



## Winter Driving Tips

Winter driving can be hazardous; especially in northern regions that get a lot of snow and ice. Additional preparations can help make a trip safer, or help staff deal with an emergency. The information below is provided by the Occupational safety and Health Administration (OSHA) and can help to prevent motor vehicle incidents due to winter storms.

### **The Three P's of Safe Winter Driving**

PREPARE for the trip

PROTECT yourself

PREVENT crashes on the road.

#### **PREPARE**

Vehicle maintenance: check battery, tire tread, and windshield wipers, keep your windows clear, put no-freeze fluid in the washer reservoir, and check the antifreeze.

Have on hand: flashlight, abrasive material (sand, kitty litter, even floor mats), shovel, snow brush and ice scraper, warning devices (like flares) and blankets. For long trips, add food and water, medication and cell phone.

Plan your route: allow plenty of time (check the weather and leave early if necessary), be familiar with the maps/ directions, and file your itinerary with the Y.

Practice cold weather driving: during daylight, rehearse maneuver slowly on the ice or snow in an empty lot. Steer into a skid. Know what your brakes will do; stomp on antilock brakes, pump non-antilock brakes. Stopping distances are longer on water-covered ice and icy roads.

#### **PROTECT YOURSELF**

Wear your seat belt; drive within the limits and in consideration of the conditions. Pull over to use a cell phone or radio. Avoid fatigue – Get plenty of rest before the trip, stop at least every three hours, and rotate drivers if possible

#### **PREVENT CRASHES**

Drugs and alcohol never mix with driving, slow down and increase distances between cars, and remember to keep your eyes open for pedestrians walking in the road.

## Tips for Driving In Severe Weather

### On Ice or Snow:

- Bridges and overpasses freeze first, so always slow down and avoid sudden changes in speed or direction.
- Keep windows clear.
- Keep your speed steady and slow – but not so slow that your car gets stuck in deeper snow.
- Use your brakes cautiously. Abrupt braking can cause brake lock-up and cause you to lose steering control.
- To make antilock brakes work correctly, apply constant, firm pressure to the pedal. During an emergency stop, push the brake pedal all the way to the floor, if necessary, even in wet or icy conditions.
- If you get stuck in snow, straighten the wheels and accelerate slowly. Avoid spinning the tires. Use sand or cinders under the drive wheels.
- In High Winds
- It is best not to drive a trailer, van or other "high-profile" vehicle in high winds.
- If driving in high winds, use extra caution near trailers, vans or vehicles carrying lightweight cargo.

### When It Rains:

- Slow down. Roads usually prove more slippery than they would seem.
- Turn on your lights.
- Use the defroster or air conditioner to keep windows and mirrors clear.

### When Conditions are Foggy:

- Stay to the right of the roadway.
- Turn on your headlights – day or night – to low beam.
- If you can't see the road's edge, pull off on the right – well out of the traffic lane – and turn on the emergency flashers. Wait until visibility improves before you continue.

### In a Hailstorm:

- Find shelter by driving under an overpass or bridge.
- Listen to your car radio and be alert.

### If You See a Tornado:

- Never try to outrun a tornado.
- Get out of the car and find shelter.
- If you can not get to a safe structure, lie down in a ditch or low area. Lie face down to protect yourself from flying debris and cover the back of your head and neck with your hands.
- Stay alert for flash floods.