

Safety Alert

Tailgating

12 May 2021

Background information

Highways England are currently trialling detection technology to identify tailgating and nudge road users, to change their behaviour, through early interventions comprising of; warning letters and educational material.

Tailgating is a factor in 1 in 8 casualties on England's motorways and major A roads* and is an offence of driving without due care and attention. This carries a minimum £100 fine and 3 penalty points and, in some cases, more severe penalties or court appearance.

Pre-COVID trials demonstrated offence rates of 200-300 per hour. Since November 2020 we have captured over 50,000 instances of tailgating and sent over 2,000 warning letters to repeat offenders (those identified two or more times).

Amongst these we have identified tailgating behaviour among HE staff and our supply chain. We worked with the local site team to feedback behavioural insights as part of a proof of concept which saw a 100% reduction in tailgating behaviour at this site, where site staff were identified, since intervention.

An informative leaflet, including a diagram to help understand safe stopping distances, can be found [here](https://highwaysengland.co.uk/road-safety/stay-safe-stay-back/)

* <https://highwaysengland.co.uk/road-safety/stay-safe-stay-back/>



Lessons Learnt

- Keeping a safe distance from the vehicle in front gives you time to react and stop if you need to.
- The Highway Code says you should leave 'at least a two-second gap between you and the vehicle in front'. This gap is made up of the time needed for thinking and stopping. This gap should be at least doubled on wet roads and increased further on icy roads or when visibility is poor. Dependant on your vehicle type, a greater distance may be necessary.
- If you are being tailgated, just drive normally and do not speed up, signal left and move over when it is safe to do so.