

SafeDriver Monthly Newsletter

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Another Quora Question: When should you use your hazard lights while driving, and what does it indicate to other drivers around you?

It's a common sight on Florida highways, especially during summer thunderstorms; drivers, afraid of being hit, turn on their emergency flashers to try to make themselves more visible in low visibility conditions. What most aren't aware of is that they're breaking the law.

Florida law bans the use of emergency flashers while a vehicle is in motion.



Chapter 316 Section 2397 - 2011 Florida Statutes States:

(7) Flashing lights are prohibited on vehicles except as a means of indicating a right or left turn, to change lanes, or to indicate that the vehicle is lawfully stopped or disabled upon the highway or except that the lamps authorized in subsections (1), (2), (3), (4), and (9) and s. 316.235(5) are permitted to flash.

The only legitimate use for emergency flashers is for disabled vehicles that are stopped on the side of the road and there's a good reason for that.

When you're driving in heavy traffic during a heavy rain storm, all of the flashing lights become confusing. It's easy to mistake brake lights on the vehicle ahead for flashing lights and neglect to apply your own brakes in time to avoid a crash.

If weather conditions are so severe that you feel you need extra illumination, you really should get off the road and wait out the storm.

Remember, in Florida as in most other states, if conditions are so bad that you need to use your windshield wipers, you must also turn on your headlights.

America's Rural Roads: Beautiful and Deadly

A recent report by the Governors Highway Safety Administration (GHSA) gave new support to what highway safety experts have known for a long time; rural roads are deadly!



Most people think that urban roads, especially urban interstates, are the most dangerous roads in America. While it's true that the greater number of highway deaths occur on urban roads, that's because most Americans live in urban areas. Your chances of becoming involved in a traffic crash is greatest where you do your most driving. However, your chances of dying in a crash are 62% higher on rural roads. There are several reasons for that.

Rural roads are generally narrower with fewer safe passing zones and less room to escape if you encounter a hazard ahead. Rural roads also tend to have more curves and hills, making it much more difficult to see potential hazards ahead.

Those winding, hilly roads make driving distractions such as cell phones and extra passengers that much more dangerous because of the very limited room in which to react to a hazard ahead.

Limited speeds and few safe passing zones lead aggressive drivers to take more chances by driving too fast for conditions and passing in no passing zones.

If you become involved in a collision on a rural road, it will take much longer for first responders to reach you to provide first aid.

Teach your teen, if they should drive on rural roads to be especially mindful of speed limits and passing zones. If they should find traffic backing up behind them, they should pull over to the side and let the traffic pass. Don't give an aggressive driver an excuse to put your life in danger.

