



Severe Weather Driving Tips

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.

Driving during winter weather conditions is sometimes hazardous at best. Below is some information you may find useful as you prepare to confront the winter season.

If you must use your car during a storm...

- Plan your travel, selecting both primary and alternate routes.
- Let someone know your travel routes and itinerary so that, if you don't arrive on time, officials will know where to search for you.
- Check latest weather information on your radio.
- Try not to travel alone - two or three people are preferable.
- Travel in convoy (with another vehicle) if possible.
- Drive carefully and defensively. Watch for ice patches on bridges and overpasses.
- If a storm begins to be too much for you to handle, seek refuge immediately.
- If your car should become disabled, stay with the vehicle, running your engine and heater for short intervals. Be sure to "crack" a window in the vehicle to avoid carbon monoxide build-up.

Reliable transportation is especially important in the winter. If you have a car, make sure it is ready for whatever winter may bring. Not only should your car be kept in top operating condition all year round - for safety and fuel economy, it is especially important to get it winterized to avoid any unpleasant or dangerous situation while traveling in frigid weather. The following should be checked:

- ignition system
- fuel system
- brakes
- exhaust system
- wiper blades
- snow tires
- tire tread
- defroster
- proper grade oil
- cooling system
- battery
- lights
- antifreeze

Always fill the gasoline tank before entering open country, even for a short distance, and stop to fill-up long before the tank begins to run low. Keeping your tank as full as possible will minimize condensation, providing the maximum advantage in case of trouble. A Citizens Band (CB) radio and/or cellular phone can be very useful to you or another stranded motorist in case of an emergency.

Coffee Can Survival Kit...

Here's how to make your own:

- 2 or 3 pound coffee can (punch 3 holes at the top of can, equal distance apart)
- 60-inch length of twine or heavy string (cut into 3 equal pieces - used to suspend can)
- 3 large safety pins (tie string to safety pins and pin to car roof interior to suspend can over candle)
- 1 candle 2" diameter (place on lid under suspended can for melting snow)
- 1 pocket knife, reasonably sharp (or substitute with scissors)
- 3 pieces of bright cloth 2" wide x 36" long (tie to antenna or door handle)
- Several packets of soup, hot chocolate, tea, bouillon cubes, etc. (mixed into melted snow to provide warmth and nutrition)
- 1 small package of peanuts (provides protein) & fruit-flavored candy (orange slices, jelly beans, etc.-avoid chocolate)
- 1 pair of athletic socks (cotton) and 1 pair of glove liners (cotton)
- 2 packages of book matches
- 1 sun shield blanket or 2 large green or black plastic leaf bags (to reflect body heat)
- 1 pen light and batteries (keep separate)

When complete, place stocking cap over kit and carry in passenger compartment of car. If you have a 3 pound can, you will still have additional room for band-aids, aspirin, small

radio, etc. If there is still room left, increase the quantity of any of the above items or improvise items you feel might be necessary.

Remember hypothermia (rapid loss of body temperature) can happen to anyone!

Stay in your car until help arrives!

An accident or severe weather situation can occur at any time. Your driver must be aware of the effects of cold weather in the event he or she becomes stranded.

Be Alert To Frostbite Conditions

Exposed skin can freeze within one minute at wind-chill equivalent temperatures below -25 F. Frostbite affects the extremities, such as fingers and toes. If a body part has been frostbitten once, it is more susceptible to frostbite again, even in milder conditions. Redness and a burning sensation are indications frostbite will occur unless the extremity is warmed. Numbness is an indication that frostbite has already taken place. If frostbite is discovered, hold the affected part tightly against the warm skin or another part of the body; (for example place frozen fingers under arm). When thoroughly warmed, keep covered and make an effort to keep area from freezing again.

Hypothermia

Under conditions of prolonged exposure to cold, the body may begin to lose heat faster than it can produce it. A condition called hypothermia begins to develop. The symptoms become very apparent, and include:

- uncontrollable shivering
- vague, slow, slurred speech
- memory lapses
- incoherence
- immobile, fumbling hands
- frequent stumbling
- lurching gait
- drowsiness
- apparent exhaustion

Wind-Chill Equivalent Temperatures

The true effect of winter weather on your body can be deceiving. While the air temperature may not seem too cold, the wind may increase its effect. To find the wind chill, find the actual air temperature in the "Calm Air" column, then look for the corresponding value under the column closest to the current air speed. For example, if the actual air temperature is 20 degrees Fahrenheit, a wind speed of 30 mph makes the air feel like -18 degrees.

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 it's 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.

In severe thunderstorms -- 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.

In an approaching Hurricane -- Avoid low areas and do not wait to travel inland.