



Winter Driving Hazards – Vehicle Safety

Poor visibility and adverse road conditions create hazards all year round but, during the winter months, we need to exercise an even higher level of caution. Winter weather can change in an instant! Taking appropriate actions well before the cold winds and heavy snow arrive could set the stage for a more enjoyable winter season.

What’s so special about driving in winter weather?

- There’s less daylight during the winter months which means we’re driving more miles “in-the-dark”
- Snow, ice and wet roads reduce tire traction, leading to an increased chance of sliding and spinouts
- Spray from the tires of other vehicles sharing the road reduces vision (yours and other motorists)
- Overcast and gray skies often reduce our ability to see clearly
- Water, ice and condensation on windows and mirrors make it difficult for drivers to monitor clearances
- Brakes may freeze or be covered with snow/ice, reducing our ability to stop effectively

What can we do?

A pre-trip inspection of your vehicle should be conducted to avoid mechanical failures and assure you’re prepared for driving in potentially hazardous conditions. Before driving, always:

➤ Check Braking System Operation	➤ Make sure defrosters and heaters are operational
➤ Clear wipers of ice/snow; make sure they work	➤ Make sure all lights work and are visible
➤ Wipe off reflectors and directional signals	➤ Clear the windows of ice, snow, frost or condensation
➤ Wipe off all mirrors	➤ Make sure you have a good ice scraper and window brush
➤ Tell someone where you’re going and when you expect to arrive	➤ Consider if tire chains should be applied
➤ Pack extra clothes/jackets/gloves, etc.	➤ Put an extra blanket or two in the vehicle

No matter how experienced we are with driving in winter weather, it is important to remember to slow down during poor weather conditions and be prepared for anything Mother Nature throws at us. The actions we take now will set the stage for a safe and enjoyable season.

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