

Edmonton

Traffic Safety Tips



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Edmonton Traffic Safety Tips

Traffic safety is important to Edmonton's citizens and a major priority for the City of Edmonton. A safe transportation system contributes to a strong sense of community and the livability of our city. Through the strategic deployment of traffic enforcement in combination with education and engineering initiatives the Office of Traffic Safety is committed to making Edmonton's streets safer. The following information is provided to help ensure safety for all road users in Edmonton.

Being a Responsible Courteous Driver

The easiest way to avoid collisions on our roads is to be courteous to other motorists.

- Be responsible for your vehicle and your safety.
- Ensure your car is regularly maintained and is road-ready.
- Drive with your headlights on if your vehicle does not have daytime running lights or when weather conditions create reduced visibility.
- Avoid driving in other driver's blind spots.
- Be extra cautious during sunrise and sunset, when the sun makes it difficult to see other road users.
- Maintain a safe following distance (two to three seconds) behind the vehicle in front of you. Increase this distance if you are driving a larger vehicle or travelling at higher speeds.
- Make way for trucks completing turns. Large trucks need space to maneuver.
- Indicate your intention to turn or change lanes and avoid sudden moves.
- Keep to the centre or right highway lane and allow faster vehicles to pass on the left.
- Secure loose material in the back of your truck.
- Be kind to the environment by turning off your engine when parked.
- Ensure your vehicle does not emit excessive noise, including sounds from squealing tires, mufflers, radios, stereos or security systems.
- Share the road with bicyclists and give them plenty of room when passing.
- Yield to pedestrians crossing at intersections and crosswalks.



Speed Limits

Excessive speed or speeding too fast for road and weather conditions has been identified as a key risk factor in road traffic injuries. Many studies have shown that reduced speeds greatly increase safety of road users. Lower speeds on residential streets help create a more livable and comfortable environment for cyclists, pedestrians and residents

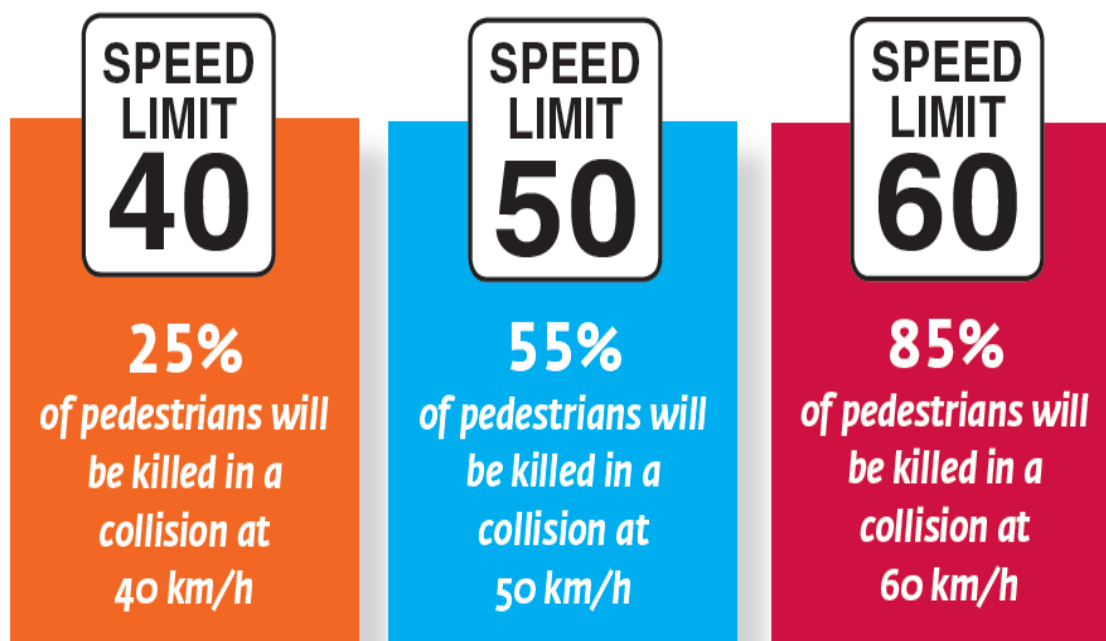
While speeding may make you feel as if you're getting to your destination quicker, it's simply not the case. The average commute is fraught with traffic lights, stop signs, and cars traveling the speed limit which eat up most of the time saved by exceeding the speed limit. If you watch a car that is speeding, you'll notice them weaving dangerously in and out of traffic as well as braking and accelerating and in most cases you catch up to them as traffic slows or at the next light.

