

KWORDS *from* KWORCC

WINTER Driving

Winter is the most difficult driving season. Not only do you have snow and ice to deal with, but there are fewer hours of daylight as well.

Before winter weather arrives, make sure your vehicle is in good condition, especially the tires. Make sure you've got good snow tires, and put them on early. Try not to get caught without them in the first snowfall. Never combine radial and non-radial tires on the same vehicle. On front-wheel drive cars, it's best to put snow tires or "all-season" tires on all four wheels, not just the front. Also, prepare your car for winter with a checkup that includes:

- Checking the ignition, brakes, wiring, hoses and fan belts.
- Changing and adjusting the spark plugs.
- Checking the air, fuel and emission filters, and the PCV valve.
- Inspecting the distributor.
- Checking the battery.
- Checking the tires for air, sidewall wear and tread depth.
- Checking antifreeze levels and the freeze line.

Your car should have a tune-up (check the owner's manual for the recommended interval) to ensure better gas mileage, quicker starts and faster response on pick-up and passing power.

The best advice for driving in bad winter weather is not to drive at all, if you can avoid it. If you must drive, don't go out until the snow plows and sanding trucks have had a chance to do their work, and allow yourself extra time to reach your destination.

If you must drive in snowy conditions, make sure your car is prepared, and that you know how to handle road conditions. It's helpful to practice winter driving techniques in a snowy, open parking lot, so you're familiar with how your car handles. Consult your owner's manual for tips specific to your vehicle.

Before starting out, clear the ice and snow from your vehicle including *all* windows and windshield wipers. Be sure the windshield washer reservoir is adequately filled with a freeze-resistant cleaning solution.

Drive slowly. Even if your vehicle has good traction in ice and snow, other drivers will be traveling cautiously. Don't disrupt the flow of traffic by driving faster than everyone else.

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Emergency Equipment and Supplies for Your Car

An emergency situation on the road can arise at any time and you must be prepared. In addition to making sure you have the tune-up, a full tank of gas, and fresh anti-freeze, you should carry the following items in your trunk and replenish after use:

- Snow shovel
- Scraper with a brush on one end
- Tow chain or strap
- Tire chains
- Flashlight (with extra batteries)
- Abrasive material (cat litter, sand, salt, or traction mats)
- Jumper cables
- Warning device (flares or reflective triangles)
- Brightly colored cloth to signal for help
- Empty coffee or similar type can containing candles
- Sleeping bags or blankets, ski caps, and mittens
- Compass
- Properly inflated spare tire, wheel wrench and tripod-type jack
- Shovel
- Extra cell phone batteries and cell phone charger
- Tool kit
- First aid kit
- Exterior windshield cleaner
- Wooden stick matches in a waterproof container
- Scissors and string/cord
- Non-perishable, high-energy foods like unsalted canned nuts, dried fruits, chocolate and hard candy

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CLAIMS REPORTING

For assistance with on-the-job injuries, contact IMA at 1-800-333-8913. Questions on claims should be directed to Annette Duncan. All correspondence, bills or other documentation for your claims can be mailed to Annette's attention at: 250 North Water, PO Box 2992, Wichita, Kansas 67201.

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In a rear-wheel drive vehicle, you can usually feel a loss of traction or the beginning of a skid. There may be no such warning in a front-wheel drive, however. Front-wheel drives *do* handle better in ice and snow, but they *do not* have flawless traction, and skids can occur unexpectedly. Don't let the better feel and handling of a front-wheel drive car cause you to drive faster than you should.

Despite a popular misconception, the best approach to recovering from a skid is the *same* for both front and rear-wheel drive vehicles. If your *rear wheels* start to skid:

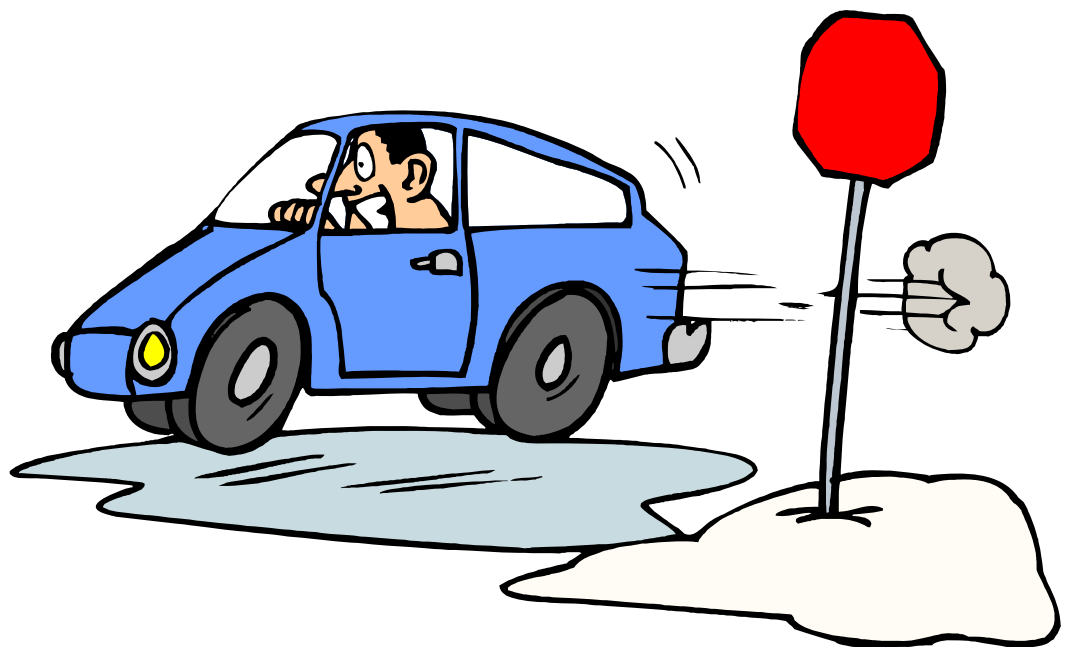
- Turn the steering wheel in the direction you want the front wheels to go. If your rear wheels are sliding left, steer left. If they're sliding right, steer right.
- If your rear wheels start sliding the other way as you recover, ease the steering wheel toward that side. You might have to steer left and right a few times to get your vehicle completely under control.
- If your car has an anti-lock braking system (ABS), keep your foot on the pedal. If not, pump the pedal gently, pumping more rapidly as your car slows down. Braking hard with non-anti-lock brakes will make the skid worse.

