



# Weekly Safety Meeting

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## Safe Winter Driving

Driving conditions in the winter months can be full of treacherous hazards including winter ice, poor visibility, strong winds, snow, rain, and more, especially in northern regions that get a lot of snow and ice. Appropriate precautions can help make a trip safer and help motorists deal with an emergency.

Perhaps the deadliest danger of all is "black ice." Black ice forms on a roadway, usually due to snow melting and refreezing. 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 may be darker in color and dull looking should alert you to the presence of black ice.

Regardless of your driving skill or vehicle preparation, there are some winter conditions that can't be conquered. But these tips may help prevent snowy and icy roads from ruining your day.

### Tips You Should Remember for Driving Safely in Winter:

- Allow enough time to get to your destination. Rushing in difficult driving conditions can lead to an accident. Turn your radio on to listen to the road report and weather forecast. Leave a few minutes earlier in the morning and allow plenty of time to get to work. Buckle up your seat belt or safety restraint before you start driving.
- Stay alert. Don't drive when you are under the influence of alcohol, drugs, or certain medications. Read the labels of prescription drugs and over the counter medicines to determine if they can cause drowsiness. Driving demands your full attention.
- Stay calm. Sometimes other drivers will become frustrated with slow moving traffic. Keep your temper and don't let other drivers aggravate you. Maintain a safe speed and drive defensively.
- Keep a safe driving distance between you and other vehicles. The "two second rule" works well on dry roads and in ideal conditions, but in winter you should extend it to four seconds. Watch the vehicle directly ahead of you. As it passes a stationary object start counting – "One thousand and one" "One thousand and two", and so on. Your Vehicle should not pass the same object until you say "four."
- Keep your car well maintained and in good working order. This includes having good tread on your tires, the engine tuned up for winter, and all lights functioning properly. In colder climates, you may need to add antifreeze to the radiator. In some areas, gasoline antifreeze may be required.
- Clean your windows and headlights frequently. Keep your windshield washer fluid topped off. Good visibility is essential to safe driving. Clean your windows and headlights of all ice or snow before starting out on your trip. Repeat this exercise frequently throughout your trip.

- Drive appropriately for the road conditions. The posted speed limit may be too fast under winter conditions. Driving on a wet road can cause hydroplaning as a thin barrier of water builds up between your tires and the road surface, causing your vehicle to slip. If you begin to lose control of your steering, take your foot off of the gas.
- Stay with your vehicle if it breaks down. Put on your emergency flashers and wait for assistance. Carry a sign for your window asking other motorists to tell the police you need help.
- Wait out bad weather. Strong icy winds in combination with snow or dust can make it impossible to see where you are driving -- or walking. Under these conditions it is usually safest to stay with your vehicle and wait out the storm.
- In slippery conditions, never jam on your breaks in a panic stop. You will most likely skid and lose control of the vehicle. Instead, pump your brakes gently a few times.
- Avoid driving through deep puddles, especially at high speeds. The water can make your brakes less effective and, if deep enough, can cause serious engine damage. If you must drive through water and you are not sure about the depths, slow down and cautiously inch forward until you are certain it is safe.
- Quit driving when you begin to feel tired and sleepy. If you have a big trip that involves a long distance to drive, take frequent short breaks for rest, fresh air, and a walk around the vehicle.

Many accidents could be avoided if you take time to learn and practice these tips for driving safely during snowy and icy conditions.

***ICE AND SNOW...TAKE IT SLOW!***

