

WINTER DRIVING TIPS

--The leading cause of death during winter storms is motor vehicle crashes. Preparing your vehicle for the winter season and knowing how to react if stranded or lost on the road are the keys to safe winter driving.

--If you don't have to go out, DON'T

WINTERIZE YOUR CAR:

- 1) Take your vehicle in for checkup to prepare for winter temperatures (Just like getting flu shot for your body)
- 2) Have mechanic check brakes, hoses, fan belts, spark plugs, etc
- 3) Check battery- cold weather starts require a fully charged battery
 - batteries lose power as the temperature drops so you need MORE power to start the engine in winter and get LESS power from the same battery
- 4) Check your tires- the amount of traction between the tires and roadway determines how well the vehicle accelerates, turns, and stops
 - make sure tires are properly inflated and have adequate tread
 - if you can't get four new tires, at least buy two and place them either in front on front wheel drive or rear on rear wheel drive
- 5) Check wipers and windshield fluids
 - you can go through a lot of fluid in one messy day so keep some in trunk
 - replace wipers if worn: try winter blades if necessary but take them off in Spring
- 6) Keep gas tank always over half full
 - you can keep engine running if stuck and it prevents fuel line freeze
- 7) Keep winter driving kit in vehicle:
 - bag of abrasive material
 - small shovel
 - scraper/brush
 - flashlight
 - windshield solvent
 - gloves
 - booster cables
 - blanket
 - warning flares/triangles
 - cellular phone
 - if long trip: snacks, water, snow gear, etc

WINTER DRIVING TIPS:

- 1) Avoid driving while fatigued
- 2) Never warm up a vehicle in an enclosed area such as a garage
- 3) Don't leave a running vehicle unattended
- 4) Avoid using your parking brake
- 5) Do not use cruise control when driving on slippery surface

- 6) Always wear seat belt
- 7) Clear all windows of ice and snow-it is the law!
- 8) Remove snow from hood, roof, and lights
- 9) Allow extra time to get where you are going; Drive for conditions; don't get overconfident with four wheel drive-we work just as many crashes with SUVs than other cars
- 10) Allow additional room between other vehicles-don't tailgate (always leave a cushion of at least 2 car lengths per 10mph you're traveling)
- 11) Slow down when approaching intersections, off ramps, bridges, or overpasses
- 12) Avoid abrupt actions while steering, braking, or accelerating to lessen the chances of losing control of the vehicle; slow starts prevent spinning of wheels; accelerate and decelerate SLOWLY
- 13) Don't stop if you can avoid it; if you can slow down enough to keep rolling until the light changes, do it; DO NOT disregard lights or stop signs in the process
- 14) Don't power up hills-it will only start your wheels spinning; do not stop while going up a hill
- 15) Know your brakes-do you have ABS?; if you have ABS, keep brake down even if it starts pulsating; do not lock up brakes
- 16) If you start sliding, take your foot off the brake and steer the car in the direction of the skid; hitting your brakes will only cause you to lose control; if you can't recover, steer off the road instead of into oncoming traffic
- 17) Drive defensively-anticipate others' actions; you may be driving carefully but others are not
- 18) Watch for pedestrians-poor visibility and slippery conditions provide hazards for them
- 19) Do not pass snow plows: the drivers have limited visibility and the road ahead of them is worse than behind
- 20) If you get stuck in the snow: do not spin your wheels-you will only dig in deeper; use light acceleration to ease it out; use a shovel to clear snow away from tires; pour abrasive around tires; try rocking the car if nothing else works
- 21) If you do slid off road, make sure exhaust pipe isn't clogged with snow which could lead to carbon monoxide leaking into the passenger compartment
- 22) Be patient-on really bad winter days, police response could be very slow

REMEMBER THE 3 S'S: Stay Alert, Slow Down, and Stay in Control