

WINTER DRIVING

The best advice for driving in bad weather is not to drive, if you can avoid it.

Know your roads of travel and the routes which are the safest in bad weather.

Make sure your car is prepared:

Make sure your car is in peak operating condition and that your tires are properly inflated.

Carry: chains (and know how to put them on), shovel, sand (or other traction means), flashlight, cell phone, blankets, gloves, hat, food, water, medications.

Keep at least ½ tank of gas in vehicle at all times.

Do not warm your car up in an enclosed area, such as a garage.

Keep lights and windshield clean.

Allow extra time. Wait until snow plow and sanding trucks have had a chance to do their work.

TIPS FOR DRIVING IN SNOW AND ON ICY ROADS:

- 1) Use headlights to increase your visibility to other motorists.
- 2) It generally takes 3X as long to stop on icy/snowy roads. Allow the time and distance needed.
- 3) Accelerate, decelerate, and maneuver turns slowly to facilitate traction. Icy roads require more time to avoid skidding out.
- 4) Know your brakes. The best basic braking, no matter the types of brakes, is to apply steady pressure. Keep the heel of your foot on the floor and use the ball of your foot to brake.
- 5) Use low gears at times when you need more traction.
- 6) Do not power up a hill, keep steady movement.
- 7) Be especially careful on less traveled roads, bridges, and through shady areas.
- 8) Do not pass snow plows or sanding trucks. The drivers have limited visibility and the road ahead could be worse.
- 9) Do not assume 4WD, AWD, or FWD can handle all conditions. When chains are required, it usually includes these types of vehicles.
- 10) Studded snow tires are designed for icy road conditions. They are beneficial, if they are not worn down. They tear up the pavement, when there is no ice, and can leave the road susceptible to rain water build up and hydroplaning. If you use studded tires, it is best to have a set of tires that you put on in winter months only.
- 11) If you need to put on chains, start by putting on your emergency flashers and pull far enough off the road that you will not be hit.

REAR WHEELS SKID:

- 1) Take your foot off the accelerator.
- 2) Steer the front wheel in the sliding direction, left to left, right to right.
- 3) If you start sliding the other way, as you recover, ease steering wheel left and right a few times, until the vehicle is completely under control.

- 4) If you have standard brakes, pump them gently.
- 5) If you have anti-lock brakes, do not pump the brakes, Apply steady pressure to brakes. It is normal if you feel the brakes pulse.

FRONT WHEEL SKID:

- 1) Take foot off gas and shift into neutral.
- 2) Do not try to steer immediately.
- 3) As the wheels skid sideways, they will slow vehicle and traction will return. As it does, steer in the direction you want to go.
- 4) Put into drive and accelerate slowly.

IF YOU GET STUCK:

- 1) Do not spin your wheels, you will dig in deeper.
- 2) Use a shovel to clear away snow from wheels.
- 3) Pour sand, kitty litter, gravel, or salt in path of wheels for traction.
- 4) Turn wheels side to side a few times to push away snow.
- 5) Use light touch to ease vehicle out.
- 6) Always look and steer where you want to go.

IF YOU GET SNOWBOUND:

- 1) Put on your emergency flashers
- 2) Call for help on cell phone.
- 3) Stay with your vehicle.
- 4) Tie a brightly colored cloth to antennae.
- 5) At night, leave the dome light on.
- 6) Make sure the exhaust pipe isn't clogged with snow, ice, or mud.
- 7) Use whatever is available to insulate you from the cold.
- 8) If possible, periodically run the engine just long enough to remove the chill.

WIND AND SNOW

- 1) Watch for downed branches, power lines, and flying debris.
- 2) Tailwinds: Come from behind and can go unnoticed until you turn across or into its path.
- 3) Headwinds: Make your car work harder, especially with a heavy load.
- 4) Crosswinds: Can come across from either side
 - a) Keep steering slightly into wind direction.
 - b) Watch for flying object and other vehicles, which may cause wind to act differently.
 - c) Keep alert, as large vehicles pass, to changes in wind strength.
 - d) Keep focused on controlled driving with both hands on wheel to remain in control.
- 5) Wind and snow is a dangerous combination, leading to accidents. Look ahead for weather reports and wait out travel. You cannot see anything in a white out, but white, until you are on top of another vehicle. If you get stuck in a sudden white out, slow down and stay to the right. Pull off the road, if safely possible.