- Unless otherwise posted, the speed limit on all Edmonton roads is 50 km/h. If you are not sure of the speed limit, ensure that you drive at 50 km/h until you see a sign that indicates otherwise.
- The speed limit in alleys is 20 km/h.
- Speed limits are the maximum speeds a vehicle may travel. Under the Alberta Traffic Safety Act drivers can be ticketed for exceeding the speed limit by one km/hr or when they are driving below the posted speed limit if the speed they are driving at is determined to be too fast for the current road or traffic conditions.

Why do some drivers Speed?

- They're in a hurry.
- They're inattentive to their driving.
- They don't take traffic laws seriously; they don't think the laws apply to them.
- They don't view their driving behaviour as dangerous.
- They don't expect to get caught.
- Some or all of the above

Did you know that 46 seconds is the **maximum** time you **might** save if you travel at 65 km/h vs. 60 km/h over a **10 kilometre** distance? Did you know that this small increase in speed doubles the risk of being involved in a fatal crash? If you were actually able to save 46 seconds, a minute or even two, what would you do with that time?



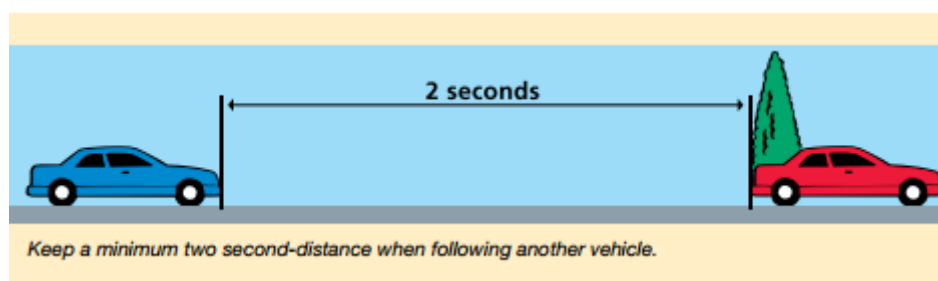
The enforcement of traffic laws in Edmonton is a cooperative project between the Edmonton Police Service who are responsible for manned enforcement initiatives and the Office of Traffic Safety who administer the automated traffic enforcement strategies including the Mobile Photo Enforcement Program and the Intersection Safety Camera Program. Mobile units utilize either photo radar or photo laser technology to measure and capture the speed of vehicles in violation of the speed limit.

If a vehicle registered to you is captured exceeding the speed limit at a mobile photo enforcement site or captured travelling through a red light or speeding through a green light, you may receive a traffic fine in the mail.

Following Too Close

Following too close which often results in rear-end collisions, continues to be the most common type of collision in Edmonton. In many cases speed is a contributing factor.

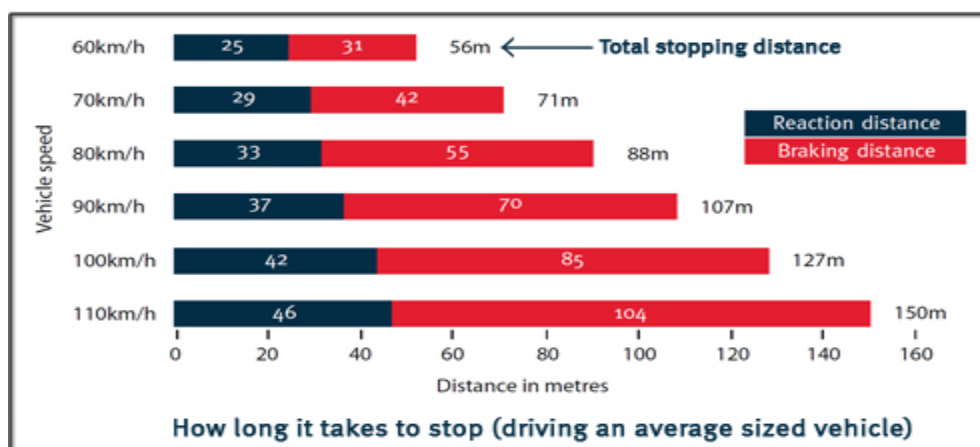
- Don't speed
- Maintain a safe distance between your vehicle and the vehicle in front of you, in case you need to stop.
- Increase this safe distance when road or weather conditions worsen and if you are driving a larger vehicle or travelling on higher speed roads.



