



State Senator Scott T. Rupp ~ District 2

The Rupp Report

Serving Lincoln County & St. Charles County

Column For Week of: December 27, 2010

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Have a Safe and Happy New Year

The year 2010 is about to come to a close and we can all start with a fresh slate for 2011. New Year's is a time for family and friends to have fun and enjoy each others company. Traveling on New Year's, however, can be dangerous when drivers are not being responsible. By simply following these tips, Missourians across the state will be able to bring in 2011 safely.

Being a parent myself, a top concern is always the safety of our children while traveling on our roadways. The best precaution drivers can take is to wear their seat belts. In the past three years, 600 drivers (under 21 years old) died in traffic accidents in Missouri, and of those drivers, 78 percent were not buckled up. It is also easy for young people to become distracted while on the road. Please refrain from texting and talking on the phone, rummaging through CDs, and other preoccupying tasks.

Another concern regarding travel during the holiday season is winter weather. Driving in snow and ice can be scary and unsafe, and it is important to take the proper precautions before battling Jack Frost. During your trip:

- Obey the posted speed limits and don't try to speed.
- Adjust your speed to accommodate driving conditions.
- Give the snowplows plenty of room and don't try to pass them.
- Always wear your seat belt.
- Watch for other vehicles having problems with road conditions.
- Keep your mirrors, windows, and lights clean for improved visibility.
- Don't pass other vehicles on or near bridges — bridges tend to get very icy.
- Keep your fuel tank at least half full.
- If you don't feel comfortable driving, park at the first safe place.

Finally, do not drink and drive under any circumstances. Tragically, a person is killed or seriously injured in an alcohol-related accident every 1.9 hours in Missouri. This shocking statistic resulted in 280 deaths and 1,140 seriously injured people in 2009. To avoid being in an alcohol-related crash, remember to choose a designated driver that has not consumed any alcohol, consider calling a cab or a friend to come and pick you up, or stay where you are and spend the night at a friend's house if possible.

Please remember to travel safe, and I hope you and your family enjoy a happy New Year's and a very blessed 2011. For more information about safe traveling, please visit www.modot.mo.gov. If you have any questions regarding this matter or any other issues within state government, please visit my website at www.senate.mo.gov/rupp. You can also [e-mail me](#) or call my office toll-free at (866) 271-2844.

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