WINTER FIRE PREVENTION

All heating systems should be maintained at least once a year, either by yourself or use a professional.

Chimneys:

- 1) Cleaning of tar deposits, which can be a fire hazard.
- 2) Checking for gaps in mortar or cracks in brick/stone chimneys.
- 3) Lining in Chimneys: If there isn't a flue, there should be a liner installed of either corrugated stainless steel or pumice.
- 4) If there is a gap between the chimney and flue, it should be insulated using a material, such as leca (a clay aggregate). A properly insulated chimney will help keep the escaping gases hot, until they are discharge from the chimney, preventing tar from forming.
- 5) Make sure rain cap/ cowl is not broken.
- 6) Use only seasoned wood- at least 1 year drying time.
- 7) Avoid letting fire smolder.

Wood Stoves:

- 1) Flues can accumulate tar deposits, clean thoroughly. This also facilitates better stove operation.
- 2) Check for gaps between all pipe fittings.
- 3) Doors: Check the seal gasket in groove of door for aging. Replace if necessary. Make sure the door, glass, and gasket form an airtight seal.
- 4) Firebricks: If cracked, use same type to replace to insure stove efficiency.
- 5) Grates: Can become worn out. Make sure new ones fit properly.
- 6) Spark arrestor screens: Are a necessary protection to prevent fires, both to your own house and to neighboring properties. Install and periodically check to make sure they are clean. If you experience a smoky stove, first check to see if your screen may need to be cleaned.
- 7) When starting fires, do not use gasoline, kerosene, or diesel as an accelerant. Use only gels or sprays made for indoor use on wood or pellet stoves.
- 8) ASHES: When cleaning fireplaces and stove, place your ashes in an ash container, usually made of metal and have a lid. If there are warm ashes, you can place the container outside until all of the contents have completely cooled. Do not put ashes directly from the fireplace or stove into cardboard boxes, plastic bags or your trash can, until you are confident that there is nothing that can ignite a fire.

Whole House Heaters:

- 1) Indoor house heaters require maintenance. They do wear out, however it is less expensive to have them checked and turned up, than repaired.
- 2) Maintenance also helps with efficiency and therefore cost reduction running.
- 3) Replace filters annually, semi-annually if it is a heating/air-conditioning combination unit. They accumulate dust, become less efficient, and can be more hazardous.

Space Heaters:

- 1) Electric:
 - A) Check and make sure that the power cord is not frayed or worn. Taping over a frayed wire does not protect against potentially hazardous electrical currents.
 - B) If you have to use an extension cord, use a heavy duty one. The lightweight ones can overheat and start a fire.
 - C) Buy space heaters, which automatically turn off, if they tip over. A tipped over space heater can easily start a fire.
 - D) Keep all space heaters at least 3 feet away from any flammable materials.
 - E) Do not place in hallways or doorways, preventing easy escape in case of emergency.
 - F) Turn off space heaters when you go to bed.
 - G) Be vigilant in checking them for placement and cord safety.
- 2) Kerosene and propane space heaters are not allowed to be sold in California to be used in an unventilated residence due to the dangers of CO₂ emissions and their explosive nature.

FROZEN PIPES

Preparation: Become aware of pipes vulnerable to freezing and prepare them.

- 1) Invest in an outside thermometer. The news does not always reflect your house situation (trees/sun exposure).
- 2) Outside pipes/water spigots/sprinklers; turn off water valves, which feed outside lines, cover with faucet covers (good for keeping out drafts and critters, as well.), or insulate, prepare with heat tape
- 3) Garage pipes: insulate and wrap with heat tape
- 4) Exterior wall pipes/attic pipes: which lead to kitchen, bathrooms, laundry rooms can be a problem, if not properly insulated at the time of build. These pipes can freeze easily during prolonged freezes. Be aware of this, insulate any you can get access to and repair any small noticeable leaks.
- 5) Always turn off washing machine valve in between uses, especially if they are on a second floor.

