



News Release

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Silver Tsunami Practices Safe Driving Says AAA Survey

Despite popular belief, senior drivers engage in safe driving habits, especially older women

VIRGINIA BEACH, Va., (May 1, 2013)– Nine in 10 older drivers buckle up when they get behind the wheel and more than a third have taken driver improvement courses, according to data surveying more than 7,000 seniors. Survey findings, collected by AAA, the American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA) and AARP also reveal that twice the number of women attended driver safety courses despite the fact that older men drove more often than older women by 12 percent. AAA is promoting the data to help debunk the perception that older drivers are a menace on the road.

“The silver tsunami is often unfairly dubbed as risky and dangerous. These data tell us that they practice safe driving behaviors and many older drivers have participated in programs to improve their skills,” says Georjeane Blumling, PhD, Vice President of Public Affairs for AAA Tidewater. The findings were collected from drivers who participated in [CarFit](#), a free program offered by AAA, AOTA and AARP. Typically offered at community events, CarFit runs drivers and their vehicles through a twelve-point checklist with trained technicians who assess the fit of a driver’s car by checking for optimum and safe settings such as distance from and sight line above the steering wheel and proper mirrors settings.

According to CarFit participant data, the top four “fit” challenges for older drivers included improper distance from steering wheel (59 percent); adequate and safe views from side mirrors (32 percent); improper seat height (28 percent) and improper head restraint height (21 percent). The good news is that after a run through the CarFit twelve-point program, 97 percent of participants’ issues were resolved.

Other survey data revealed that more than half (52 percent) of drivers 65 and older typically drive seven days a week. “Even when they’re driving every day, seniors do not pose a disproportionate threat on the roads,” said Blumling. “In fact, drivers in their mid-to-late 80s have lower crash rates per mile driven than drivers in their early 20s and roughly half the crash rate of teenagers.”

As a leading road safety advocate for more than 110 years, AAA provides expert advice and helpful resources for older adults and their families—working to support them as they tackle the challenges of balancing safety and mobility. [SeniorDriving.AAA.com](#) provides convenient, online access to a wealth of interactive material and AAA’s Senior Driver Safety Expos offer a local hands-on opportunity to sample AAA’s suite of free tools and programs.

To view results from AAA’s survey of older drivers visit [NewsRoom.AAA.com](#). For more information on AAA’s free resources for senior drives and their families, visit [SeniorDriving.AAA.com](#).

As part of North America’s largest motoring and leisure travel organization, AAA Tidewater Virginia provides its more than 325,000 members with travel, insurance, financial and automotive-related services. Since its founding AAA Tidewater Virginia has been a leader and advocate for the safety and security of all travelers. For more information, visit [AAA.com](#) and follow us on Twitter at [Twitter.com/AAATidewaterVA](#).

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