Stopping Distances

One aspect of safe driving involves the ability to stop a car readily. This ability depends upon the driver's alertness and readiness to stop, the conditions of the road, the speed of the car, and the braking characteristics of the car. The actual distance that it takes to stop the car can be thought of as consisting of two parts - the reaction distance and braking distance.

Stopping Distances under Dry Conditions



Intersection Safety

The most basic rule is that a driver approaching an intersection must yield to vehicles already in the intersection. At any intersection where you want to turn left or right, you must yield the right-of-way. If you are turning left, you must wait for approaching traffic to pass or turn and for pedestrians in your path to cross. Remain behind the crosswalk if there is only room for one vehicle ahead of you in your lane in the intersection. A driver turning left across the path of an approaching vehicle cannot turn left until it is safe to do so.

Right and Left Hand Turns

Unless otherwise prohibited by a traffic control device, a vehicle may, after coming to a complete stop and when it is safe to do so, turn right on a red light.

Unless otherwise prohibited by a traffic control device, a vehicle may, after coming to a complete stop and when it is safe to do so, may turn left from a one way road onto another one way road.

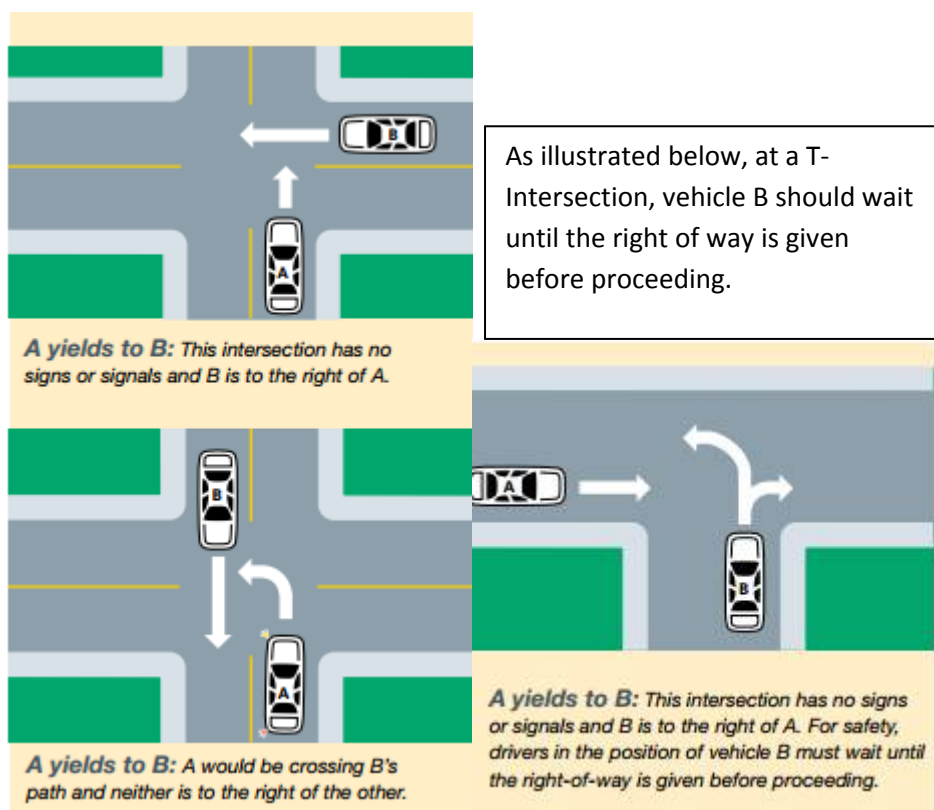
Remember, you do not have to make a right or left hand turn on a red light unless you are certain that it absolutely safe to do so.

