



# The Torch



Edition 40

## Make sure your journeys are safe this festive season



*Travel safely this Festive Season*

As we enter the festive season, many of us will be on the roads heading to holiday spots or visiting family and friends all over the country.

A road trip gives holidaymakers the chance to thoroughly enjoy the sights of the Western Cape along its famous scenic routes.

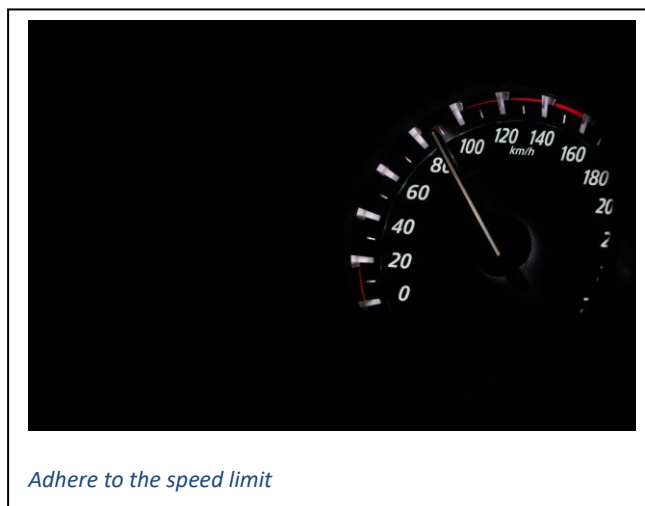
The tips below will help to keep you safe.

### Before your trip

- Plan your trip in advance. This will give you time to decide which routes are the safest, and to avoid roadworks, bad weather, and high accident zones. Plan regular rest-stops every 200km or 2 hours to avoid getting tired while driving.
- Consider having your car serviced by a qualified service mechanic.
- Have your lights, indicators, windscreen wipers, brakes, steering, exhaust system and tyres checked for faults and make sure your vehicle is roadworthy before departure.
- If you are on medication, ask your doctor or pharmacist whether your medication might make you drowsy.
- Make sure to rest properly before embarking on a long journey.

## On the road

- Have your driver's licence with you at all times.
- Always make sure you and your passengers are buckled up. Here's more information on seatbelt safety.
- Always adhere to the speed limit – driving too fast or too slowly can be a potential hazard.
- Keep a safe following distance so that you have enough time to react in an emergency. Remember to increase your following distance when visibility is poor and when the road is wet.
- Drive with your lights on - this will make you more visible to other drivers.
- Dip your headlights at night well before an approaching vehicle is close. Also remember to dip your lights as you approach vehicles in front of you.
- Be courteous and patient with other road users.
- Remember that drivers may only travel in the emergency lane if they can see the road ahead is clear for 150m. Don't expect the driver in front of you to move over just because you are in a hurry.
- Drive defensively. Don't assume that other drivers will do what they are supposed to do.
- Only overtake when it is absolutely safe. Never overtake on a blind rise or where there is a solid white line.
- Always check your blind spot before changing lanes, even when the road seems deserted.
- Always be cautious when approaching a railway crossing. Be sure to slow down and cross only when it is safe to do so.
- Stay alert and keep an eye on what's happening around you.
- Always be prepared for emergencies. Carry an emergency kit with items that will come in handy if you're stranded on the side of the road or involved in a crash.
- Watch out for potentially dangerous drivers and pedestrians and keep well clear of them. Find out more about pedestrian safety.
- Be on the lookout for obstructions like potholes or animals which may stray into the road, especially in rural areas.
- Be cautious when driving alone and avoid stopping in remote areas.
- Be alert when you are in an area where there is a risk of criminal activities such as hijacking or smash-and-grab theft.



*Adhere to the speed limit*

## Things to avoid while driving

- Never drink and drive. Statistics indicate that about 50% of road deaths in South Africa are alcohol-related. The blood alcohol limit for motorists is 0.05g per 100ml of blood. Here's what you need to know about the blood/alcohol limit.
- Avoid distractions while driving. For example, never use your cellphone while driving. This will cause a lapse in your concentration, putting you and others at risk. Rather install a hands-free kit in your car. Find out more.
- Don't drive tired. Fatigue affects your concentration and slows down your reactions. Pull over in a safe place and rest every 2 hours or 200km.
- Avoid driving when visibility is poor. It is more difficult to drive safely at night, or when the weather is bad. If you struggle to see clearly at night, rather drive during the day.
- Never disobey road signs. Pay attention to flag signals and law enforcement officer signals.
- Never leave items such as cellphones and wallets in plain sight in a parked car. Rather carry them with you, or lock them in your boot. Even if you are driving, it is safer to keep valuable items out of sight to avoid smash-and-grab theft.

## Other things to take into account

We also encourage you to take the following factors into account when planning your journey to help you reach your destination safely and comfortably:

## Road works

View our interactive provincial rural road map for information about road conditions and road projects.

