

SAFETYFIRST

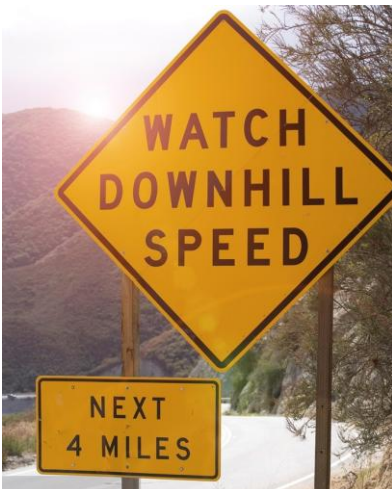
INFORMATION DEDICATED TO DRIVER SAFETY

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THE CURVE**

Safety Management
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TRANSPORTATION GROUP

Coasting Out of Gear

Some drivers still falsely believe that putting the transmission in neutral—whether on manual or automatic—when coasting downhill will save fuel and improve MPGs. This practice, sometimes called a “Georgia Overdrive”, is never a good idea and here is why:

Fuel savings

Coasting in neutral does not save fuel and can actually cause more fuel consumption. Modern computerized truck engines are designed to optimize fuel economy in all driving conditions including when the vehicle is descending a hill. Taking a truck out of gear can result in the engine burning fuel to prevent it from stalling.

Safety

Coasting in neutral is simply not safe as it prevents the ability to accelerate quickly avoid unsafe road conditions. Runaway truck ramps were built for drivers that coast out of gear.

Legality

Coasting out of gear can easily result in vehicle speeds over the speed limit and serious speeding violations. In many states, coasting out of gear is illegal. For example:

California Vehicle Code §21710.

“The driver of a motor vehicle when traveling on down grade upon any highway shall not coast with the gears of such vehicle in neutral.”

Law enforcement can cite drivers for coasting out of gear. Following a crash, law enforcement can determine coasting out of gear to be a primary factor in how the crash occurred. Aside from potential citation costs and driving history demerits, such findings can strengthen an attorney’s case against the driver when arguing fault of the crash.

In terms of a cost-benefit analysis, it’s a no-brainer. Coasting out of gear is dangerous, illegal, and will not save fuel.