
WINTER WEATHER PREPAREDNESS WEEK IN NORTH CAROLINA
NOVEMBER 28 – DECEMBER 4, 2010

This week has been declared winter weather preparedness week in North Carolina. All week long the National Weather Service will be issuing Informative messages to help you prepare for winter weather.

Today...we will focus on winter weather driving tips to keep in mind when snow and ice are forecast.

Driving in winter weather!!!

Seventy-five percent of all winter weather related deaths occur on the road...either in accidents or by people becoming stranded. Obviously...when the weather is bad and driving conditions are poor...the best bet is to stay at home. However...if your must venture out...the following tips could make for a safer journey.

1) ***make sure your car is in good running condition***

Make sure that your battery...antifreeze...windshield wipers...ignition and thermostat are all in good working order. Be sure your tires have enough tread. Replace any of these items if necessary.

2) If you must go out when snow and ice are on the ground...let someone know your destination and when you plan to arrive. Also carry a cell phone if possible.

3) Clean snow and ice off all parts of your car before you drive away.

4) Keep your gas tank as full as possible when snow are ice are forecast. This will not only give you added peace of mind...it also increases the weight of your car and this will provide additional tracking.

5) Keep the following basic items in your car - windshield scraper and brush...booster/jumper cables...a tow chain or rope...bag of sand or salt...blankets...flashlight...first aid kit and road map.

6) Overall drive slow. Driving at even posted speeds is extremely dangerous when snow and ice are on the road. Many vehicles will lose traction especially at higher speeds resulting in serious accident and vehicle rollovers.

7) Steer you car into the skid. If your vehicle loses traction and begins to skid...steer the front tires into the direction of the skid. Never hit your brakes as this will result in a more serious skid and spinning of the vehicle. When your vehicle skids keep your cool and remain calm. Again driving at slower speeds will help you recover from a skid.

...If you get stranded on the road...

1) ****stay in your car. ****

Do not seek alternate shelter unless it is close by or already visible. You can easily become disoriented in heavy snow and cold temperatures. Carry a cell phone with you when you travel if possible.

2) Periodically turn on the car engine for brief periods. This will help provide heat to the inside of the car. However, to avoid carbon monoxide gas buildup, clear the exhaust pipe of snow and leave a downwind window slightly open for ventilation.

3) Make yourself visible by tying a colored cloth to your antenna or door, or by turning on your dome light when running the engine.

Being prepared for winter weather means having the necessary information to make the right decisions. Weather forecasts play a large role in this decision making process. The National Weather Service recommends that you regularly tune into NOAA Weather Radio...local television and local radio in order to keep abreast of weather.