Controlled four-way intersections

All vehicles approaching the intersection are required to come to a complete stop. Safety and courtesy dictate that the vehicle that arrived first proceeds first. If two vehicles arrive at the same time, courtesy again states that the vehicle on the right be allowed to proceed first.

Uncontrolled intersections

Uncontrolled intersections have no signs or traffic lights and are most common in areas where there is not much traffic. If two vehicles come to an intersection at approximately the same time, the driver on the left must allow the driver on the right to proceed first.





Freeways and Corridors

Edmonton has numerous freeway, corridor and arterial roadways within its boundaries. These roadways carry larger volumes of traffic and will usually have higher posted speed limits. Drivers should be prepared to encounter yield, merge or free flow signs as they approach these roadways.

Watch for speed limit signs along these routes as speeds may change in conjunction with changes in the road environment.

Merge and Free-Flow



Drivers approaching a Merge sign should not stop but should take all necessary precautions to merge safely with the traffic on the intersecting roadway. Other drivers must take all reasonable precautions to allow merging traffic to enter safely onto the roadway. Remember, both drivers have equal rights-of-way and responsibility in a merging situation.

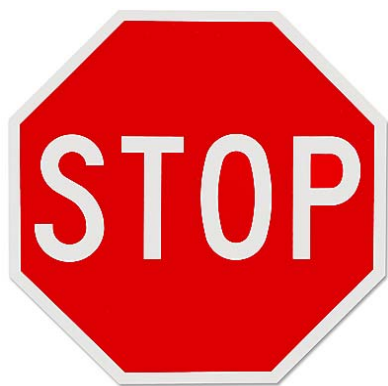
Drivers approaching a roadway with an added lane sign are provided with free-flow or through lane and do not need to merge or yield to other traffic on the intersection roadway.

Entering freeways:

- Use a turn signal to indicate your intention to merge.
- Time your entrance to safely merge into the flow of traffic.
- Select a vehicle to merge behind while maintaining a steady, slightly accelerating speed. Check your blind spot before merging.
- Adjust your speed to the surrounding traffic.
- Cancel your turn signal and check the rearview mirror once you've merged.

Exiting freeways

- Plan your exit and signal a considerable distance ahead of the exit.
- Maintain your speed until they get to the exit ramp.
- Use controlled braking on the ramp to reduce speed to the speed limit or less.
- Prepare to slow down or stop suddenly if you encounter heavy traffic or a very slow ramp speed limit



Stop

A driver must always come to a complete stop at a stop sign controlled intersection and not proceed until safe to do so. Stop at the stop line if it is marked on the pavement or if there is no stop line, at the crosswalk whether it is marked or not. "Rolling stops" are not sufficient, and can result in a ticket.



Yield

When approaching a Yield sign you must slow down and stop if necessary, to yield the right-of-way to crossing traffic or pedestrians.

Severe Weather in Edmonton

Extreme weather can occur at any time of the year and create challenging driving conditions for Edmonton drivers - drive with extra care.



Rainy Weather Driving Tips

- Routinely check your tires tread depth and keep them properly inflated.
- Reduce your speed and turn on your headlights.
- Keep your distance from the car ahead. Wet-weather driving demands gentle use of vehicle controls and a larger allowance for errors and emergencies.
- If rain becomes too heavy, stop. If the roadside is your only option, pull as far to the right as possible – keep your headlights on and turn on your warning flashers.
- Use extra caution when passing vehicles.
- Be on the lookout for standing water. Large pools of water may be encountered near catch basins and beneath overpasses.
- Extremely heavy rainfall may overload the storm sewer system and increased pressure may cause manhole covers to “pop out” – use extreme caution if you see a cover that is out of place and report the incident (**call 311**) whenever possible.

Winter Weather Driving Tips

- Tune-up and winterize your vehicle.
- Check your tire treads and consider installing snow tires.
- Clean snow and ice off your vehicle, headlights, tail lights and windows.
- Give yourself extra time to reach your destination.
- Listen to your local radio station for traffic and weather updates.
- Delay your trip until the roads are in better condition if possible.
- Reduce your speed and turn on your headlights.

