

Safe Winter Driving Tips

Weather, such as rain, sleet, snow, fog and/or slick roadways, result in 24% of all crashes each year. According to the US Department of Transportation, 7,400 people are killed and over 673,000 people are injured in these crashes. The following information is provided to help make your winter trips safer. **Always Avoid Distracted Driving and Buckle Up.**

PREPARE

Maintain Your Vehicles by checking your brakes, lights, battery, tire tread and windshield wipers. Keep your windows clear by using no-freeze fluid in the washer reservoir, and check your antifreeze.

Plan Your Route by allowing plenty of time to arrive. Be familiar with the maps/directions and let others know your route and arrival time.

Items to Have On Hand to increase your safety should include flashlights, jumper cables, shovels, ice scrapers, warning devices (like flares), blankets and a cell phone (if weather conditions warrant).

If You Become Stopped or Stalled, move your vehicle to a safe location off the roadway. Put bright markers on the antenna or windows and shine dome light. Stay in your vehicle, and, if you run your vehicle for warmth make sure to clear the exhaust pipe.

WHILE YOU DRIVE

IN FOG: Slow your speed and maintain a safe stopping distance. Use your Low Beams and keep your windshield clear (defrost) to maximize visibility.

IN RAIN: Slow your speed and increase your following distance to maintain a safe stopping distance. Use your windshield wipers and try to drive in the tire tracks left by vehicles in front of you. If you find yourself hydroplaning, do not brake or turn suddenly. Ease your foot off the accelerator until your vehicle slows and you can feel the road again.

IF PULLING OVER: In reduced visibility conditions, drivers tend to follow the tail lights of vehicles in front of them. If you must pull off the road, pull off as far as possible, turn off your headlights, take your foot off the brake pedal, and turn on your hazard lights.

