

Winter Safety Tips

Whether you enjoy winter sports or activities, travel for work or work in the elements, the winter season always comes with less-than ideal conditions. Here are some tips to staying warm and safe amidst the snow, wind and cold temperatures!

Driving:

- Make sure your car is in good working order *before* the snow hits! Check the battery, ignition, lights, brakes, tires, exhaust system, heating and windshield wipers.
- Gas up – fill your tank before you leave, and don't let fuel levels get too low. If you get stranded somewhere with less than a quarter tank of gas, you may run out before help can get to you.
- Keep an emergency winter driving kit in your vehicle – you can purchase pre-filled kits or make your own!
- Plan the work and work the plan – know exactly where you're going, how to get there and the road conditions before you set out. Make sure to tell someone your route and estimated time of arrival!
- Have a cell phone and hands-free device, and make sure your phone is charged.
- SLOW DOWN! Adjust your speed according to the road conditions, and avoid using cruise control in poor weather.

Outdoor Activities:

- Dress in layers; an outer layer to break the wind and allow some ventilation (like Gortex® or nylon); a middle layer of down or wool to absorb sweat and provide insulation even when wet, and; an inner layer of cotton or synthetic weave to allow ventilation. Avoid tight-fitting clothing.
- Wear a hat – up to 40% of body heat is lost through the top of your head!
- Wearing a scarf will help to prevent cold air from entering your lungs.
- Choose mittens over gloves whenever possible. Mitts keep the fingers together, which actually generates more body heat than gloves.
- Watch for wind chill warnings – exposed skin can freeze in just a few minutes!

Moving Snow:

- Dress appropriately – make sure to wear a layer that will pull sweat away from the body.
- STRETCH! Don't attempt to shovel or blow snow without warming up first!
- Rest and hydrate in between. Avoid alcohol and caffeine.
- Do NOT attempt to shovel or move snow if you have a pre-existing heart condition – talk to your physician first! Stop immediately if you experience any chest or arm pain.
- When lifting snow, make sure to lift with your legs, not your back! Push the snow whenever possible. If you have to lift the snow, avoid twisting – move it forward instead.

~ *Stay Warm!* ~ *Stay Safe!* ~