



SAFETY FIRST: WHAT TO DO AFTER THE CRASH



What you do immediately after an automobile accident can significantly impact your case. The follow is a guideline of the steps you should take following an accident to preserve your claim while keeping you and your family safe.



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1. Stop your vehicle. Only move the vehicle if conditions are safe and the car is in the roadway.
2. Notify the police department. Even if it is a minor collision, you should still report the accident to protect yourself from a liability claim by the other party.
3. If anyone was injured, call 911. Do not try to move the person unless there is a threat of danger, as moving an injured person could make their injury worse.
4. Get out of the roadway. Each year pedestrians in SC are injured or killed in the road following an accident. You are undoubtedly shaken up after any accident, but always think about your surroundings and be careful.
5. Make sure the police officer completes a report AND the report is accurate. Take a look at the report to make sure the information is correct. Remember, the police officer most likely didn't see the accident happen, you did.
6. Take your own notes, including noting the road and weather conditions, the street the accident occurred on including cross streets and the direction you were heading, the time of day, and be sure to get the name, telephone and address of any person that witnessed the accident happen. If possible, get the name, telephone number and address of each passenger of the other vehicle in addition to the driver's name and address. Ask any witness what they saw. Remember, you are jotting down notes to prepare your case should you need them later.
7. Take pictures of the damages to both vehicles as well as the license plate of the other vehicle. Do not assume that just because it is a minor collision, you don't need pictures. You never know if the other driver will file a claim for more damage than actually occurred in the accident. It's a good idea to keep a disposable camera in your glove compartment or trunk if your cell phone doesn't come equipped with a camera.
8. Get the name of the police officer at the scene and name of the police department and any emergency vehicles on the scene.
9. If your vehicle is towed, be sure to get the name of the tow company, their telephone number, and tell them where you want the vehicle towed BEFORE they tow the car. It is enough stress to have been involved in an accident, you don't want to be wondering what happened to your vehicle.
10. Even if you aren't severely injured, you may be sore the next day. Some injuries will only become problematic 24 hours to three days after an accident, so be sure to monitor your condition, and seek medical attention immediately, as your injury may be worse than you first think.
11. Do NOT give a recorded statement. Talk to the police officer at the scene but do not discuss fault with other drivers or passengers, or witnesses, no matter who was at fault.
12. Finally, after the accident, it is advisable to seek the advice of an attorney. Each case is different, and it is always best to get the opinion of a lawyer, even if you don't think you need one. Most offer free case evaluations. Call our office at 843.297.8485 today.