During Prolonged Freeze Times:

- 1) Check for leaks under sinks, around toilet, around washing machine and dishwasher
- 2) Keep cupboard doors open to allow heat to enter
- 3) Remember that water expands when frozen, causing pressure and possible breakage.
- 4) Keep a drip running on vulnerable faucets

Frozen pipes: Water not running

- 1) Always call a plumber, if you are unsure how to proceed.
- 2) If it is a short freeze time and you are aware of which pipe is frozen, direct a grounded hair dryer (blowing from faucet end down the pipe) or space heater on the pipe, with the faucet open until water runs freely. Do not use a blow torch.
- 3) If unsure of which pipes are frozen, check by turning off main water supply. Turn on all faucets. If there is no water running, it is possible that it is frozen near the water meter. If water is running through in some faucets, then you will be able to determine, which ones are frozen.

Breakage: Turn off main water supply to house, then call a plumber.

VACATIONING IN WINTER

Notify the Department of Public Safety of your departure and return dates; Leave a contact number. 938-2226

Give a friend a key and ask them to check the house, while you are away.

Leave the heat on at 55 degrees, with the cupboards with pipes left open.

Extended winter vacation:

- 1) Turn off water source.
- 2) Open faucets, drain lines.
- 3) Turn down thermostat to 55 degrees.
- 4) Unplug appliances to protect from faulty electric problems.
- 5) Turn down water heater to vacation setting.
- 6) Use light timers.

POWER FAILURES

Have on Hand and Be Knowledgeable:

- 1) Alternative light sources- flashlights, lanterns, candles
- 2) Alternative cooking means- gas stove, wood stove top (do not use kerosene or charcoal grills inside, carbon monoxide poisoning)
- 3) Non-perishable food, canned, jars, boxed, bagged
- 4) 3 Day water supply; one gallon per person daily (not stored where it can freeze)
- 5) Blankets and layers of clothing
- 6) Non-electric radio, try tuning into KSYC 103.9, Yreka
- 7) Water jugs/buckets to flush toilets
- 8) Non-electric entertainment (books, puzzles, art, etc.)
- 9) Open refrigerator as little as possible.
 - a) If electricity off less than 2 hours, food safe
 - b) Perishables must be kept below 40 degrees, if door not opened, good for 4 hours
 - c) After 4 hours, check temperature for safety
 - d) If projecting outage for 4 + hours, pack dairy, meat, and fish in cooler with ice.
- 10) Freezer: If full good for 48 hours, ½ full- good for 24 hours
- 11) Know how to disconnect electric garage door opener, so you can manually open it if Necessary

Staying Warm: If you have only electric heat or monitor heater

- 1) Close doors to unneeded rooms, Stay in a small common area
- 2) Dress in layers
- 3) Mittens are better than gloves
- 4) Wear a hat
- 5) Take a warm shower; Electric tank should stay warm for at least a few hours
- 6) Watch for signs of hypothermia.
- 7) Unplug electronic equipment, so surge when electricity returns does not cause damage

IF YOU ARE CONCERNED THAT YOU MAY NEED TO BE CHECKED ON, IN THE EVENT OF AN EXTENDED POWER OUTAGE, ONTACT THE DPS OFFICE AND INQUIRE ABOUT GETTING ON THE YANA PROGRAM.

OUTSIDE YOUR HOUSE

Fall:

- 1) Make sure your rain gutters are clean
- 2) Make sure any tarps covering wood or vehicles are secure
- 3) Complete any weatherization projects (sealing, caulking, stripping), especially if it involves a ladder
- 4) Use chain saws, splitters, and other machinery at times it is deemed safe to do so.
- 5) Outdoor vent covers help keep cold drafts down to a minimum.

Winter:

- 1) Open curtains to allow sun in and assist in warming the house, unless windy and windows are not dual pane.
- 2) SNOW and ICE:

If there is a buildup of snow, keep it cleared. Ice will form and make the area dangerous for walking or driving.

Ice on steps, sidewalks, and driveways: Pay attention to icy build up, Have salt or cat litter (not clumping) available to spread on slippery walk areas

- 3) WIND:

Look around home after a wind storm for damage such as broken branches, fallen trees, blown trashcans, or other loose debris.

Check wood stove pipe and caps to make sure they have not gotten loose or have blown off.