

SNOW HOW

Safe Winter Driving

Everyone has to do their part to get around safely in the winter. When a winter storm is expected, all municipalities have a plan:

- First, hills and bridges are treated in advance of a storm to make them easier to plow.
- As soon as snow begins, salt trucks head out and treat expressways and main roads first, followed by smaller routes.
- Plowing begins in a similar order. With large snowfalls, plowing usually begins once the storm has ended.

Drivers need to have their own plan, which includes leaving earlier and planning a route. It is important to delay unnecessary travel during significant storms to give plows time to do their jobs. It's also safer for drivers. Other ways to drive safely this winter include:

Go slow driving in snow

Drive according to weather conditions, not the speed limit.

- During a storm, posted speed limits are usually too fast. Conditions can also be unpredictable and change rapidly. Adjust your speed accordingly and give yourself extra travel time.
- Avoid sudden moves, starts or stops. Start slowly on slick or snowy roads and brake gradually, giving yourself plenty of space. Steer gently into turns to maintain control.
- Be visible. Use your low-beam headlights when it is snowing. They are brighter than daytime running lights and will turn on your tail lights.

Be nice driving on ice

Stopping distance on ice is double that of a dry road.

- Leave extra space when driving in icing conditions.
- Approach intersections slowly, when they are covered with ice or snow.
- Use extra caution on bridges and ramps. Ice can form without warning, even if roadways are dry.
- Watch out for black ice, a thin, nearly invisible coat of ice that can make the road look like shiny new asphalt. Pavement will look grey or white in the winter.

It's not a race, give plows space

Plows can't see you and you can't see the road ahead.

- Plows are extra wide and throw snow and spray, making it difficult to see if the road ahead is clear for passing.
- The safest place is well behind the plow.
- Wait for plows to pull over before passing. But don't accelerate too quickly -- the road ahead is unplowed and could be slick or snowy.
- Avoid parking in the street. Plows can't clear roads that are blocked by parked cars.