- Give yourself extra time to stop at intersections, signs and for pedestrians. Increase the distance between your vehicle and the vehicle in front of you.
- Do not pass working snow removal vehicles.
- Leave 10 metres—about three car lengths—between your vehicle and snow removal vehicles.
- Watch for stalled vehicles. Be cautious when travelling on bridges, overpasses and off ramps as they may be icy.
- Turn on your windshield wipers before passing other vehicles on rainy or snowy days. Use caution when passing bicyclists, as they may have to ride further from the curb in the winter.
- Be aware of parking restrictions including snow route parking bans and street cleaning restrictions. Refer to the Seasonal Parking Restrictions section of this booklet for more information.

Distracted Driving

Alberta's distracted driving legislation is focused on ensuring motorists, including bicyclists, use due care and attention when driving.

Drivers are prohibited from:

- Using hand-held cell phones.
- Texting or e-mailing.
- Using electronic devices such as audio and video players, computers, video games and cameras.
- Entering information on GPS units.
- Reading printed materials.
- Writing or sketching.
- Personal grooming.



For more information visit

www.transportation.alberta.ca/distracteddriving

Emergency Vehicles

Emergency vehicles include fire, police, ambulance, designated emergency response units and tow trucks. Flashing lights from emergency vehicles warn drivers to reduce speeds, carefully change lanes and/or prepare to stop.



When an emergency vehicle with flashing lights is travelling on the road:

- Pull over in a safe manner and stop so emergency vehicles can pass quickly and safely.
- Use proper signals so all drivers are aware of your intentions.
- Slow down to 60 km/h or the posted speed, whichever is lower, when passing a stopped emergency vehicle with its lights flashing. This applies to the lane directly next to the stopped vehicle.
- Do not follow an emergency vehicle through a signalized intersection when the light is red.
- Do not follow an emergency vehicle too closely. These vehicles often have large blind spots. Use a minimum four second following distance.

Pedestrians

Pedestrians have the right of way at all intersections and crosswalks unless the intersection is controlled by a traffic signal, a traffic control device or a police officer. Before crossing, pedestrians should ensure traffic has stopped and cross the road without delay. Motorists should not stop for pedestrians waiting to cross illegally, but should proceed with caution.



Pedestrian Crossings

Pedestrian control devices, including crosswalks and traffic signals, help protect people when they cross the street. They do not guarantee a person's safety. Always obey traffic signals and check that traffic has stopped before stepping into the street.



Pedestrian countdown signals supplement the walk man, flashing hand and solid hand pedestrian traffic signals. They are used where there is heavy pedestrian and motorist traffic. Countdown signals are intended to let pedestrians know how much time they have to clear the intersection and should not be used by motorists to determine when the traffic light might change.

For Additional information on pedestrian crossings and signals please telephone **311** or visit http://www.edmonton.ca/transportation/roads_traffic/pedestrian-crosswalks.aspx

Vehicle Height Restrictions



When driving beneath bridges and underpasses, it is your responsibility to know the height of the vehicle you are driving, and to watch for posted vertical clearance warning signs.

Bicycling

Cyclists and motorists have the same rights and responsibilities. Everyone has to follow the rules of the road and deserves to be treated with respect. Cyclists are not obligated to use the reserved bike or shared-use lanes.

Certain residential streets are designated bicycle routes. These are the preferred roadways for cyclists in residential areas. These routes are identified with blue and white way route signage.

Some major roadways have designated bike lanes. They are bordered by a solid line on the traffic side of the lane and identified by black and white signs with diamonds and by pavement markings.



Dedicated Bike Lane



Shared-use Lane



Shared-use lanes indicate where the roadway is to be shared between motorists and cyclists. The markings guide cyclists on the road and remind drivers to expect cyclists in the same lane of traffic.



As a motorist, remember:

- Bicyclists are not restricted to bike lanes and can use regular traffic lanes.
- Do not drive, stop or park in the bicycle lanes. Marked bike lanes are restricted to bicycle use only. You may enter a bike lane to execute a turn, as long as you yield to existing bicycle traffic and use your turn signals.
- Avoid sounding your horn unnecessarily near a bicyclist, as it may be distracting.
- Check for bicyclists and other on-coming traffic before you open the door of your parked vehicle.
- When pulling away from the curb, check for bicyclists who may be trying to pass you.
- Pass bicyclists only when it is safe to do so. Ensure you give them at least one metre of space.
- Watch for bicyclists who may be in your blind spot when preparing to make a right turn. Yield to bicyclists on the right as you would to a car in an adjacent lane.
- Be extra cautious during sunrise and sunset. It may be difficult to see bicyclists and other roadway users during these times.
- If a bicyclist dismounts and is walking beside their bicycle, he or she is considered a pedestrian.



