

DID YOU KNOW???

CRUISE CONTROL HAS MANY ADVANTAGES

You are driving on a state highway in Franklin County and are following a vehicle that is driving at speeds varying from below the posted speed limit to speeds above the limit. This is annoying to say the least. This is the type of driver that usually speeds up on straight stretches, making passing difficult and forcing a passing vehicle to exceed the speed limit. This is also the type of driver that is not using cruise control.

Cruise control can be a fantastic tool if you use it properly, or just use it at all! Many drivers first feel unsettled by the idea of taking their foot off the gas and allowing the car to remain at the same speed. Like any tool, there is a time and place to use cruise.

Cruise Control should be used when going over 30 mph without an abundance of stops. Most people have a hard time keeping a consistent speed; you usually find yourself speeding up and slowing down throughout long drives. Cruise control can help save you gas by limiting the amount of changes happening in your speed as well as keep you at a pace best for your gas mileage. US studies suggest fuel savings may be in the order of 7 to 14 percent. However these figures must be considered in their proper context. An experienced and fuel economy conscious driver may be able to drive more economically without using cruise control, though less skilled drivers would probably derive some benefit from its use. The actual benefit achieved will depend on the driver's skill level.

Another great reason to start using your cruise control is speeding tickets. It's very easy on long stretches of highway to let your foot rest a little too heavy on the gas pedal and before you know it you're going way too fast. If a cop catches you at one of those moments you could be looking at a pretty hefty ticket. Cruise control allows you to relax and not worry about going too fast.

The last reason, and arguably the most important reason, is comfort! If you have ever driven a long stretch of highway, you can get uncomfortable pretty fast. Driving is not really the best seating positions for your posture; however being able to take your foot off of the gas can seriously improve your drive.

However, using cruise control in inclement weather (rain, snow, or ice) is actually dangerous — the very moment that you *need* to reduce speed (sliding on ice or snow, or hydroplaning on wet roads), your cruise control system will try to keep your vehicle moving at the same speed. You don't want to panic-hit the brakes to stop the cruise control system, either, because that can cause additional skidding problems. Newer vehicles are at a lower risk of these problems, but safety and automotive groups still recommend disabling cruise control in inclement weather.

It is also important to pay attention to advisory speeds for curves and other situations, such as limited site distance. In these situations, coming off cruise and slowing down may be critical.

Cruise control isn't everything but it sure has advantages. For more articles on traffic law and safety, go to the traffic safety board's web site at: www.franklincony.org and click on "Traffic Safety Board" under departments then look for Did You Know articles under "services". You may also email me at: dwerner151@verizon.net