

Mr. Roadshow

Parents can be liable for teen driving infractions

Q Your article about parents and young drivers needing to know driving restrictions was right on the money.

Don Meyer
*Economic Driving
School, San Jose*



GARY RICHARDS

A Here are the key restrictions for drivers from ages 16 to 18: For first 12 months they are licensed they may not transport passengers under age 20, unless a

licensed driver over 25 is a passenger, and may not drive between 11 p.m. and 5 a.m.

And drivers under the age of 18 may not use any type of wireless device such as a telephone (including "hands-free"), pager, laptop or any other electronic or services to speak or text, except in an emergency.

Q With a new wider Panama Canal that allows containerized cargo ships to go directly to the East Coast, will this have any appreciable effect on truck traffic coming out of Oakland?

Linda Keating
Hayward

A No. Although total container volume at the Port of Oakland fell by almost 5 percent in 2015 from 2014 levels, the volume thus far in 2016 has rebounded by almost 4 percent.

Keep in mind that Oakland is a leading export location, and California shippers (especially agriculture) are highly unlikely to ship their wine, nuts and other products to Asia via Hous-

ton, Savannah, Norfolk or New York.

On the import side, California and other Western states constitute a major and growing market, so there will continue to be a lot of containers moving into and out of Oakland as well as Los Angeles, Long Beach, Seattle and Tacoma, even if a small percentage are destined for the East Coast.

Q Concord has been resurfacing its streets for some time. When they do so, they often create a depression where sewer covers are not raised to the new level of the road. Is there a way they can raise the sewers to avoid a visit to the tire dealer? Babel Road is a great example.

Ken Cess
Concord

A We don't like examples like that. Concord city officials say they raise sewer covers when paving leaves the cover at least 1 inch below the street surface. Crews will check Babel Road to see if a lift is needed there.

Join Gary Richards for an hourlong chat noon Wednesday at www.mercurynews.com/live-chats or contact him at mrroadshow@bayareanewsgroup.com.

A I hope it helps parents understand the risks of allowing new drivers to carry other teens on the road.

Q When my teens were in their first year as licensed drivers, they always wondered why they couldn't drive other teens around as their friends were doing. I explained to them that, first, it is against the law.

Second, statistics show that the driver becomes 20 percent more distracted with each additional person riding in a vehicle. Teens are turning up the radio, talking and often conversing on cellphones, which is a huge distraction.

Finally, parents should know that they are accepting financial responsibility for the actions of their student driver. If a newly licensed driver is driving friends around and something illegal occurs, the parents' assets could be in jeopardy. Parents often do not consider the consequences of not following the rules.

Don Meyer