

B.D.R. Safety Consulting Inc.



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Are you ready for winter?

It comes every year, whether you like it or not. It is called winter.

For those of us that live in the northern hemisphere, winter is simply a fact of life. However, many of us are not prepared to tackle its challenges when it arrives. Are you?

Winter presents a number of challenges to both drivers and vehicles. We tackle those challenges every time winter comes around, however, some of us tend to forget how to handle them during the first few cold or snowy days.

As a driver, you need to shift your thinking. Driving in winter as if it was summer is a recipe for disaster.

The best solution to winter driving is to not go out at all. Safe but impractical. So let's look at some simple things we can do to ensure that our travels will be as safe as possible.

The use of the cruise control should be discontinued during winter months. Your vehicle may accelerate when you do not expect it. This acceleration may be on an icy portion of the road, resulting in possible loss of control. The first instinct would be to hit the brakes. Sure this will disengage the cruise control and stop the acceleration. It more than likely will cause loss of control.

Watch the weather channel or weather reports prior to venturing out. Then ask yourself "Do I

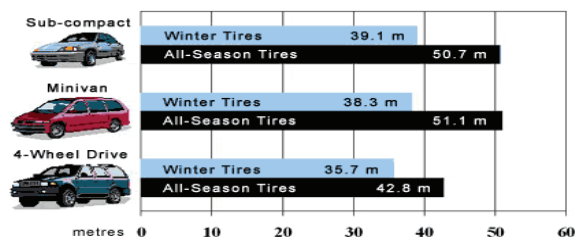
really need to be out there?" If so, let someone know where you are going and what route you are taking, especially if you intend to travel long distances.



Accelerate and decelerate slowly. Avoid spinning or locking up your tires. This will increase your traction.

Winter tires are best during winter months. They are a small expense to ensure your safety. Regardless of what type of tires you have, ensure that they are in good condition with at least 4/32" (3.0mm) tread and that they are properly inflated.

Braking distances are greatly increased on snow covered or icy roads. A good set of winter tires will greatly reduce this distance.



If your windshield washer reservoir is filled with summer cleaner, drain it and replace it with -40 fluid. Summer fluid will freeze at low temperatures making your system inoperable. Check your wiper blades and ensure that they are in good condition. If you can, install a hingeless or winter type wiper.

Get a tune up and ensure that all lights, heaters and fans are working properly.

Carry a basic safety kit. This kit should contain the following items:

- Booster cables, cell phone and charger, tow rope, need help sign, flashlight with batteries (or crank style), first aid kit, candle with metal tin, waterproof matches or lighter, some nuts or power bars, tools such as pliers and screwdrivers, roll of electrical tape, hose clamps of various sizes, work gloves, space blanket, safety triangles or cones, large garbage bag (for impromptu rain gear), bottled water and pre-mixed antifreeze.

Many people will carry bags of sand in the trunk of their vehicle for added weight and for traction aid. If you ever had a look at those bags of sand at -10° C, you may have noticed that it has become a big bag of frozen matter. These frozen bags can become a hazard if you are involved in a collision.

Instead of sand, use bags of Kitty Litter. They contain dry material that will not freeze and offers superior traction on ice when used as a traction aid.

If you are going to travel longer distances, a small winter kit containing the following items will complement your basic kit:

- Gas line antifreeze, winter gloves, Hot Pockets or similar hand warming devices, hat or

tuque, scarf, collapsible or full size shovel, wool blanket for warmth, ice scraper.

If you intend to travel long distances, include the following items:

- Sleeping bag, spare winter jacket, winter boots, wool or winter socks, snow pants, ski goggles (just in case you have to walk).

Basic Winter Driving Tips

- ☺ Plan your trip in advance.
- ☺ Check the weather and road conditions.
- ☺ Do not drive when tired or fatigued.
- ☺ Let someone know the route you take.
- ☺ Have a winter kit.
- ☺ Ensure your vehicle is prepared.
- ☺ Are you ready for the trip?
- ☺ Be seen. Drive with your lights on.
- ☺ Sunglasses are a must during bright days.
- ☺ Wear comfortable clothing but be prepared for the worst.

For more tips on winter driving or Winter Driving Courses, contact B.D.R. Safety Consulting Inc.

Safe Travels.

To remove your name from our mailing list, please contact: bdrsafetyconsultinginc@sasktel.net

If you have questions or comments E-mail us at: bdrsafetyconsultinginc@sasktel.net

or call 1-306-737-2911

If you wish to contact us by mail, send to: 3522 Sandringham Road East, Regina, SK S4V 3C8

or Fax at 1-306-789-2691



www.bdrsafetyconsulting.com