

# NEWS RELEASE



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## **AARP Defensive Driving class set at Touchmark at Coffee Creek**

EDMOND, Okla. – Rush-hour traffic can challenge the most skilled drivers, but for older Oklahomans, even the road less traveled sometimes can present special obstacles. Those challenges will be addressed Jan. 8 in an AARP Defensive Driving class at Touchmark at Coffee Creek in Edmond.

The six-hour class – 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. -- will qualify participants for insurance discount programs. Cost is \$15 for AARP members and \$20 for non-members. Class is limited to 35 people. Touchmark is located at 2801 Shortgrass Road.

“The Defensive Driving class is a very proactive way for older drivers to actively engage in becoming safer at the craft of driving,” said Myra Smith, Health Services director for Touchmark at Coffee Creek. “Many people tend to drive less as they age. This can mean they aren’t as familiar with road changes or other travel hazards.”

For example, vision is a particular challenge for many older drivers, said Smith, who worked as an emergency room nurse prior to her current position with Touchmark at Coffee Creek. She recalls several examples where older drivers were brought to the ER with injuries after an auto accident that began with an attempt to change lanes.

“It can happen so quickly. People think they have checked their blind spot, but there can be a car there,” Smith said. “As they start to pull over, the other driver honks, and this startles people. They intend to step on the brake and instead step on the gas and run into the car in front. It actually happens all the time.

“While there usually weren’t fatalities, there certainly were injuries, because people’s reflexes aren’t as fast and their visual field is less. They just don’t see the other driver.”

The AARP Defensive Driving class will be taught by veteran instructor Chuck Reffner, who has taught it more than 100 times over the past 11 years.

Reffner describes the class as a “self-assessment” for participants in areas of vision, hearing and reaction time.

"As we age our eyesight, particularly at dawn and dusk, is not as good," Reffner said. "Many of the older people in my classes have curtailed night driving. These and other small changes make a lot of difference in keeping us safer on the road."

*TOUCHMARK at Coffee Creek*

2801 Shortgrass Road • Edmond, OK 73003

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The class also will provide a review of changing traffic laws as well as discuss the challenges presented by newer vehicles and the technology they offer, he said.

Space is limited, so interested drivers are encouraged to RSVP at 405-340-1975.

Touchmark is part of the Coffee Creek 638-acre planned residential development, which includes a golf course, recreational centers and walking and biking trails for Coffee Creek homeowners. A full-service retirement community, Touchmark at Coffee Creek offers a wide range of homes and lifestyle options. For more information, contact Touchmark at 405-340-1975 or visit [TouchmarkEdmond.com](http://TouchmarkEdmond.com).