

Truck

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should.

"Drivers have to eyeball what's going into their truck," Gourlay said. "If there's too much weight, the axles can collapse."

One of the biggest messages truckers want to get across to motorists is that trucks, when packed, creep along while building up speed. Gourlay has a 10-speed transmission, and it takes quite a distance for him to get from one to 10.

In fact, on turns, it seems Gourlay's truck, with a 53-foot trailer packed with aluminum wheel drums and his cab pushed by a 425 H.P. engine, struggles and strains a lot, yet barely budges.

"People get mad if you're not going fast enough," Gourlay said. "But it takes a long time to get going, as well as it takes a long time to stop."

Fighting fatigue

One of the biggest battles Gourlay said long-distance truckers have to fight is fatigue. By law, trucks can't drive more than 10 hours a day. But at the end of their 10 hours, they often can't find a safe place to stop.

"If they don't get into a spot early enough, they won't get in," Gourlay said. "So they keep driv-

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ing. That's our biggest reason for having accidents."

With his daycab driving job, Gourlay doesn't have to deal with finding a place to stop at night. But he understands how "performance can drop" after eight or so hours on the road.

For truckers, despite all the dangers, freeway driving is a breeze compared to the hassles they deal with once they turn off the freeway onto main or residential roads.

Headaches here include frequent stopping because of traffic lights, low-hanging tree branches and wires, low bridges, navigating tight corners and watching out for people getting out of parked cars.

"Freeways are safer than surface streets," Gourlay said.

The following are police and fire incidents that occurred in Farmington and Farmington Hills during the past week.

NOISE COMPLAINTS

In Farmington Hills: Police ticketed a garbage hauler under the city's loading ordinance after he was picking up trash behind the Merchant of Vino on Middlebelt and 12 Mile at 8:30 a.m. July 16. Police received numerous complaints from nearby residents about the noise. The driver, who didn't want to accept the ticket, said he was unaware of the city law prohibiting loading and unloading between the hours of 8 p.m. to 7 a.m.

CHILD ABANDONMENT

In Farmington Hills: Police ticketed a Farmington Hills mother, 30, for leaving four children ages 8, 6, 4 and 2 unattended in a 1996 Ford Windstar outside Target on Grand River around 1:25 p.m. July 16. The engine was running with the air-conditioning on, police reports said. The 8-year-old boy said his mother said she'd only be a few minutes. She told police she was in the store between 15-20 minutes. It's illegal to leave a child unattended under 11 years old.

THEFT

In Farmington Hills: Someone stole a stump grinder worth \$12,000 from Treco-R-Us on Eight Mile Road

between July 14-15.

A woman said someone stole a check from her purse and cashed it for \$885 between July 15-16. The woman, who is handicapped, receives home care. Another check had been written for \$2,000, which the victim said she'd have canceled.

A \$400 air compressor was reported stolen from a Runnymede residence between July 17-18.

AUTO THEFT

In Farmington Hills: A black 1987 Pontiac Grand Prix was stolen from the Botzford Hospital parking lot July 16.

RECKLESS DRIVING

In Farmington Hills: Police ticketed a Hills man, 31, for reckless driving after a man on a bike had to swerve onto Eight Mile Road to avoid being hit by a 1997 Dodge Dakota exiting Little Valley Trailer Park on July 16. The bicyclist lost control of his bike and fell, cutting both hands from a glass bottle he'd been carrying. A witness said the driver didn't look when he pulled out of the driveway, police reports stated.

MARIJUANA ARREST

In Farmington Hills: Police arrested two males, ages 20 and 17, after finding 3 grams of marijuana inside a plastic bag in the center console of the 1999 Chevrolet Cavalier

parked at Forest Elementary School shortly after midnight July 17.

CRACK ARREST

In Farmington Hills: Police arrested two males for sale and manufacturing of crack cocaine after a SONIC undercover officer made two buys at Gateway Apartments July 17-18. Based units stopped the 1986 Mazda on 12 Mile and Middlebelt shortly after the second buy took place around 1:30 a.m. A Novi officer recovered \$200 used in the recent buy as well as \$103 from a purchase earlier that night. Police later conducted a search of a Gateway Apartment residence where investigators believed crack was manufactured. Officers found a digital scale and packaging material.

ACCIDENT

In Farmington Hills: Police believe a driver who left the scene of an accident at Haggerty and 14 Mile was on a heroin high at the time. An Oakland County Sheriff found the 1984 Buick Regal on Welch Road and Pontiac Trail after it left the scene. Hills police later interviewed the driver, who admitted she panicked and left the scene. She also said she used heroin six hours before the accident. Police also found 3.5 grams of marijuana in the woman's pouch. She was arrested and taken to Botzford Hospital to have her blood

drawn, which will be sent to the Michigan State Police crime lab for analysis.

ASSAULT

In Farmington Hills: A tiff over a CD led to an argument at Little Caesars on 12 Mile where a manager had to subdue an employee who tried to lunge at another teenager with a pizza cutter July 17. The employee said the teen and two friends came to the pizza place, demanding he return a CD he owns. When the employee refused, the teen punched him. The teen, who is black, said the employee used a facial slur, which the employee denied. A manager said he didn't see who hit who first but intervened when the employee grabbed the pizza cutter knife. Later, police arrested a girl who'd accompanied the teen after finding she had the employee's pager.

SHOPLIFTING

In Farmington Hills: Police arrested a Detroit man, 46, after someone ran out without paying for a \$90 pair of Rockports at Famous Footwear on Orchard Lake July 17. Police stopped a U-Haul truck that the man left in. Three people were inside, including a man with a new pair of Rockports. Police also found several bags of merchandise, including clothes and cameras, that didn't have any receipts. Police arrested the driver, a Detroit woman, 47, for driving on a suspended license.

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