



## News for Immediate Release

Dec. 4, 2014

### **PennDOT, State Police Urge Motorists to Steer Clear of Emergency Responders**

**Harrisburg** – PennDOT and the Pennsylvania State Police today urged motorists to “steer clear” of police, emergency responders, road crews and tow-truck operators while they carry out their duties.

To draw additional attention to the “Steer Clear” law, PennDOT will display a message from Dec. 6-13 on more than 200 electronic message signs across the state. The message will be displayed from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. whenever other traffic alerts aren’t being displayed.

“Please remain aware and move over when flashing lights, flares, or emergency personnel appear on state roadways,” PennDOT Secretary Barry J. Schoch said. “This law is often ignored or disregarded due to speed, space or time. Let our workers, police and other responders focus on doing their jobs and returning home safely every day.”

In October, a state police trooper was severely injured while removing debris from Route 119 in Westmoreland County. The marked patrol car was positioned so that it blocked the right lane of the roadway, moving traffic into the left lane. As the trooper began removing the debris from the roadway an SUV approached the slowed traffic from the rear and was unable to stop in time – striking the trooper.

“When you see law enforcement personnel on a traffic stop, assisting at a crash scene, or tending to a disabled motorist, please move over. If you cannot move over due to heavy traffic, please reduce your speed and proceed with caution,” said State Police Commissioner Frank Noonan. “Your life and that of the first responder may depend on it.”

Pennsylvania’s Steer Clear Law requires motorists to move to a lane that is not immediately adjacent to an emergency response area. Such areas include locations where police are making traffic stops, where highway or construction workers are involved in emergency assistance, or where tow trucks are responding to disabled vehicles.

If drivers cannot move over because of traffic or other conditions, they must proceed at a speed that is “reasonable and prudent,” according to the law.

The law applies any time an emergency vehicle has its lights flashing and where road crews or emergency personnel have lighted flares or have posted signs or other traffic control devices.

Failure to move over or slow down can result in a summary offense that carries a fine of up to \$250. In addition, fines will be doubled for other traffic violations occurring in these areas. If the violation leads to a first responder being injured, a 90-day license suspension could result.

For more information on traffic safety in Pennsylvania, visit

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