



Winter SAFETY BRIEF

PREPARE FOR WINTER DRIVING

Driving in the winter can be harrowing, especially in snowstorms and icy conditions. By getting your car ready for winter and using some simple tips to drive safely, you can face almost any weather Mother Nature decides to send your way.

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PREVENT SLEDDING INJURIES

Most people can agree that kids on slippery saucers careening down an icy hill at upwards of 20 miles per hour can be dangerous. According to the Center on Injury Research at Nationwide Children's Hospital in Columbus, Ohio, more than 20,000 kids younger than 19 are treated for sledding injuries on average each year.

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WHAT SHOULD YOU KEEP IN THE CAR?

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HOW SAFE IS SNOW SHOVELING?

Nationwide, snow shoveling is responsible for thousands of injuries and as many as 100 deaths each year.

While most people won't have a problem, shoveling snow can put some people at risk of heart attack. Sudden exertion, like moving hundreds of pounds of snow after being sedentary for several months, can put a big strain on the heart.

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PREPARE FOR WINTER DRIVING

Prepare Your Car for Winter

In addition to annual maintenance, here are some tips to winterize your car:

- Test your battery; battery power drops as the temperature drops
- Make sure the cooling system is in good working order
- Have winter tires with a deeper, more flexible tread put on your car
- If using all-season tires, check the tread and replace if less than 2/32 of an inch
- Check the tire pressure; tire pressure drops as the temperature drops
- Check your wiper blades and replace if needed
- Add wiper fluid rated for -30 degrees
- Keep your gas tank at least half full to avoid gas line freeze
- Remember to keep your car's emergency preparedness kit fully stocked, too.

WHAT SHOULD YOU KEEP IN THE CAR?

Every vehicle should have an emergency supply kit in the trunk. Kits should be checked every six months, and expired items should be replaced regularly. Vehicle emergency supply kits should include:



- A properly inflated spare tire, wheel wrench and tripod jack
- Jumper cables
- Tool kit and/or a multipurpose utility tool
- Flashlight and extra batteries
- Reflective triangles and brightly colored cloth to make your vehicle more visible
- Compass
- First aid kit with gauze, tape, bandages, antibiotic ointment, aspirin, a blanket, nonlatex gloves, scissors, hydrocortisone, thermometer, tweezers and instant cold compress
- Nonperishable, high-energy foods, such as unsalted nuts, dried fruits and hard candy
- Drinking water
- Reflective vest in case you need to walk to get help
- Car charger for your cell phone
- Fire extinguisher
- Duct tape
- Rain poncho
- Snow brush
- Shovel
- Windshield washer fluid
- Warm clothing
- Cat litter for traction
- Blankets

IT'S ALSO A GOOD IDEA TO KEEP FAMILY AND EMERGENCY PHONE NUMBERS, INCLUDING YOUR AUTO INSURANCE PROVIDER AND A TOWING COMPANY, IN YOUR PHONE.

Slippery Slope: Take Care to Prevent Sledding Injuries

Injuries often occur when the sled hits a stationary object or the child falls off. That's why parents would be wise to purchase sleds that can be controlled with a steering mechanism and brakes.

If you are planning on taking the kids to the local hill, don't just drop them off, especially if they're under age 10. Stick around while they sled, make sure all sledders wear a helmet – sledding injuries often include skull fractures – and be sure to share these important guidelines with them so they can enjoy tobogganing and sledding safely.



- **Make sure all equipment is in good condition, free of sharp edges and cracks**
- **Sled on spacious, gently sloping hills with a level run-off at the end so the sled can safely stop**
- **Check slopes for bare spots, holes and obstructions, such as fences, rocks, poles or trees**
- **Do not sled on or around frozen lakes, streams or ponds**
- **Riders should sit or lay on their back on top of the sled with feet pointing downhill; never sled head first**
- **Dress warmly, and wear thick gloves or mittens and heavy boots to protect against frostbite and injury**



Snowmageddon, Snowpocalypse, SnOMG!

There is no end to the terms for "really big snowstorm," and those terms came in handy, particularly in America's snowiest cities. Just check out these average annual snowfall totals, according to the Weather Channel:

Boonville, N.Y. – 193.5 inches

Lead, S.D. – 200.8 inches

Truckee, CA – 202.6 inches

Hancock, MI – 211.9 inches

Crested Butte, CO – 215.3 inches

Valdez, AK – 326.3 inches

But with really big snow storms – and even everyday, run-of-the-mill snowfalls – comes a risk of death by shoveling. Nationwide, snow shoveling is responsible for thousands of injuries and as many as 100 deaths each year.

So, why so many deaths? Shoveling snow is just another household chore, right?

Not really, says the American Heart Association. While most people won't have a problem, shoveling snow can put some people at risk of heart attack. Sudden exertion, like moving hundreds of pounds of snow after being sedentary for several months, can put a big strain on the heart. Pushing a heavy snow blower also can cause injury.

And, there's the cold factor. Cold weather can increase heart rate and blood pressure. It can make blood clot more easily and constrict arteries, which decreases blood supply. This is true even in healthy people. Individuals over the age of 40 or who are relatively inactive should be particularly careful.

National Safety Council recommends the following tips to shovel safely:

- Do not shovel after eating or while smoking
- Take it slow and stretch out before you begin
- Shovel only fresh, powdery snow; it's lighter
- Push the snow rather than lifting it
- If you do lift it, use a small shovel or only partially fill the shovel
- Lift with your legs, not your back
- Do not work to the point of exhaustion
- Know the signs of a heart attack, and stop immediately and call 911 if you're experiencing any of them; every minute counts



Don't pick up that shovel without a doctor's permission if you have a history of heart disease. A clear driveway is not worth your life.



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