

Resources available to help prepare for the inevitable aging and driving conversation

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When should you or your aging family member stop driving?

There's no easy answer and that's why it's important to say, "Let's talk about aging and driving." ODOT is joining other organizations across the country for Older Driver Safety Awareness week, Dec. 7 – 11, and our message is simple: talk about it!

"The ability to drive is often closely associated with independence, and no one wants that taken away," says Kelly Kapri, Safe and Courteous Driving program manager in ODOT's Transportation Safety Division.

"That's why it's important to start the discussions early and have a plan in place. You'll still be in charge because you are prepared for what is inevitable for most of us – putting away the keys for good."

In Oregon, the fatality rate of drivers 65+ is 17 times higher than for drivers age 25 – 64. Recent research from ODOT shows that older drivers are particularly at risk at intersections, and skewed intersections (when

streets intersect at angles other than 90 degrees) are especially dangerous. The off-set creates additional complexity in the visual challenge for older drivers.

The American Occupational Therapy Association plans a week of webinars focused on helping older drivers and their families learn about and talk about aging and driving, including tips on staying engaged with your family and community when your driving days are over. Here are more resources to help get the conversation going:

Oregon Department of Transportation's DMV older driver page.

Aging and Disability Resource Connection of Oregon.

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration Older Driver resources.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Older Adult Drivers website.

AARP Older Driver Safety.

ODOT has program that helps older drivers and their families as they consider whether or not to continue driving.