

# Safety Fact Sheet



These programs offered by the Utah Safety Council offer practical strategies to reduce collision related injuries and fatalities on Utah roadways.

## WHAT TO DO IF YOU HAVE A BLOWOUT ON THE HIGHWAY

Having a flat tire while driving on any road is always a problem. Experiencing a flat or blowout while traveling on an interstate highway or other high-speed roadway can present special dangers.

### The Utah Safety Council offers these tips for coping with tire trouble:

- At the first sign of tire trouble, grip the steering wheel firmly
- Turn your emergency flashers on
- Don't slam on the brakes
- Let the car slow down gradually by taking your foot off the gas pedal
- Work your vehicle toward the breakdown lane or, if possible, toward an exit
- If it is necessary to change lanes, signal your intentions to drivers behind and do so smoothly and carefully, watching your mirrors and the traffic around you very closely
- Steer as your vehicle slows down. It is better to roll the car off the roadway and into a safe place than it is to stop in traffic and risk a collision from other vehicles
- When all four wheels are off the roadway—brake lightly and cautiously until you stop
- It's important to have the car well off the pavement and away from traffic before stopping, even if proceeding to a place of safety means rolling along slowly with the bad tire flapping. You can drive on a flat if you take it easy and avoid sudden moves. Don't worry about damaging the tire. It is probably ruined anyway
- Once off the road, keep your emergency flashers on. If you know how to change a tire, have the equipment and can do it safely without being near traffic, change the tire as you normally would
- Remember that being safe must take precedence over your schedule or whatever other concerns you may have. Changing a tire with traffic whizzing past can be nerve-racking at best and dangerous at worst. Therefore, it may be best to get professional help if you have a tire problem or other breakdown on a multi-lane highway
- Raise your hood and tie something white to the radio antenna or hang it out a window so police officers or tow truck operators will know that you need help
- Don't stand behind or next to your vehicle
- All interstate highways and major roads are patrolled regularly. If you have a cell phone you can call right from the roadside. It is inadvisable to walk on a multi-lane highway. However, if you can see a source of help and are able to reach it on foot, try the direct approach by walking but keeping as far from traffic as possible.

### These are the most important things to remember when dealing with a flat tire on the highway:

- Don't stop in traffic
- Get your vehicle completely away from the roadway before attempting to change a tire
- Tackle changing a tire only if you can do so without placing yourself in danger
- Finally, the National Safety Council recommends that you have a qualified mechanic check your vehicle after having a flat tire to be sure there is no residual damage from the bad tire or the aftermath of the flat

