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Insurance & Financial Services

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Staying in touch Keeping you informed on *Personal Insurance* issues



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Brushing Up on Everyday Insurance Terms

The insurance business, like most industries, has its own—often confusing—jargon. To help you gain a better understanding of your policies, and of insurance in general, here are some common insurance terms and their definitions:

Deductible—a specified dollar amount that is deducted from the amount of loss payable for a claim made on the policy. For example: If an auto insured on a policy with a \$500 deductible sustains \$800 worth of damage, the policyholder pays the first \$500 and the insurance company pays the \$300 balance.

Endorsement—an amendment to an insurance policy that provides coverage for special circumstances not included in the basic contract, usually for an additional premium. An endorsement is generally printed on a separate page(s) and attached to the main policy document.

Floater—an endorsement to a policy that provides coverage of personal property (not real estate) beyond the limits or terms of the basic policy. Used especially when the policyholder has personal property of unusual value or mobile nature.

Exclusions—provisions of an insurance policy that specify what will *not* be paid for by the company.

Limits—the largest total amount the insurance company will pay for covered losses. Many policies have *multiple* limits—a

certain amount per person, another amount per accident and, sometimes an aggregate limit for all losses paid during the policy term.

Declaration (Declarations Page)—normally the first page of a policy contract. It includes the insured's name, how much insurance is being provided, and how long the coverage is in effect. The information contained here is considered the "declarations" of the policyholder, and any inaccuracies should be brought to the attention of the agent or insurer, as such inaccuracies could be the basis for later claim denial.

Schedule/Scheduled Property—a separate listing of specific items of property covered by a floater or other endorsement to an insurance policy, stating the exact dollar value of each.

Liability Insurance—covers a person or company against losses for which they are held legally responsible to another party or parties. It generally provides for expenses the insurance company incurs to defend the policyholder in court.

Umbrella Policy—a type of liability insurance that provides coverage for large losses that are in excess of the limits of standard liability policies.

Feel free to give us a call or stop by anytime. We are always here to offer detailed explanations of your policies and to answer any questions you may have.

Motorcycle Insurance

Most motorcycle owners take meticulous care when shopping for that new ride. Shopping for motorcycle insurance should be the same. Let's look at the following types of coverage.

If an accident occurs and you're found at fault, **liability insurance** will provide coverage for property damage or personal injuries you caused to others, but it will not cover your own losses. Some policies will provide **guest passenger liability** for your passengers, but not all. To cover your own bike, consider **collision coverage**, which will provide a payout for the book value of your motorcycle, minus your deductible. For protection against losses due to theft, fire, or vandalism, **comprehensive coverage** will provide **compensation** for the motorcycle's Blue Book value, minus the policy deductible.

To protect yourself against other drivers, consider obtaining **uninsured motorist coverage**. If an uninsured driver causes an accident, this policy will cover your medical expenses and lost income. Similarly, **underinsured motorist coverage** will offer protection when the damages are greater than the other driver's low coverage amounts.

For help deciding which policy is right for you, be sure to consult with one of our qualified insurance professionals.

Distraction-Free Driving: Protecting Yourself and Others on the Road

You experience it frequently when you're driving, day or night, whether in urban traffic or on back roads—drivers talking or texting on cell phones, playing with pets, monitoring their children's behavior, eating, shaving, or otherwise engaged by in-vehicle technologies while driving. If you or family members spend a lot of time focusing on other concerns or activities behind the wheel, you may be among the increasing number of distracted U.S. drivers who pose a dangerous risk on the road to yourselves and other drivers and their passengers, as well as pedestrians. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC 2017), each day in the U.S., approximately 9 people are killed and more than 1,000 injured in crashes that are reported to involve a distracted driver.

Here are some tips to help manage your distractions when you're behind the wheel to safely arrive at your destination.

- **Before you start your vehicle, turn off your cell phone** or put it into silent mode to avoid being tempted to take your eyes off the road and answer it.
- **Safely turn off to the side of the road**, if you must take an important call or urgently need to make a call.
- **Have a special outgoing message set up on your phone that informs incoming calls of your unavailability while driving.** Callers will understand your situation and will appreciate your communication to return calls at a more appropriate time and place.
- **Never use your phone to text, check emails, or browse the Internet while driving.** It is important to note that engaging in these dangerous activities that divert your focus from driving are against the law in most states.
- **Know where you're going ahead of time.** Research your destination before getting into the car. Internet sites, such as www.mapquest.com, offer quick and easy-to-find printable maps and directions. Refer to your road map or Internet print-out for directions before you start driving. If you have a global positioning system (GPS) device installed in your vehicle, do



not manually enter addresses while driving. You may want to invest in a newer unit with voice commands, bigger screens, and voiced directional prompts.

- **Pull over safely if you have to address your children's behavior.** Monitoring your children's actions takes your eyes and concentration from the road.
 - **Be sure to properly secure your pets before starting out.** Many companion animals tend to get overexcited by the motion of a vehicle and may become disruptive, which can pull your attention from the road. To ease your pet's stress from being transported, place your cat in a travel carrier beforehand or gently secure your dog in the back seat.
 - **Get assistance from adult passengers.** If you need to look at directions or have to make a call, ask your adult passenger/rider to do those actions for you, so you can focus 100% on the important responsibility of driving.
 - **Avoid common distractions while driving**, such as window sightseeing by scenic areas, or snacking at a stop light. If you want to eat, find a safe area or rest stop and pull over. It only takes a few seconds to lose your focus and endanger yourself and others.
- Engaging in any activity that diverts attention away from your driving, if only briefly, is dangerous behavior. The big three—texting, emailing, and talking—require your sustained visual attention and are totally inappropriate behind the wheel. Remember to prepare for your journey before you start your vehicle, so you can help protect yourself and others on the road.

For Your Information

Conservation Resources

The National Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) works with landowners through conservation planning and assistance to benefit the soil, water, air, plants, and animals for productive lands and healthy ecosystems. It's not only farmers and ranchers who benefit; the NRCS can work with homeowners, businesses, and governments to prevent soil erosion, keep water clean and plentiful, create and preserve green spaces, and reduce the impacts of floods. For more information, visit the NRCS website at www.nrcs.usda.gov.

Daily Air Quality Index

More than one-half of the U.S. population lives in an area with unhealthy air quality for at least part of the year. The Air Quality Index (AQI) at www.airnow.gov provides easy access to air quality information with daily forecasts and real-time conditions for over 300 cities across the country, including details on state and local air quality. You can also click on "Your Health" to take precautions against high levels of pollution.

Protect Your Move

The U.S. Government has partnered with the moving industry, law enforcement, and consumer groups to provide consumers with the information they need to protect themselves during a household move. In addition to accessing guides on preventing moving fraud, understanding insurance options, and consumer rights and responsibilities, consumers can search for moving companies, view complaints, and access state and local moving resources through the website www.protectyourmove.gov.