

News Release

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For Immediate Release

Close call for CAA driver serves as reminder for motorists to slow down and move over

A dangerous incident on a Winnipeg street has prompted CAA Manitoba to remind all motorists to slow down and move over when passing tow trucks and other emergency vehicles working on the side of the road.

On Sunday, December 16, 2012, a CAA driver was finishing up a service call for a member whose car battery had died. With his emergency beacons still lit, the driver was packing up his truck, standing on the driver's side with the back door open.

While the CAA truck was not blocking the road in any way, a passing car grazed the CAA truck, hitting the side view mirror hard enough to flip it backwards.

CAA Manitoba President and CEO Mike Mager says incidents like this happen far too frequently – and it's not just tow trucks and emergency vehicles that could be hurt at the side of the road.

"Thankfully our driver wasn't hurt and is trained to be cautious while working on the side of the road, but not everyone is as aware," Mager said. "Imagine if that had been a car full of kids unpacking groceries with their mother in front of their house?"

The provincial government recently proposed amendments to add maximum speed limits to the Highway Traffic Act when passing tow trucks and emergency vehicles. When the speed limit is regularly 79 km/hour or less, motorists must slow down to 40 km/hour. When the speed is regularly 80 km/hour or more, motorists must slow down to 60 km/hour.

CAA Manitoba strongly supports these amendments because they will potentially help to improve safety for people who work on the side of the road – especially during the winter months when they are far more vehicles breaking down.

"These are the risks that CAA drivers face while responding to over 250,000 calls every year," Mager said. "A few extra seconds added to a motorist's travel time isn't worth taking a chance with someone's life."

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