



INFORMATION BULLETIN

November 2007

Volume 2, Issue 4

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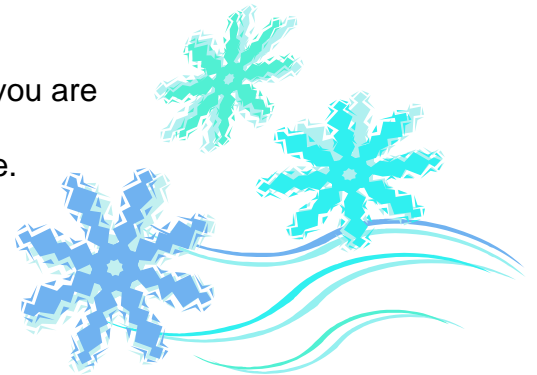
WINTER SURVIVAL TIPS FOR A SAFE & FUN SEASON

Winterize Your Car:

- Perform a full check of your vehicle including the distributor, battery, ignition, brakes, spark plugs, wiring, hoses, fan belts, and filters.
- Inspect the tires for air, sidewall wear and tread depth.
- Check antifreeze levels and the freeze line.
- Carry an inflated spare tire, wheel wrench, jack, shovel, jumper cables, tow/tire chains, bag of salt or cat litter, and a tool kit.
- Store supplies in your vehicle such as flashlight with batteries, flares, first aid kit, windshield wiper fluid, ice scraper, blanket, hat, gloves, and non-perishable snacks.

If You Become Stranded:

- Don't leave your car unless you know exactly where you are and how far it is to help.
- Light two flares placing one at each end of the vehicle.
- Hang a bright colored cloth from your antenna.
- Make sure the car's exhaust pipe is not blocked by snow and run the engine and heater for 10 minutes every hour.
- Keep at least one window open slightly. Heavy snow and ice can seal a car shut.
- Use blankets to keep warm and eat hard candy to keep your mouth moist.



Driving in Snow & Ice:

- The best advice for driving in bad winter weather is not to drive at all if you can avoid it.
- If you must drive, winterize your car and know if you can handle the road conditions. Let a family member know your plans and route.
- Drive slowly and leave plenty of room to stop. Allow at least three times more space than usual between you and the car in front of you.
- Turn on your lights for increased visibility and keep lights and windshield clean.
- Use low gears to keep traction, especially on hills.
- Don't use cruise control or overdrive on icy roads.
- Be careful on bridges, overpasses and seldom-traveled roads, which 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 snowplows and sanding trucks. The drivers have limited view, and the road in front of them may be worse.

If Your Rear Wheels Skid. . .

- Take your foot off the accelerator and steer in the direction you want the front wheels to go. *Ex. 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 you have standard brakes, pump them gently.
- If you have anti-lock brakes, do not pump the brakes. Apply steady pressure to the brakes. You will feel the brakes pulse—this is normal.

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.

If You are Stuck. . .

- Do not spin your wheels. This will only dig you in deeper.
- Turn your wheels from side to side a few times to push snow out of the way.
- Use a light touch on the gas, to ease your car out.
- Use a shovel to clear snow away from the wheels and the underside of the car.
- Pour sand, kitty litter, gravel or salt in the path of the wheels to allow for better traction.
- Try rocking the vehicle. **(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.

Outdoors During Winter Weather:

- Avoid overexertion when shoveling snow. Overexertion can bring on a heart attack—a major cause of deaths in the winter.
- Cover your mouth to protect your lungs from cold air when outdoors.
- Keep dry and change wet clothing frequently to prevent a loss of body heat.
- Watch for signs of frostbite including loss of feeling and white/pale appearance in fingers, toes, ear lobes, and the tip of the nose. If any of these exist, get medical help.

- Watch for **signs of hypothermia**, including:
 - Uncontrollable shivering
 - Memory loss
 - Disorientation
 - Incoherence
 - Slurred speech
 - Drowsiness and exhaustion
- If you suspect hypothermia:
 - Get the victim to a warm location
 - Remove wet clothing and get them into dry clothing or a dry blanket
 - Warm the center of the body first.
 - Give them a warm, non-alcoholic, or non-caffeinated beverage.
 - Get medical help immediately.

Keeping Kids Safe in the Cold:

- Dress your child in several warm layers of clothes.
- Limit how long your children can play outdoors based on weather conditions.
- Dress your kids in bright colors if playing or walking outdoors in snowy conditions.
- Keep infants inside if it is colder than 40 degrees.
- Babies lose body heat faster.



