



With fall here, it is time to talk to your drivers about winter driving conditions!

Winter Driving tips for the Driver and the Vehicle

Proper Steps to take in Preparing for Winter Driving Conditions:

Step 1: Make sure that your truck is prepared for winter driving.

Tires are the most important aspect of keeping your vehicle under control in snow and ice condition. Traction tires on the drive axle(s) of the truck with ample tread depth provides the best control in snow and ice conditions. The tread depth and condition of the steer axle tires is also vital in keeping the control of the steering.

News:

This coming week is:
National Drug-Free
Work Week & CVSA
Operation Safe
Driver!



If you are operating in areas with chain laws make sure the chains are in good condition and ready to be installed if needed. Mirrors and all glass in the truck should be clean for maximum visibility.

Step 2: Lights On.

Turn on your lights to increase your visibility to other motorists.

Step 3: No Cruise Control.

Don't use cruise control on snowy or icy roads.

Step 4: Bridges, Overpasses infrequently traveled roads.

Be especially careful on bridges, overpasses and infrequently traveled roads, which will 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.

Step 5: Don't "pump" the brakes.

If your truck is equipped with ABS brakes do not "pump" the brakes.

Step 6: Drive slowly.

Driving too quickly is the main cause of winter accidents. Just because you are a large truck with a heavy load doesn't mean that you're invincible, be sure to drive slowly and carefully on snow and ice covered roads.

Step 7: Pay attention.

Maneuvers are more difficult to make in the snow. Be sure to anticipate what your next move is going to be to give yourself lots of room for turns and stopping.

Step 9: Don't tailgate.

While tailgating is a bad idea under normal driving conditions, it is much, much worse in winter weather. Stopping takes much longer on snowy and icy roads than on dry pavement. Be sure to leave a lot of room between your vehicle and the one in front of you. A good rule of thumb is to leave four vehicle lengths between you and the vehicle in front of you for every 10 mph you are driving.

Step 10: Brake before making turns.

It is difficult to steer vehicles while applying the brakes in snowy conditions. So make sure to smoothly step on your truck's brakes to reduce speed before entering turns. Once you have rounded the corner you can accelerate again.

Step 11: Drive smoothly.

Snowy and icy roads are much less forgiving than dry pavement. Make sure not to make any abrupt turns or stops when driving. Doing so will often cause your vehicle to lose control and skid out.

**Step 12: Be familiar with your vehicle.**

It is always a good idea to be familiar with your vehicle's driving dynamics. This is especially true when driving on snow or ice. Also, be aware of the weight condition of your truck. As your load and weight diminish the handling of the truck in snow and ice will change.

Step 13: Learn how to control skids.

While it is best practiced in a driving school or on a closed course, it is not a bad idea to practice controlling skids in your vehicle so that you know how to react if it ever happens under real world driving conditions. When skidding, you actually need to go against your natural instincts and turn into the skid and accelerate. Taking your foot off of the brakes and accelerating gently during skids transfers your vehicle's weight from the front to the rear and often helps vehicles to regain control.

The FHWA's web site at <http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/trafficinfo/index.htm> contains links to information on weather and road conditions and the availability of travel web sites and 511

Winter Tips to follow concerning the vehicle:

1. Blended fuel purchased or a diesel supplement is added to the fuel tanks as temperatures creep below 32*.
2. Make sure the unit block heaters are plugged in when unit is not in use during the winter months.
3. Initial start up each day should follow this order – unplug block heater before start up, ignition in “on” position, if equipped with “wait for glow plugs” light, wait for light to go out, start unit, once running, unit should be brought up to temperature before operating.
4. If equipped with air brakes and air tank pull cords and/or drain orifices, you should purge tanks daily, make sure the air system airs to 120psi, and listen for the air drier to purge the system clean of moisture.
5. Make sure all fluids are up, including window wash. Now is the time to check additional fluids, such as “Wet Kits” etc.
6. Make sure wiper blades are functional, all glass/mirrors cleaned, if equipped, heated mirrors functional, make sure headlights tail/turn lights are cleaned off of snow/ice/salt and operational
7. If you have driven in snow, ice, slosh, before stopping the vehicle at the end of their shift, lightly have the brakes applied to clean off and dry the shoes, drums, rotors and pads to prevent brakes pads freezing to drum/rotors while the unit is parked.
8. Make sure any steps and grab handles are clean, secure and dry to avoid slipping.

Not sure what your states chain laws are go to:
<http://www.tirechainsrequired.com/laws.html>

9. If you are operating in state that require chains to be on board, make sure the chains are the correct size, properly secured, clean, and not broken as to be easily applied when necessary.
10. Most important dress warm with self wicking clothing and have extra clothing in the event the unit may break/shut down to avoid hypothermia

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Did you know?

When the weather turns cold I occasionally get questions about placing heaters in the trailers or in a straight truck body to keep cargo warm. The FMCSA has specific regulations regarding the type of heaters being used and specifications. Use the following link to access CFR 393.77

<http://www.fmcsa.dot.gov/rules-regulations/administration/fmcsr/fmcsrruletext.aspx?reg=393.77>