Winter Weather Driving Meeting Kit



Winter Weather Overview

The majority of North American population is located in an area that receives snow or ice during the winter months. The hazards created by winter weather make it hard for even the most experienced drivers to operate a vehicle safely.

Tires

- The traction between tires and roadway determines how well a vehicle rides, turns and stops, and is crucial for safe driving in winter.
- Proper tire selection is very important.
- Use four snow tires that are of the same type, size, speed rating, and load index for better handling, control and stability.
- Use all-season radial tires only in areas that receive only light snowfall.
- Use chains or studded tires on all four wheels when you expect severe snow and icy roads. Check with your local Transportation office to see if the use of tire chains or studded tires is legal in the region through which you are planning to drive.
- Check tire pressure and if necessary restore it to levels recommended by the vehicle manufacturer. The pressure drops about 1 psi for every 5°C (9°F) drop in temperature.
- Check the wear of the tires. Tires have tread wear indicators or bars that are inside the grooves of the tires. When the tread is close to (within 1.5mm) or the same level as the wear indicator, replace the tire as it no longer provides effective traction.
- Check tire balance and correct if necessary.

Exhaust System

- Check the exhaust system for leaks. A sealed exhaust system reduces the risk for carbon monoxide poisoning.
- Keep the window in your vehicle slightly open when you’re stuck in snow. Run the engine and heater to keep warm.
- Keep the exhaust pipe clear of snow. A blocked pipe can force carbon monoxide back into the car interior.

Heating/Cooling System

- Ensure that your vehicle always has a sufficient amount of antifreeze rated for the coldest weather.
- Check the defrosters (front and back) to make sure they are working efficiently.

Windshield Wipers

- Ensure that windshield wipers function efficiently. Replace them if they are old or worn.
- Fill the washer container with an antifreeze fluid and top it up frequently.

Fuel

Do not let the fuel level get too low – the driving time to the next gas station may take much longer than expected.

Electrical System

- Battery – recharge or replace if the battery is weak. Also have the charging system checked.
- Ignition – check for damaged ignition wires and cracks in the distributor cap.
- Lights – check all lights (headlights, side lights, emergency flashers, directional lights, taillights, brake lights and parking lights) for proper functioning.

Brakes

- Check brakes and adjust to ensure equal braking.

THE WAY TO DRIVE IN WINTER WEATHER

- Buckle up before you start driving. Keep your seat belt buckled at all times.
- SLOW DOWN! – posted speed limits are for ideal travel conditions.
- Be alert. Black ice will make a road look like shiny new asphalt. Pavement should look grey-white in winter.
- Do not use cruise control. Winter driving requires you to be in full control at all times.
- Reduce your speed while approaching intersections covered with ice or snow.
- Allow for extra travelling time or delay a trip if the weather is inclement.
- Drive with low-beam headlights on. This lighting makes your vehicle more visible.
- Lengthen your following distance behind the vehicle ahead of you.
- Stay in the right-hand lane except when passing, and use turn signals when changing lanes.
- Steer with smooth and precise movements. Changing lanes too quickly and jerky steering cause skidding.
- Be aware and slow down when you see a sign warning that you are approaching a bridge.
- Consider getting off the road before getting stranded if the weather is worsening.
- Be patient and pass other cars only when it is safe to do so.
- Keep a safe distance back from snow plows, and salt/sand/anti-icing trucks.
- Never pass a snow plow due to the whiteout conditions and ridge of snow created by the plow.

FINAL WORD

The best way to avoid an accident during the winter months is to avoid driving in dangerous conditions. If you absolutely have to drive in bad weather conditions travel main roads that have already been plowed and salted.