

Make sure you know your rights and responsibilities in an auto accident

If you've ever been involved in an auto accident, you know how deeply it can shake you. Sometimes that happens instantly and you can't even think. Yet, you and your passengers (as well as people in the other vehicles(s)involved) may be hurt. Then, you think about your car, your insurance, the danger you may be in on the road and about the people or place you were on your way to see. It's a lot to think about and deal with, especially if you've been injured.

No one wants to have that happen but it's good to be prepared. You should know what to do if you become involved in a collision. Here are the basics.

Check for injuries first

Stop and find out if anyone, including yourself is injured. Don't assume that because you don't feel anything in the moments after the accident, that you are okay. Sometimes, you can be in shock and not realize the extent of your injuries. Get a medical opinion to be safe.

Also remember California law requires that you must stop whether your accident involves:

- A pedestrian
- A moving vehicle
- A parked car
- Someone's property

If you leave the scene, you can be charged with "hit and run," even if you were not at fault. Avoid these penalties or you could end up with a fine, jail time or even losing your driver's license.

Find driver information

Exchange information with other drivers. If you hit a parked car or damage someone's property, you must:

- Attempt to find out who the owner is
- Notify them of the damage

Prevent further danger

Warn other motorists to prevent additional collisions. Some things you might do are:

- place warning flares on the roadway approaching the accident (after determining NO flammable liquids or items are nearby)
- turn on the hazard lights
- lift the car's hood to signal drivers
- arrange to get help for injured persons or request help from anyone nearby
- call 911--give the exact location
- state if you need an ambulance or fire department assistance

Collect scene and witness information

Gather all appropriate information from the accident scene. Many records have now become confidential. Make sure you take time to:

- list names
- addresses
- date of birth
- phone numbers
- driver's license
- policy
- vehicle numbers of all persons and cars involved

Remember to get witness information and simply sketch the scene and all its details. Or better yet take a photograph, if you have a camera available. It's a good idea to carry an instant, one-time-use camera in your glove box for just this purpose.

Contact an attorney

After you've gathered all the details and you want to find out if you have a case for a personal injury lawsuit, **call Attorney Norman Newhouse**. He will give you an honest assessment.

Call (650) 365-8534

- Give them your insurance information
- If asked, do NOT admit to anything (find out your rights from attorney first)

If you cannot locate the owner, California law says you can drive away only after you have left your name, address and a written explanation of the accident plus the name of car's owner, if different from yours.

Also notify the California Highway Patrol or local police department by phone or in person. Let them know if there was an injury or death. Make sure to file a written report on a standard form available at the appropriate police agency as soon as possible.

Help others if necessary

Give reasonable assistance to injured persons. California law requires you to give reasonable assistance to injured persons. You may have to:

- Call an ambulance
- Take an injured person to the doctor or hospital
- Give first aid, if you know how to

If you do NOT know first aid, DO NOT move the injured to avoid further injury. If, however, an injured person is in danger of losing their life or being more severely injured, you SHOULD move them.

Attorney Norman Newhouse has:

- 20 years personal injury expertise to help increase your chance of a favorable settlement
- a special combination of legal, insurance and business knowledge giving your case a better advantage
- stronger winning legal strategies stemming from his continued success
- legal counsel that is highly regarded by insurance companies and legal firms

**Call for an appointment and
FREE consultation NOW!
(650) 365-8534**

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E-mail When you e-mail him, simply let him know your name, telephone number and the best time to call. Since he needs to ask you some specific questions, he will return your call and discuss the details of your case at that time.