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## ***NEWS RELEASE***

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: November 24, 2009

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### **Professional Drivers Offer Safe Driving Tips For Thanksgiving Travel**

**RICHMOND, Va.** – AAA Mid-Atlantic says about 1.5 million Virginians are expected to travel 50 miles or more from home this Thanksgiving holiday. Nationally, a record 40 million motorists are expected to take to the nation's roads.

Additional motorists and winter road conditions can lead to dangerous situations, so the Virginia Trucking Association is providing advice from a team of million mile accident-free drivers to help make our roads safer.

America's Road Team Captains, elite professional truck drivers, offer the following tips on how to navigate through highway traffic and arrive at your destination safely:

- Prepare you vehicle for long distance travel: Check your wipers and fluids. Have your radiator and cooling system serviced. Simple maintenance can prevent many of the problems that strand motorists on the side of the road before you leave your home.
- Plan ahead: Before you get on a highway, know your exit by name and number, and watch the signs as you near the off-ramp. Drivers making unexpected lane changes to exit often cause accidents.
- Do not cut in front of large trucks: Remember that trucks are heavier and take longer to make a complete stop, so avoid cutting quickly in front of them.
- Check your emergency kit: Contents should include: battery powered radio, flashlight, blanket, jumper cables, fire extinguisher, first aid kit, bottled water, non-perishable foods, maps, tire repair kit and flares.
- Be aware of changes in weather: Weather conditions across the U.S. will be changing - especially during early mornings and evenings with the cold. Watch for ice, snow and other weather related obstacles.
- Keep your eyes on the road: Distracted driving is a major cause of traffic accidents. Even just two seconds of distraction time doubles the chances of an accident. Use your cell phone when stopped and never text while driving.

*(More)*

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- Leave early and avoid risks: Leave early so you won't be anxious about arriving late and to accommodate delays. Road conditions may change due to inclement weather or traffic congestion.
- Be aware of truck blindspots: When sharing the road with large trucks, be aware of their blind spots. If you can't see the truck driver in his or her mirrors, then the truck driver can't see you.
- Slow Down: With the extra highway congestion due to Holiday travel, speeding becomes even more dangerous. Allow plenty of space cushion and reduce your speed.
- Buckle up: Safety belts reduce the risk of fatal injury by 45 percent and are a simple way to increase your safety on the road.

“Thanksgiving is the busiest travel day of the year,” said America’s Road Team Captain Barry Holland of UPS Freight. “With so many motorists on the road, it’s important to use caution and patience while driving. Following these rules for the road will ensure that we all arrive safely to our loved ones.”

“Trucking is one of the largest and most essential industries in Virginia, so it is important that cars and trucks co-exist safely on our highways. We urge all drivers to be aware of the blind spots around trucks, wear their safety belts, don’t drink and drive, and follow these other safe driving tips so everyone can make it home safely,” said Dale Bennett, President & CEO of the Virginia Trucking Association.

The Virginia Trucking Association joins America’s Road Team in reminding the motoring public that from driveway to highway, safety requires patience and dedication.

For more information on ATA’s America’s Road Team, sponsored by Volvo Trucks North America, visit [www.americasroadteam.com](http://www.americasroadteam.com)

The Virginia Trucking Association (VTA) is the Virginia affiliate of the American Trucking Associations and is the only statewide trade association dedicated to serving the trucking industry in Virginia. The VTA membership includes trucking companies, private fleet operators, industry suppliers, and other firms and individuals interested in the well-being and safety of motor freight transportation at the local, state and national level. [www.vatrucking.org](http://www.vatrucking.org)

The American Trucking Associations is the largest national trade association for the trucking industry. Through a federation of other trucking groups, industry-related conferences, and its 50 affiliated state trucking associations, ATA represents more than 37,000 members covering every type of motor carrier in the United States. [www.truckline.com](http://www.truckline.com)

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