

GO 55 AND STAY ALIVE

It Saves

As our highways grow ever more clogged, many drivers seem to feel the open road is a racetrack. It's easy to get caught up in the speedway syndrome. But there's no race, and it's a big mistake to think there is. Such thinking can cost you your life.

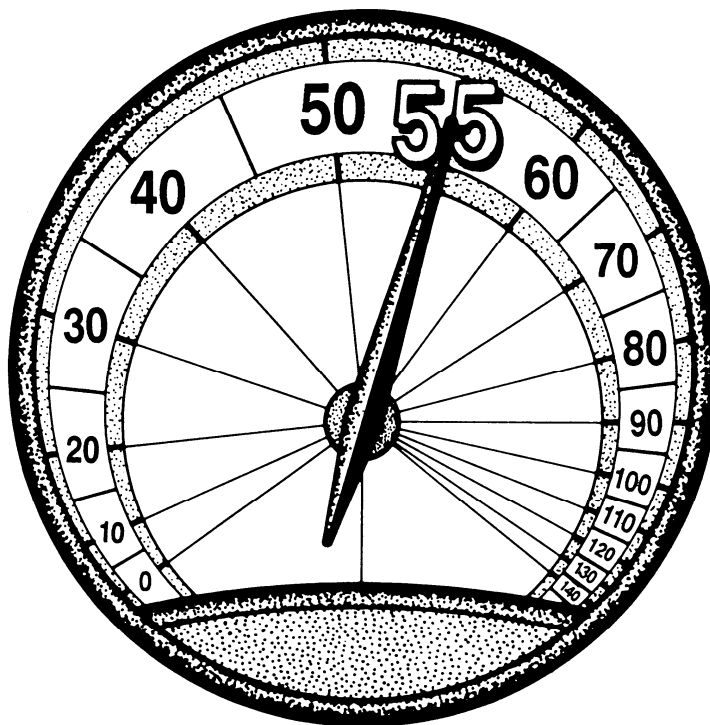
As a professional driver, your job is to get there safely, in a reasonable time, regardless of what anyone else is doing. Even a tight schedule is no excuse for tailgating, reckless lane changes or driving at high speed.

Hold It Steady

Since Congress increased the natural speed limit to 65 miles per hour on open sections of the interstate highways, it has become fashionable to speed up. But it still pays to hold it steady at 55.

To begin with, it saves wear and tear on the vehicle and give you better fuel economy. Studies have shown that steady travel at 55 can yield a savings of up to 38 percent in fuel costs and 40 percent on overall maintenance.

Balance that off with the fact that you really don't save that much time by going faster. If you travel 100 miles at 65, you'll only get there 17 minutes sooner than



if you'd held it to 55. And you would have used more fuel and put more wear on the equipment. Will 17 minutes make that much difference?

Reduce Your Risk

But the strongest argument for slowing down is the simple fact that high speed is dangerous. Statistics show that the risk of being killed in a highway crash is twice as great at 65. Go 75 and you've tripled the risk.

One study showed that excessive speed was blamed for more than 25 percent of the fatal crashed in 1987. Others

Fuel, Too

revealed that the death toll on rural interstate highways dropped 16 percent when the speed limit was reduced to 55 in 1974, then went back up by the same percentage when it was raised to 65 more than a decade later.

Set An Example

Everything you do is noticed by other motorists. Your smallest sin is magnified in their eyes by the size of your vehicle. Every professional driver's actions tend to reflect, for bad or good, on an entire industry.

If people see you racing along at high speed, it gives them just one more reason to criticize commercial drivers in general. They'll also conclude that, if it's okay for you to speed, it must be all right for them, too. Don't follow the bad examples of others, but be the leader yourself. Set a good example. Someone's watching your every move.