Using Caution Near Ice:

- Always have an adult supervise children near frozen ponds or lakes.
- Only allow children to go out or skate on lakes that have been approved for skating.
- Never assume the ice on a frozen pond or lake will hold even a child's weight. Even if the ice is strong in one area, it might be unsafe in another spot.
- Avoid dark ice or ice that has air bubbles or snow crystals trapped in it, which is weaker and may break under a child's weight.
- If someone falls through the ice, act quickly and call 9-1-1 immediately.
- Don't go on the ice after them, you may fall in and be unable to help them or yourself.
- Stay anchored on dry land and try to reach them with a branch, rope or sturdy item. Or, throw them something floatable they can hold onto until help arrives.

Keep Clear of Snowblowers:

- Teach kids that only adults should use snowblowers. Children can become seriously injured or killed by being caught in snow blowers.
- Never clear snow/debris from the snow blower while it is running. Stop the engine first.
- Never leave it running in an enclosed area. Deadly carbon monoxide could build up.

Shoveling Snow Safely:

- Avoid caffeine or nicotine, since these can increase your heart rate and puts extra strain on your heart.
- Use a lightweight, small shovel that will allow you to scoop less snow at a time and avoid an injury. Shovels with a bend in them are better for your lower back.
- Push, rather than lift. Push the snow away from you—don't lift it—to avoid back injury.
- Bend your knees, keep your back straight, and lift with your legs. If you must lift snow, only fill the shovel halfway and avoid throwing snow over your shoulder or to the side.
- Watch for ice. Look out for ice under snow or on the ground that you may slip on.
- Ask for help if it's a huge job or if you are not in the right physical shape for the job.
- Listen to your body. If you feel tightness in your chest or have pain, stop and call your doctor. If you're sore after shoveling, take a hot bath, or take a pain reliever.

Install a Carbon Monoxide Detector:

- Carbon monoxide gas poisoning is a concern in the winter. This can come from a malfunctioning gas water heater or furnace, or kerosene or gas space heaters.
- Open the garage door if running car or motor to prevent carbon monoxide build-up.

- Babies, older adults, and people with anemia, heart or lung disease are at risk for carbon monoxide poisoning. Symptoms include shortness of breath, mild nausea, headache, dizziness, confusion and fainting.
- Preventive measures include having your equipment checked and serviced regularly.

Sledding Safety:

- Pick a hill for your children to sled on that is away from trees, rocks and other dangers.
- Make sure there is no street traffic or frozen water near the bottom of the hill.
- A sled may not always come to a stop where you want it.
- Check that the sled is in good condition and has secure handholds and steering that works.
- Tell your kids never to ride on a sled that is being pulled by a car or snowmobile.
- Remind your child to sled while sitting up with feet forward.
- Lying down on the sled increases the chances of head injuries.
- Children under the age of 12 should wear a helmet when sledding.

Skating, Skiing, and Snowboarding Safety:

- Children should wear helmets and eye protection while playing winter sports.
- Helmets can reduce head injuries by 50 percent.
- Wear skiwear that is water and wind resistant.
- Clothing should not be loose at the ankles or wrists.
- Collars that cover the neck are also good for wind protection.
- If skiing, have your child follow the National Ski Patrol's Responsibility Code.
- If ice skating, skates should fit comfortably and provide ankle support.
- Only skate in designated skating areas where the ice is known to be strong.
- Always crack for cracks, holes and debris on the ice.
- NEVER skate alone.

Snowmobile Wisely:

- A disproportionate number of snowmobile accidents happen to kids, especially boys.
- According to the American Pediatric Association, children under 16 years old should never operate snowmobiles.
- Children younger than 5 should never ride on a snowmobile, even with an adult.
- Wear protective clothing, helmet, goggles and boots.
- Make sure children know to stay on marked trails while skiing, snowboarding or snowmobiling.
- Snowmobile riders should travel in groups of two or more, and stick to designated trails.
- Do not operate a snowmobile if you have been drinking alcohol.

(Information for this newsletter obtained from the National Safety Council, the Consumers Produce Safety Commission, and the University of Michigan Medical System.)

Additional copies of this publication can be obtained on the City of Taylor website www.cityoftaylor.com. For more information, contact Sgt. Mary Sclabassi Of the Investigative Services Division at (734) 374-1531.