

ROADS AND WEATHER



Rain, snow and wind make driving extremely hazardous. In fact, the adverse weather conditions create double trouble.

Congested traffic, winding curves and steep hills make driving difficult enough during normal conditions. But, when we combine these road conditions with wind and wet weather, a new set of circumstances are introduced.

We must adjust our driving for these conditions. Keep your distance.

Remember, you need a lot more room to stop on slippery roads. Anticipate stops and slow down gradually. Be extra cautious at intersections.



When driving on a slippery surface, never slam on your brakes. These sudden stops can throw you into a skid. If you have anti-lock brakes, do not pump the brakes. Apply steady pressure to the brakes. Rapid acceleration and too-hard braking cause most skids, but a sudden steering movement can also whip your vehicle into a slide. Slow down well ahead of turns and curves. Plan ahead for lane changes and move into them gradually. Be sure to signal your intentions to traffic behind.

If you do go into a skid, follow these rules:

- ◆ Don't hit your brakes or over-steer.
- ◆ Take your foot off the gas and steer in the direction the rear of the car is sliding. If the rear of the vehicle slides right, turn your wheels right. If your rear slides left, turn wheels to the left.
- ◆ When you feel the recovery, straighten your wheels and roll on.

The danger of trailer jack-knifing is also present on wet roads. What happens is that the speed of trailer surpasses that of the vehicle creating a hinging effect. The trailer whips around with great force, throwing the vehicle out of control. Routine vehicle maintenance is important throughout the year. However, during inclement weather, we rely on vehicle equipment that we sometimes take for granted. Before each trip, make sure all lights are working properly. Check your windshield wipers, tire pressure, heater defroster, and be sure you are carrying a set of tire chains. One of the few good feelings about driving in bad weather is knowing that you're in a safe vehicle.

Be prepared for the unexpected. Keep your vehicle in top-notch condition, increase your following distance and slow down when necessary.