

Winter Safe Driving Awareness Week  
January 3 – 9, 2021



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I wrote about Winter Driving Preparedness in a previous article. This article will talk about Winter Safe Driving as the awareness week is January 3-9, 2021.

Before you travel anywhere during the winter season, remember the law to make sure to clear the ice and snow completely off of your vehicle. If there is predicted to be inclement weather, check 511PA.com or download the 511PA app on your smart phone for road and weather conditions along with travel delays and road closures. You are also able to check traffic cameras on the major interstates across Pennsylvania and the location of plow trucks in "real time".

It can take plow trucks 2-3 hours to clear their route under ideal low snow accumulation. If you encounter a plow truck when travelling do not pass it as some trucks have a secondary plow attached to them. Snow coming off the plow can also create a "white out" condition leaving you unable to see oncoming traffic. Leave at least six car lengths between you and the back of the plow truck, if you don't your vehicle could be damaged by the salt, cinders or sand being spread.

If you find yourself in a "white out" condition, do not stop in the middle of the road. Activate your 4-way flashers and move off to the side of the road or into a parking lot and wait for it to pass.

Another hazard while driving is "black ice". This is where the road develops a thin coating of ice that is very slippery. It often looks like the road is glass or crystal, not just wet. If you encounter this condition slow down, if your vehicle starts to "fishtail", take your foot off the gas, this will usually get the vehicle moving straight again. If your vehicle starts spinning, take your foot off the gas, don't use the brake, and slowly steer the car in the direction it is turning.

Driving at a slow and steady speed should get you to your destination. However, do not use the cruise control to stay at a steady speed. If you need to turn off the cruise control, most people will step on the brake pedal and this can cause the vehicle to slide if the roads are icy.

During inclement weather only travel if necessary. Remember to always wear your seat belt and give yourself plenty of extra travel time to get to your destination safely.

For questions, comments or to request a winter driving program, please email me at [ffox@hsnetwork.org](mailto:ffox@hsnetwork.org). You can also follow me on Facebook @safetyfox or on Instagram at: highwaysafetynetworkd5. This is a PennDOT funded project.