



SAFETY UNLIMITED, INC.

Weekly Safety Meeting

Winter Driving

The leading cause of death during winter storms is transportation accidents. Many accidents could be avoided if drivers took time to learn and practice these tips for driving safely during snowy and icy conditions.

Perhaps the deadliest danger of all is "black ice." Black ice is ice that forms on a roadway, usually due to snow melting and re-freezing. Since it is almost invisible, drivers fail to recognize black ice conditions and may drive at normal speeds--often resulting in very serious accidents.

Always be alert to the possibility of black ice when temperatures are near or below freezing. Pavement that looks dry but appears darker in color and dull-looking should alert you to the presence of black ice.

Winter Driving Tips:

Driving in the snow and ice is one of the most dangerous activities you can do on the road. Traction is at a premium and you can easily lose control of your vehicle.

Here are some tips you should remember for driving safely in winter:

- Always use your seatbelt.
- Turn on your headlights during adverse weather conditions. Overcast skies and falling snow limit visibility. It is important to see and be seen.
- Like all the signs say, bridges and overpasses freeze before the roadway. Use extra caution on these.
- Remember that driving in winter weather conditions causes physical and mental fatigue and reduces reaction times.
 - Get plenty of rest and adequate nutrition. Don't drive while you're sleepy or on medication that causes drowsiness.
- Prepare your vehicle well ahead of time. Check fluid levels, tire pressure, lights, and the battery.
 - Have a mechanic give your vehicle a winter check-up and make any necessary repairs.

Vehicle Inspection:

Inspect the following vehicle systems to determine if they are working properly:

- Brakes: Brakes should provide even and balanced braking. Also check that brake fluid is at the proper level.
- Cooling System: Ensure a proper mixture of 50/50 antifreeze and water in the cooling system at the proper level.
- Electrical System: Check the ignition system and make sure that the battery is fully charged and that the connections are clean. Check that the alternator belt is in good condition with proper tension.
- Engine: Inspect all engine systems.
- Exhaust System: Check exhaust for leaks and that all clamps and hangers are snug.
- Tires: Check for proper tread depth and no signs of damage or uneven wear. Check for proper tire inflation.
- Oil: Check that oil is at proper level.
- Visibility Systems: Inspect all exterior lights, defrosters (windshield and rear window), and wipers. Install winter windshield wipers.

Emergency Kit:

An emergency kit with the following items is recommended in vehicles:

- Cellphone or two-way radio;
- Windshield ice scraper;
- Snow brush;
- Flashlight with extra batteries;
- Shovel;
- Tow chain;
- Traction aids (bag of sand or cat litter);
- Emergency flares;
- Jumper cables;
- Snacks;
- Water;
- Road maps; and
- Blankets, change of clothes.

Stranded in a Vehicle:

- If you are stranded in a vehicle, stay in the vehicle. Call for emergency assistance if needed, but response time may be slow in severe winter weather conditions.
- Notify your supervisor of your situation.
- Do not leave the vehicle to search for assistance unless help is visible within 100 yards.
- You may become disoriented and get lost in blowing and drifting snow.
- Display a trouble sign by hanging a brightly colored cloth on the vehicle's radio antenna and raising the hood.
- Turn on the vehicle's engine for about 10 minutes each hour and run the heat to keep warm. Also, turn on the vehicle's dome light when the vehicle is running as an additional signal.
- Beware of carbon monoxide poisoning. Keep the exhaust pipe clear of snow and open a downwind window slightly for ventilation.
- Watch for signs of frostbite and hypothermia.
- Do minor exercises to maintain good blood circulation in your body.
- Clap hands and move arms and legs occasionally.
- Try not to stay in one position for too long.
- Stay awake; you will be less vulnerable to cold-related health problems.
- Use blankets, newspapers, maps, and even the removable car mats for added insulation.
- Avoid overexertion since cold weather puts an added strain on the heart.
- Unaccustomed exercise such as shoveling snow or pushing a vehicle can bring on a heart attack or make other medical conditions worse.

Ice and Snow...Take it Slow!!

