

DMV hosts Senior Driver Day, launches new senior Web site

Delaware seniors ruled the road on October 2, when the Delaware Division of Motor Vehicles held Senior Driver Day at the Delaware Department of Transportation campus in Dover.

To celebrate the day, the DMV opened registration and driver's license booths as well as vehicle inspection lanes for safety and emissions checks. Information was available in the lobby from DMV partner agencies, the Delaware Office of Highway Safety,

TOP: A Delaware Division of Motor Vehicles employee, left, makes sure a guest gets some goodies from the informational tables during the DMV's Senior Driver Day.



BOTTOM: Jennifer Cohan, director of the Delaware Division of Motor Vehicles, left, talks to a woman about the DMV's new Senior Driver Web page and one of the safe driver games featured on the site.



AAA, DART, Ride-Share, the Delaware Insurance Commissioner's Office and the Sussex County Consortium. Outside, a team of trained technicians from the AARP CarFit program made sure vehicle components were properly adjusted for drivers' comfort and safety.

That day, the DMV officially launched its Senior Driver Web page.

The site offers the senior drivers numerous resources from driving tips, to reaction time games and health information.

The day was put together by the DMV and a Senior Driver Task Force. The group's overall goal is to keep senior citizens driving safely for as long as possible.

DMV statistics show that 17 percent of Delaware's drivers are age 65 and older and are involved in 14 percent of the state's fatal crashes.

To visit the DMV's Senior Driver Web page, go to: www.seniordriver.dmv.de.gov.

AARP program makes sure people are 'fit' to drive

Are you 'fit' to drive your car? Some people aren't. However, volunteers from the AARP of Delaware helped drivers get 'fit' when they held CarFit inspections on October 2 as part of the Delaware Division of Motor Vehicles' Senior Driving Day in Dover.

"What we're doing is making sure people are familiar with their cars," said James DeVone, a certified CarFit technician who volunteered for the day with the AARP of Delaware.

Technicians helped drivers adjust their car's components for maximum mobility and safety. A driver, for instance, should be 10-12 inches from the steering wheel to prevent injuries in case the air bag deploys during a crash. Steering wheels should be no higher than the driver's shoulders, and drivers

should grip the steering wheel at 8 o'clock and 4 o'clock with their upper arms resting against their ribcage. This position also protects drivers from airbags as they deploy.

Technicians helped drivers adjust their mirrors, seats and head rests for visibility and comfort.

"Do you realize how many people don't know their head rest adjusts?" CarFit technician Charles Cantler said.

AARP volunteers checked tire pressure and asked drivers to look over both shoulders to make sure they could see clearly.

Although the CarFit lane was part of Senior Driver Day, AARP driving instructor Robert Williams said any driver could benefit from the inspection.

For more information about CarFit, visit the DMV's Senior Driver Web site at: www.seniordriver.dmv.de.gov.

Tips For A Good Fit:

As you get in and out of a vehicle, notice if you must bend uncomfortably or experience difficulty lifting your legs.

Adjust the rearview mirror so that you can see as much of the rear window as possible.

Look over your shoulder on both sides to confirm that you can see rear and side windows clearly.

Adjust the seat. Assure that you can easily adjust the height and tilt.

Make sure the top of the steering wheel is no higher than the top of your shoulders .

Check that you can steer freely. Grasp the steering wheel at 8 o'clock and 4 o'clock, with your upper arms resting on your ribcage.

Assure that you can comfortably reach the pedals, radio and temperature controls while steering.

Confirm that there is at least 10 to 12 inches between your chest and the front airbag and steering wheel.

Make sure your seat belt fits comfortably. The lap belt should go across your hips, and the shoulder strap should go across your rib cage.



An AARP volunteer, right, talks a driver through a checklist to make sure his seat, mirrors and other components are properly adjusted.