

# FLEETING IDEAS

## DON'T BE MR. MAGOO

I recently went to the Eye Doctor and after an exam; he informed me that I was nearsighted. In other words, without my glasses, I can only see things that are really close. Many drivers have formed seeing habits that cause them to be nearsighted. A truly defensive driver must practice the habit of "getting the big picture".

Avoiding a collision with another vehicle that has just run through a red light or a stop sign is not a matter of good luck or quick reflexes. It's the result of using defensive driving concepts like - "keep your eyes moving". Keeping your eyes moving can save your life at intersections because your eyes are ahead of your vehicle. You should shift your eyes every two or three seconds to avoid the fixed stare—a steady gaze along one line of sight. Moving your eyes keeps you alert and gives you a constant update of what is in or about to enter the traffic pattern.

It's also important to be aware of what's going on to the sides and behind your vehicle. Check your rearview mirrors every five to eight seconds. In this way, you'll have a constant update on vehicles overtaking you — this information is critical for the defensive operation of your vehicle.

Scanning the traffic pattern helps you prepare for changing conditions and tips you off to a potentially hazardous situation. As a professional driver, you realize that keeping your eyes moving is the only way to anticipate the offensive actions of other drivers... and avoid an accident.

## KEY POINTS

- A. Check left and right as you approach an intersection
- B. Keeping your eyes moving helps you to:
  1. Stay alive at intersections because you keep your eyes ahead of your vehicle.
  2. Avoid the fixed stare [a steady gaze along one line of sight]—Shift your eyes every two seconds.
  3. Keep alert and get a constant update of what is in or about to enter the traffic pattern.
  4. Be alert for side streets, alleys and driveways.
  5. Spot parked cars, bushes and other obstructions where hazards, such as kids, may be hiding.
- C. Know what's going on to the sides and behind your vehicle. Check both (all) outside mirrors and rearview mirror every five to eight seconds.
- D. Keeping your eyes moving helps you prepare for changing conditions in the traffic pattern and to anticipate the offensive actions of other drivers.

