

SAFETY SPOTLIGHT

BE PREPARED FOR WINTER DRIVING

As winter descends upon us, it is crucial to be cautious while driving to ensure your safety and that of others sharing the road. Safety is a shared responsibility – but we ALL need to remind ourselves and others that driving conditions can change without notice. Please take a moment and review this information with those who drive for your organization.

Prepare Your Vehicle

In addition to annual maintenance:

- Test your battery – battery power drops as the temperature drops.
- Check the tire pressure – tire pressure drops as the temperature drops.
- Remove dirt, ice, and snow from your vehicle's windows, sensors, external camera lenses, and side mirrors.
- To avoid carbon monoxide poisoning, never leave a vehicle running in your garage – even with the garage door up.
- Share your travel plans and route with someone before you leave.
- Keep your vehicle's emergency preparedness kit fully stocked.

How to Avoid a Crash

AAA offers the following driving tips:

- Avoid using cruise control in wintry conditions.
- Steer in the direction of a skid, so when your wheels regain traction, you don't have to overcorrect to stay in your lane.
- Accelerate and decelerate slowly.
- Increase following distance to 8 to 10 seconds.
- If possible, don't stop when going uphill.

If visibility is severely limited, pull off the road to a safe parking place and do not drive until conditions improve. Avoid pulling off onto the shoulder unless it is an absolute emergency. Limited visibility means other vehicles can't see yours on the shoulder.

Driving in Rain or Snow

Driving in rain or snow can be challenging and it is essential you use precautions to stay safe on the road. Below are tips for safer driving in rain or snow.

- To avoid hydroplaning, reduce your speed when driving in wet conditions. Slower speeds help your tires maintain better contact with the road, reducing the risk of hydroplaning.
- Black ice, a thin layer of nearly invisible ice, can form on roads, especially during the early morning and evening. Approach bridges and overpasses with caution, as these areas freeze first.
- Visibility is often reduced during winter weather. Always use your headlights, even during daylight hours, and use your turn signals well in advance to alert other drivers of your intentions.

Driving in Fog

Fog is a significant contributor to weather-related accidents. Below are tips on safely navigating through foggy conditions.

- Use low-beam headlights to illuminate the road without causing glare.
- If equipped, using your vehicle's fog lights can cut through fog better than regular headlights.
- Keep your full attention on the road and avoid distractions like using your phone or adjusting the radio.
- Open your windows to listen to traffic and hear approaching vehicles.
- Follow the road markings, such as lane lines and reflectors, to stay on the correct path.
- Be cautious at intersections and approach carefully due to limited visibility.

In conclusion, prepare your vehicle for winter, follow safety tips, and use extra caution when driving in inclement weather.

Source: Winter driving - National Safety Council. (n.d.). <https://www.nsc.org/community-safety/safety-topics/seasonal-safety/winter-safety/driving>

Helping to keep our member's employees safe! This Safety Spotlight brought to you by: