

# Safety Alert

## Breakdowns advice

30 July 2020

### Background information

Following a recent safety alert, we wanted to clarify our breakdown advice. Knowing what to do in an emergency or a breakdown is key to keeping yourself and others safe.

Every year our traffic officers deal with more than 85,000 breakdowns. Over 40 per cent of these are caused by vehicles running out of fuel, poor tyre maintenance, power loss and engine trouble. Most breakdowns are avoidable and simple [vehicle checks](#) can help you have a safer journey.

All motorists should be able to make their own recovery arrangements in the event of a breakdown. Keep details of your breakdown provider with you.

**If your vehicle appears to have problems or is damaged, always try to exit the motorway.** If that's not possible, follow this advice:

- **If there is an emergency area** – Emergency areas are regularly spaced along a motorway with no hard shoulder and are marked with blue signs featuring an orange SOS telephone symbol. If you can't get to the telephone in the emergency area but have a mobile phone with you, call our customer contact centre on 0300 123 5000.

- **If there is a hard shoulder on a motorway, you can use it to stop in an emergency only.** Put on your hazard lights. If you feel you can get out safely with any occupants, consider exiting your vehicle via the left-hand door, and wait behind the safety barrier if there is one and it is safe to do so. Keep clear of your vehicle and moving traffic at all times. Use the free SOS telephone or call Highways England on 0300 123 5000
- **If you can't get to an emergency area or there is no hard shoulder** move your vehicle as close as possible to the nearside (left-hand) verge or other nearside boundary or slip road and put on your hazard lights. If you feel you can get out safely with any occupants, consider exiting your vehicle via the left-hand door, and wait behind the safety barrier if there is one and it is safe to do so. Keep clear of your vehicle and moving traffic at all times. Call 999 immediately.

Do not put out a warning triangle on a motorway.

**If it's not possible to exit your vehicle safely, there's no safe place to wait, or you feel your life is in danger, put your hazard warning lights on and stay in your vehicle with your seat belt on. If you have a mobile phone, dial '999' immediately.**