As a bicyclist, remember:

- Obey all traffic control devices and regulations. Bicyclists must follow all the rules of the road.
- Distracted driving legislation applies to all vehicles, including bicycles.
- Examine your bicycle before riding to ensure tires are properly inflated, brakes work and other components are in good order.
- Ensure you have a working headlight and a tail-light.
- Equip your bike with a bell.
- Cyclists aged 17 and under are required by law to wear an approved bicycle helmet.
- Cycling on the sidewalk is prohibited unless bicycle wheels are less than 50cm in diameter (such as kids' bikes).
- Wear brightly coloured or reflective clothing to ensure you are visible to motorists.
- Keep both hands on the handlebars except when making a hand signal. Do not carry more people at one time than the bicycle was designed for. Do not hold onto or attach the bicycle to any other moving vehicle.
- Ride single file except when passing another bicycle.
- When proceeding through an intersection, watch for motorists turning left.
- Ride predictably, use hand signals to indicate that you are preparing to turn and ride in a straight path when possible. Always ride in the same direction as traffic, unless otherwise indicated.
- To maintain visibility on the road ride at least one metre from parked vehicles and avoid weaving around them.
- Be aware of your surroundings. Try to make eye contact with others to ensure they see you.

For detailed information on Cycling in Edmonton please telephone **311** or visit www.edmonton.ca/cycling

Traffic Controls

Roundabouts and Traffic Circles



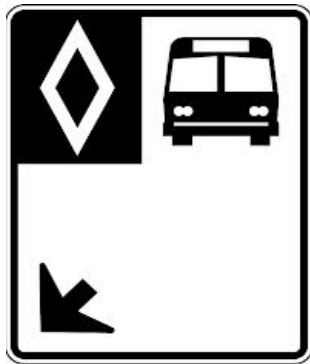
The Alberta Traffic Safety Act, Use of Highway and Rules of the Road Regulation AR304/2002 Section 40 states:

Unless otherwise directed by a traffic control device, a person driving a vehicle that is travelling in a traffic circle shall yield the right of way to any other vehicle that is in the circle and that is travelling to the left of that person's vehicle.

This means that vehicles travelling in a traffic circle in the right lane SHALL yield to vehicles travelling in a traffic circle in the left lane. Drivers must remember to yield to the vehicles in the left lane when attempting movements through traffic circles in the right lane. In Alberta, yield signs are posted for both approach lanes. Drivers in approach lanes must yield to vehicles in the circle.

When driving through a roundabout or traffic circle, remember:

- Plan ahead – know which exit you will be using.
- Yield to pedestrians in crosswalks.
- Yield to traffic when entering a roundabout or traffic circle.
- Enter into the right (outer) lane if you plan to leave at the first exit point.
- Enter into the left (inner) lane(s) to proceed to the second exit or beyond.
- Yield to vehicles on your left.
- Use turn signals when changing lanes.



Restricted Lanes

Restricted lanes can only be used by vehicles designated on signage. These vehicles may include:

- Buses
- Taxis
- Bicycles

Restricted lanes are identified with white diamond markings that are stenciled on the roadway. Misuse of these lanes may result in a fine. If you must cross a restricted lane to enter or exit a roadway, you must do so within one block.

Lane Reversals



A lane reversal is an arrangement where traffic is permitted to flow in different directions during different times of the day. It is generally used to provide additional capacity for peak period traffic flow. Generally, the lane reversals are in effect Monday to Friday excluding holidays. There are some exceptions to the holiday exclusions.

In areas where lane reversals are in effect, overhead signal displays indicate which lanes are open to traffic and which lanes are not. A green arrow identifies a lane as being open, while a red X identifies a lane that is closed.

Road Construction Zones

Always be on the lookout for signs warning of construction ahead. Speeding in construction zones endangers you, workers and other drivers. Construction zone speed limits must be obeyed at all times. **Speed fines are doubled when workers are present.**

Be prepared to slow down, stop or obey instructions from flag people. Hazards such as bumps, fresh oil and loose gravel may be present even when workers and equipment are not.



