

Risk Manager

Answers, resources and information to help assess and reduce risk

Winter Driving Safety By Mark Nease

Cold weather, snow and ice are approaching; and that means the roads may be slippery. Now is the time to prepare your vehicle for winter driving and to refresh yourself on alternative driving habits geared towards winter driving safety.

Vehicle Maintenance

Maintain your vehicle to prevent winter breakdowns. Check your battery, tire tread, tire inflation, windshield wiper blades, and washer fluid and antifreeze concentration to prevent coolant freeze-up.

Emergency Kit

Prepare an emergency kit to keep in your vehicle. This kit should include:

- Contact list of phone numbers (auto club, family, etc.)
- Flashlight (with fresh batteries)
- Jumper cables
- First aid kit
- Blanket, warm clothes, hat and gloves
- Bag of salt or sand to use for extra traction
- Extra washer fluid
- Snow brush, ice scraper and a shovel
- Non-perishable foods such as canned nuts and dry candy

Travel Preparation

The better prepared you are to start your traveling for the day, the safer you can be.

- Wear winter boots.
- Clear all snow from the surface of your vehicle.
- Be prepared to adjust your driving habits. If you have 4WD or All Wheel Drive, although it may accelerate better, know that it may not brake or corner any better.
- Drive after having adequate rest. Driving in winter weather when fatigued can compromise your ability to safely reach your destination.
- Watch weather reports prior to driving, especially long-distance trips.
- Leave early if you have to. Don't put yourself in a situation where you may be late and think you'll have to drive quicker to reach your destination.
- Always keep at least a half tank of fuel in your vehicle.

Driving in Snow

When driving on snowy roads:

- Accelerate slowly. Spinning your drive wheels by suddenly accelerating will sacrifice traction.
- Decelerate slowly and avoid making abrupt moves in braking or steering.
- Drive with your headlights on. Always make your vehicle visible, especially when in snow squalls.
- Reduce speed and increase the distance between your vehicle and the vehicle ahead of you.
- On four-lane highways, drive in the lane that has been cleared the most recent.

- Avoid passing vehicles when the adjacent lane has not been plowed.

Driving on snow-covered roads in Pennsylvania is usually unavoidable. Proper preparation in key areas can help you get to your destination without incident.

For additional information or training on best practices and safety management within your school entity, please contact Director of Risk Management Sharon Orr at (866) 401-6600, ext. 7152 or sorr@cmregent.com.