Winter Driving Meeting Kit

WINTER CONDITIONS

Before winter weather arrives, make sure your vehicle is in good condition, keep in mind how you and your vehicle may be affected by the elements and be prepared for emergency situations.

WHAT TO KNOW ABOUT WINTER CONDITIONS

- Whenever a car loses traction and starts to slide, it is usually best to turn the front wheels into the slide. In other words, if the rear of the car starts sliding to the left gently turn the steering wheel to the left and gently tap on the brakes to slow the vehicle.
- If driving on black ice or other slippery conditions never jerk the steering wheel or slam on the brakes.
- If driving in low visibility conditions, such as fog, drive slowly and use you low beams. Remember to increase your following distance and consider pulling off the road and waiting for visibility to improve.

WINTER DRIVING RULES

- **SLOW DOWN!** – posted speed limits are for ideal travel conditions. Driving at reduced speeds is the best precautionary measure against any misfortune while driving on slippery roads. “Black ice” is invisible.
- Be alert. Black ice will make a road look like shiny new asphalt. Pavement should look grey, white in winter.
- 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.
- Lengthen your following distance behind the vehicle ahead of you. Stopping distance on an icy road is double that of

stopping on a dry one. For example, from around 45 metres (140 ft) at the speed of 60 km/h, to 80 metres (over 260 ft) on an icy road surface.
- Be aware and slow down when you see a sign warning that you are approaching a bridge. Steel and concrete bridges are likely to be icy even when there is no ice on the ground surface, (because bridges over open air cool down faster than roads which tend to be insulated somewhat by solid ground.)
- Keep a safe distance back from snowplows, and salt/sand/anti-icing trucks. Never pass a snow plow due to the whiteout conditions and ridge of snow created by the plow.
- Keep at least half a tank of fuel in your vehicle at all times.
- Never warm up a vehicle in an enclosed area, such as a garage.

VEHICLES

Prepare Vehicles for Driving in Winter

- 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.
- Use four snow tires that are of the same type, size, speed rating, and load index.
- Where permitted, use chains or studded tires on all four wheels when you expect snow and icy roads.
- 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.
- Check wheel alignment and correct if necessary.
- Check the exhaust system for leaks.
- Check the radiator and hoses for leaks.
- 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.
- Ensure that windshield wipers function efficiently. Replace them if they are old or worn.
- Fill up the fuel tank before you leave on your trip. Do not let the fuel level get too low – the driving time to the next gas station may take much longer than you ever expected.

THE WINTER DRIVING KIT

- Properly fitting tire chains.
- Bag of sand or salt.
- Tow rope.
- Traction mats.
- Snow shovel.
- Snow brush.
- Ice scraper.
- Booster cables.
- Warning devices such as flares or emergency lights.
- Fuel line de-icer.
- Extra windshield wiper fluid for sub-freezing temperatures.
- Roll of paper towels.
- Flashlight
- Blanket
- Extra clothing
- First aid kit.
- Snack bars or other “emergency” food and water.
- Matches and emergency candles.
- Road maps.

FINAL WORD

Recognize the hazards of winter weather driving, for example, driving on snow/ice covered roads; be properly trained for driving in winter weather conditions; and licensed (as applicable) for the vehicles you operate.