## Check your licence

- The law requires your car to be licensed every year. It's your duty as the owner of the car to make sure that your vehicle licence is renewed before it expires.
- If the licence isn't renewed you are liable to pay late licensing penalties and arrears. There's a grace period of 21 days after the expiry date of the car's licence to renew the licence without incurring penalties and arrears.

## Don't drink and drive

Alcohol is damaging our society, visit SafelyHome for more information, and on Twitter @WCGSafelyHome under the hashtag #BoozeFreeRoads.

## Safely Home Reporter

- National traffic call centre number: 0861 400 800
- Emergency numbers
- Police Flying Squad: 10111
- Ambulance: 10177
- Crime Stop: 08600 10111
- Cellphone Emergency: 112 (MTN, Vodacom and Cell C)
- ER24: 084 124

Source: [Western Cape Government](#)

## Festive season safety tips

As South Africans prepare to unwind and spend time with family and friends, it is important to remember to take care of yourself and your family.

### Advice to keep your home safe include:

- Ask your neighbours to take out the post. Post left in the mailbox says that nobody is home.
- Make sure you have good lighting. Don't leave the outside lights on during the day.
- Don't let too many people know when you are going on holiday, only those you trust.
- Make sure your doors lock properly and that you have burglar bars.
- If your house is broken into, notify the police immediately.



*Make sure your house is secure*

## If you are going on a road trip:

- Buckle up.
- Don't drink and drive.
- Keep a safe following distance.
- Do not use up your energy on activities, which will increase your fatigue.
- Get enough sleep the night before, at least six hours.
- Do not travel when you are emotional or stressed out.
- Plan your trip, the route you will travel and where you will stop and rest overnight.
- Make sure your car is road worthy.
- Make sure you have a spare wheel and that it is in good condition and a jack.
- Make sure your luggage is in the boot and that it is closed properly.
- Stop every two hours, taking 15 minute breaks.
- Avoid driving between 1am and 5 am.
- If you feel tired or restless, pull over at a safe stop and rest for a little while.

## If you are travelling at night:

- Be on the lookout for suspicious-looking people or vehicles.
- Know where you are going, do not use unfamiliar routes to get home.
- Lock your doors and close your windows.
- If you are bumped from behind, head to the nearest police station or place of safety.
- Never leave keys in your ignition to open gates.
- Don't wait for your passengers, drive around the block or get out of the car and lock the doors.
- Never pick up hitchhikers.
- Don't get out to assist someone who seems to be in trouble. Inform the police.

## To ensure your safety while shopping:

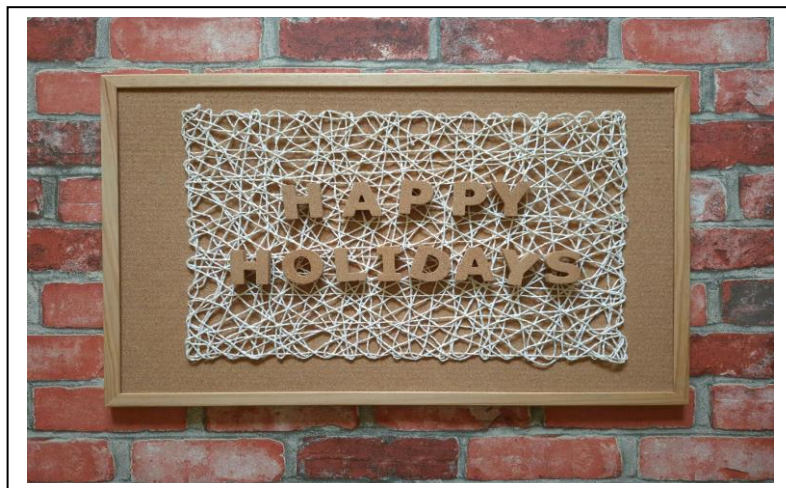
- Avoid carrying large amounts of money.
- Don't leave valuable belongings in the trolley.
- Don't have your wallet or purse visible. Keep wallet in your front pocket and not the back pocket.
- Don't let money be too visible, especially large amounts.
- Hold your child's hand and be alert of them at all times. Always accompany them to the bathroom.

## Water safety tips:

- Always swim with an adult who can swim.
- Only swim in a public pool or sea if there is a lifeguard on duty.
- Never dive into the water unless the lifeguard says it is safe to do so.
- Never run along the edge of a swimming pool or push people in.
- Stay away from diving boards when in the pool.
- Always keep chairs and tables away from the pool fence to keep children from using them to climb over the fence.
- Do not allow anyone of any age to swim alone - drowning happens to adults too.
- When you are entertaining a group of children or adults, have a designated water watcher who is responsible for keeping track of everyone.
- Never leave children unattended in or around pools - not even for a second.

Source: [SAPS, Department of Transport, SANRAL and City of Johannesburg.](#)

## Office Closure



Our offices will be closed from 18 December 2024 and open again on 7 January 2025. We wish everyone a safe and happy festive season and a prosperous 2025.

## THE END