

SHARING THE ROAD WITH SUMMER TOURISTS

Summer's a great time to get away from it all and hit the road for a pleasant vacation. But if you drive for a living, everyone who's getting away from it all lines up on the highway in front of you and makes your job much harder.

Here are some tips on how to survive the endless parade of station wagons, trailers, boats and campers.

Overtaxed and Overtired

In the United States, a study by the Transportation Research Institute at the University of Michigan determined that in three out of four crashes involving a truck and a car, the auto driver was at fault.

The risks get higher at vacation time, when people when people who haven't driven cross-country for a year pile into the family vehicle and set out on overtaxing trips through unfamiliar territory.

Often they get lost or confused on highways far from home. Further, they may try to cover too many miles in a day as they set out to cover a maximum amount of territory in a minimal amount of time.

Tempers flare as parents try to cope with impatient youngsters and family members argue over where to stop next. Small wonder, then, that there are plenty of crashes involving travel weary vacationers.

How to Protect Yourself

Before you set out on the road, review your itinerary and make a note of the areas where you're most likely to encounter vacation travelers. Give yourself

extra time to make it through the most congested sections of highway.

When you carry out your pre-trip vehicle inspection, remember that your rig needs to be in top shape to help you cope with the heat, the congested traffic and those vacation drivers. Roads that re normally overtaxed will be even more clogged than usual. Be ready to slow frequently, or even come to a halt, as the long lines of vehicles jam the highway and its access roads.

Watch Out For Others

Summer is a time when your defensive driving skills are likely to pay off. It's a sure bet that, on any highway clogged with vacationers, somebody is going to make a mistake.

Someone who seldom drives will be spelling another family member and won't know the fine points of how to behave on a freeway. Someone who hasn't towed a boat before will try to go too fast and the family yacht will start to sway violently. Worse yet, somebody who drivers sober the rest of the year may think it's permissible to celebrate vacation time by Toting a pack of alcoholic beverages in the car and consuming a few of them while driving.

In every case, it's you who must protect your rig and your own skin. At the same time, you may have to protect the other fellow from his own mistakes. Drive slowly, cautiously and

defensively so you can maintain your margin of safety at all times. Then, when someone else becomes a hazard, you'll have room to maneuver.