If your *front wheels* skid:

- Take your foot off the gas and shift to neutral, but *don't* try to steer immediately.
- As the wheels skid sideways, they will slow the vehicle and traction will return. As it does, steer in the direction you want to go. Then put the transmission in "drive" or release the clutch and accelerate gently.

To avoid skids, brake carefully and gently on snow or ice. "Squeeze" your brakes in slow, steady strokes. Allow the wheels to keep rolling. If they start to lock up, ease off the brake pedal. As you slow down, you may also want to shift into a lower gear.

When sleet, freezing rain or snow start to fall, remember that bridges, ramps and overpasses are likely to freeze first. Also be aware that slippery spots may still remain after road crews have cleared the highways.



Cold weather can make starting your car more difficult. Here are some routine precautions to help you avoid starting problems:

- Get an engine tune-up in the fall. Switch to winter-weight oil if you aren't already using all-season oil. Be sure all lights are in good working order. Have the brakes adjusted.
- The battery and voltage regulator should be checked. Make sure battery connections are good.
- If the battery terminal posts seem to be building up a layer of corrosion, clean them with a paste of baking soda and water, let it foam and then rinse. Apply a thin film of petroleum jelly to the terminal posts to prevent corrosion, and reconnect.
- Be sure all fluids are at proper levels. Antifreeze should not only be strong enough to prevent freezing, but fresh enough to prevent rust.
- Make sure wiper blades are cleaning properly. Consider changing to winter wiper blades, which are made for driving in snow. They are covered with a rubber boot to keep moisture away from working parts of the blade.
- Don't idle a cold vehicle's engine for a long time to warm it up - it could harm the engine. The right way to warm up a vehicle is to drive it.

Tips for driving safely on icy roads

- Decrease your speed and leave yourself plenty of room to stop. You should allow at least three times more space than usual between you and the car in front of you.
- Brake gently to avoid skidding. If your wheels start to lock up, ease off the brake.
- Turn on your lights to increase your visibility to other motorists.
- Keep your lights and windshield clean.
- Use low gears to keep traction, especially on hills.
- Don't use cruise control or overdrive on icy roads.
- Be especially careful on bridges, overpasses and infrequently traveled roads, which will freeze first. Even at temperatures above freezing, if the conditions are wet, you might encounter ice in shady areas or on exposed roadways like bridges.
- Don't pass snow plows and sanding trucks. The drivers have limited visibility, and you're likely to find the road in front of them worse than the road behind.
- Don't assume your vehicle can handle all conditions. Even four-wheel and front-wheel drive vehicles can encounter trouble on winter roads.

If a **BLIZZARD** traps you in the car:

- **Pull off the highway.** Turn on hazard lights and hang a distress flag from the radio antenna or window.
- **Remain in your vehicle where rescuers are most likely to find you.** Do not set out on foot unless you can see a building close by where you know you can take shelter. Be careful; distances are distorted by blowing snow. A building may seem close, but prove to be too far to walk, especially in deep snow.
- **Run the engine and heater about 10 minutes each hour to keep warm.** When the engine is running, open a downwind window slightly for ventilation and periodically clear snow from the exhaust pipe (*to protect you from carbon monoxide poisoning*) and the heater vents (*the grill under the windshield*).
- **Exercise to maintain body heat, but avoid overexertion.** In extreme cold, use road maps, seat covers and floor mats for insulation. Huddle with passengers and use your coat for a blanket.
- **For extra heat,** burn a candle inside a coffee can - but don't set the can on fabric.
- **Take turns sleeping.** One person should be awake at all times to look for rescue crews.
- **Avoid alcohol.** It lowers body temperature and will cause you to become drowsy.
- **Drink fluids to avoid dehydration.**
- **Be careful not to waste battery power.** Balance electrical energy needs - the use of lights, heat, and radio - with supply.
- **Turn on the inside light at night** so work crews or rescuers can see you.
- **If stranded in a remote area,** stomp large block letters in an open area spelling out HELP or SOS and line with rocks or tree limbs to attract the attention of rescue personnel who may be surveying the area by airplane.
- **Signal to other motorists** that you're stranded by using flares or flashlights.
- **Eat hard candy to keep your mouth moist.**
- **Leave the car and proceed on foot** once the blizzard passes, but only if you know exactly where you are, how far it is to help and you are certain you will improve your situation.



Have you seen the
Safety Coordinator Video
by Zoman Productions?

Getting Unstuck

If you should find yourself stuck, here's what to do:

- Turn your wheels from side to side a few times to push snow out of the way. Keep a light touch on the gas, and ease forward. Don't spin your wheels - you'll just dig in deeper.
- Rocking the vehicle is another way to get unstuck. (Check your owner's manual first - it can damage the transmission on some vehicles.) Shift from forward to reverse, and back again. Each time you're in gear, give a light touch on the gas until the vehicle gets going.



2008 Board Meeting Dates

January 17th

February 12th

March 20th

April 17th

May 22nd

June 19th

July 17th

August 21st

September 18th

October 16th

November 17th – Annual Meeting

December 11th