Collisions and Stalled Vehicles

If you have been in a minor non-injury collision (damage is under \$2000) or your vehicle is stalled, turn your hazard signals on and move your vehicle out of the way as soon as possible.

Reporting a Collision

What to do if you have been involved in a collision?

- If your vehicles are drivable, move them to another location so that they will not be obstructing traffic. If one or more are not drivable call the police complaint line at 423-4567.
- Exchange information (insurance, registration, name and drivers licence number.)
- If someone refuses to provide their information document the licence plate number, vehicle description and driver description before they leave the scene.
- Obtain names and phone numbers of all witnesses.
- If the combined damage to the vehicles involved is **over \$2,000**, you must attend a police station and file a Collision Report Form. Failure to do so could result in a \$287 fine.

If the collision involves serious injuries or if impaired operation of a motor vehicle is suspected, here is what you or someone else should do.

- Call 9-1-1 so that the necessary medical help can be dispatched to the scene and police can be notified.
- In this instance, vehicles need to remain where they are in order that the collision scene can be investigated.

Police attendance is ONLY required when:

- Someone has been seriously injured.
- Individual does not have documentation including driver's license, registration or insurance.
- You suspect the driver is impaired
- One or more of the vehicles isn't drivable.

If you are unsure, call the police complaint line at 780-423-4567. For more detailed information on your Obligations in a Collision please visit

<http://www.edmontonpolice.ca/TrafficVehicles/TrafficCollisions/ObligationsinaCollision.aspx>

Parking

On-Street Parking

When parking on-street, do not park:

- In the opposite direction of traffic flow.
- On a sidewalk or boulevard.
- Within 5 m of a fire hydrant, corner, intersection, stop sign, yield sign or marked crosswalk.
- Within 1.5 m of a driveway or alley.
- In an alley unless your vehicle has commercial licence plates.
- In restricted parking zones when they're in effect.
- In one spot for more than 72 consecutive hours. Your vehicle may be considered abandoned and towed.
- In an Emergency Access Zone.
- In a Disabled Parking Zone.
- A detached trailer or camper.

Standard Parking Signs



A No Stopping sign indicates that you may not stop your vehicle, even momentarily, to pick up or drop off a passenger.



Some Edmonton roadways prohibit stopping during specific hours of the day or week. Vehicles parked during prohibited hours may be towed.



A No Parking sign indicates that you may stop your vehicle only to actively load and unload passengers.

Special Parking Zones

Disabled Parking Zones



Accessible parking zones are for the exclusive use of people with disabilities who operate or travel by motor vehicle. Vehicles using designated accessible parking spaces must display a parking placard or a license plate for persons with disabilities.

Transit Zones



Transit zones are marked with a Bus Stop sign. No vehicle other than an Edmonton Transit vehicle may stop or park in a bus zone. You may not stop, even momentarily, to drop off or pick up a passenger in a bus zone.

Seasonal Parking



A seasonal parking ban on designated bus routes will be put into effect in Edmonton when there is a significant snowfall that requires the plowing of major roadways. A minimum of 8 hours notice will be given.

Residential Parking



The Residential Parking Program was developed to manage the availability of parking in specific residential areas experiencing urban growth and increased visitor demand. The program does not eliminate non-resident or public parking and it does not guarantee residents an on-street parking space.

For additional information please contact:

The City of Edmonton Transportation Operations

1500 Century Place

9803 - 102A Avenue

Edmonton Alberta

Telephone 311

Fax 780-496-1757

Email transportationoperations@edmonton.ca

Or visit <http://www.edmonton.ca/transportation.aspx>

The City of Edmonton – Office of Traffic Safety

Suite 200, 9304 – 41 Ave NW

Edmonton, AB T6E 6G8

Telephone 780-495-0371

Fax 780-495-0383

Or visit <http://www.edmonton.ca/saferoads>

Related Links



Capital Region Intersection Safety Partnership

Alberta Traffic Safety Act

Edmonton Police Service

Edmonton Federation of Community Leagues

<http://www.drivetolive.ca/>

<http://goo.gl/4WBxWn>

<http://www.edmontonpolice.ca/>

<http://www.efcl.org/>