



## Surviving Accidents On Major Roads

(NAPSA)—It's a cold, hard fact: Icy roads are dangerous for even the most experienced driver, and even in dry weather, multicar pile-ups have closed interstates.

If you're ever involved in an accident on the highway, take heed of a particular hazard: In many cases, people in multiple-vehicle accidents are hurt or even killed after surviving the initial crash largely unscathed. Three things to remember to avoid being among them are:

**1. Stay Inside:** Stay in your car. According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, about 16 percent of pedestrian traffic deaths occur on freeways. People who get out of their cars are killed and injured far more often than those who stay inside;

**2. Stay Belted:** Even those who do stay in the car but unbuckle their seat belt are more easily and severely hurt by subsequent cars that pile into them;

**3. Stay Calm and Connected:** Don't panic and don't get into a discussion on the spot with another driver. Do try to signal the other drivers to get off the road to somewhere safe where you can exchange information and contact the police.

As one California Highway Patrol officer put it, "The best safe practice would be to stay in your vehicle with your seat belt on. If your vehicle is drivable, we always recommend getting out of the roadway. Bottom line: The freeway is a very dangerous place for pedestrians to be, and people need to realize that the potential



**If you're ever in an accident on the highway, drive off the road if you can and don't unbuckle your seat belt or get out of your car.**

for major injuries or death skyrocketed as opposed to being in your car with your seat belt on."

Added an EMT after a crash, "Never, never, NEVER get out of your car on a roadway unless your life is in imminent danger if you do not.

"I can't stress how dangerous it is to ever get out of your car on a road. You have absolutely no protection if someone plows into you, and if you are stopped, chances are much higher that someone will get hurt than if traffic were moving normally. Plus, if you are out of your car, busy exchanging information with someone else while standing in the road, you aren't paying 100 percent attention to what might be coming up behind you, lessening your chances of getting out of the way when something goes wrong."

### Learn More

To help, experts on safety at the Accident Attorneys Organization developed a safety checklist that you can download at [www.accidentattorneys.org](http://www.accidentattorneys.org) and keep in your glove box.