESSIVE DRIVER

Take a deep breath.

Do not respond with a counterattack.

Safely move out of the aggressive driver's way.

Avoid eye contact.

Ignore gestures and don't return them.

Do not challenge an aggressive driver by speeding up, slowing down or swerving suddenly.

Do not fight over a parking spot. Let the other driver have it. It's not worth risking your life.

Get the license number of the offender and report the incident to the authorities.

If an aggressive driver is following you, do not drive home and do not get out of your car. Drive to a police station or a busy public place.

If an aggressive driver is involved in a crash farther down the road, stop at a safe distance from the crash scene, wait for the police to arrive, and report the driving behavior that you witnessed.



## Aggressive Driving Self-Test

Below are 20 items listed in escalating degrees of driver hostility, beginning with milder forms of aggression (step 1) and going all the way to ultimate violence (step 20). How far down the uncivilized road will you allow yourself to go when you are behind the wheel? Take this test and determine if you fit into a zone of aggressiveness.

- 1: Mentally condemning other drivers.
- 2: Verbally denigrating other drivers to a passenger in your vehicle.
- 3: Closing ranks to deny someone entering your lane because you're frustrated or upset.
- 4: Giving another driver the "stink eye" to show your disapproval.
- 5: Speeding past another car or revving up the engine as a sign of protest.
- 6: Preventing another driver from passing because you're mad.
- 7: Tailgating to pressure a driver to go faster or get out of the way.
- 8: Fantasizing physical violence against another driver.
- 9: Honking or yelling at someone through the window to indicate displeasure.
- 10: Making a visible obscene gesture at another driver.
- 11: Using your car to retaliate by making sudden, threatening maneuvers.
- 12: Pursuing another car in chase because of a provocation or insult.
- 13: Getting out of the car and engaging in a verbal dispute, on a street or parking lot.
- 14: Carrying a weapon in the car in case you decide to use it in a driving incident.
- 15: Deliberately bumping or ramming another car in anger.
- 16: Trying to run another car off the road to punish the driver.
- 17: Getting out of the car and beating or battering someone as a result of a road exchange.
- 18: Trying to run someone down whose actions angered you.
- 19: Shooting at another car.
- 20: Killing someone.

### Which zone are you in?

- Unfriendly Zone - steps 1 to 3
- Hostile Zone - steps 4 to 7
- Violent Zone - steps 8 to 11
- Lesser Mayhem Zone - steps 12 to 16
- Major Mayhem Zone - steps 17 to 20.

Hopefully you scored a zero. Probably however at some time or another you have gotten frustrated and scored a 1 or 2. If you scored higher than a 1 or 2 then you have a problem and need to seek some help if you can not change your behavior. If you need help getting out of your zone, ask your employer for information!

## IMPORTANT DATES TO REMEMBER

### 1999

September	17-18	PCOC Executive Committee Standing Committees Board of Directors Caesar's Lake Tahoe
December	3-4	PCOC Executive Committee Standing Committees Board of Directors Ontario Airport Marriott

### 2000

March	24-25	PCOC Executive Committee Standing Committees Board of Directors Monterey Marriott
June	<b>19-25</b> <b>NEW DATES</b>	<b>PCOC 57th Annual Convention</b> Universal City Hilton & Towers Universal City

## REGULATORY Q&A

Recently a Fumigator questioned weather they had to carry Interscans on their fumigation trucks. We look to Section 1971 of the California Code of Regulations dealing with the Fumigation Safety kit for the answer. Subsection "2" of this code was changed in 1996 *from* "Proper testing equipment capable of measuring the required concentration of fumigant" to the current language of "**Proper testing equipment as required by the manufacture's label instructions and all applicable laws and regulations**". With the current language we only need to have "testing equipment" (typically Inerscan or Draeger tubes) when the label requires. This means the only time you would need an Inerscan would be when going to clear a structure for re-entry.