



Winter Driving

Winter weather can bring unexpected conditions, so make sure that both you and your vehicle are ready for ice and snow. The best tip is, if winter weather is forecast, eliminate all unnecessary travel. This will keep you and your family safe and allow the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT) and other road crews the ability to more easily perform these winter duties. If you must travel, PennDOT offers the following tips for safe driving this winter season. You may also download their [Winter Driving Guide](http://www.dot.state.pa.us/public/PubsForms/Publications/PUB%20650.pdf) (<http://www.dot.state.pa.us/public/PubsForms/Publications/PUB%20650.pdf>)

- Carry a winter emergency travel kit.
- Listen to weather and travel advisories, but if you don't have to travel in bad weather, don't.
- Keep your gas tank at least half full.
- Make sure someone else knows where you are going and when you expect to arrive. In case you run into an emergency and need help, someone will know where to look for you.
- If you do become stranded, it's better to stay with your vehicle until help arrives. Run the engine every hour or so, but make sure the tailpipe is clear and keep the downwind window cracked open.

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- Beware of roads that may look wet, but are actually frozen, often referred to as "black ice."
- Use extra caution on bridges and ramps, where ice can often freeze before road surfaces.
- Carry a cellphone.
- State law requires you to turn on your headlights when your wipers are on.

- Use your low beams in particularly bad weather, especially in cases of heavy or blowing snow.
- Remove ice and snow from windows, mirrors and all vehicle lights before you drive and as often as needed.
- Remove snow and ice from the hood and roof of your vehicle. It is against the law to allow snow or ice to fall from your vehicle and strike another vehicle or person and causes death or injury. You can be ticketed.



- Do not park or abandon your vehicle on snow emergency routes.

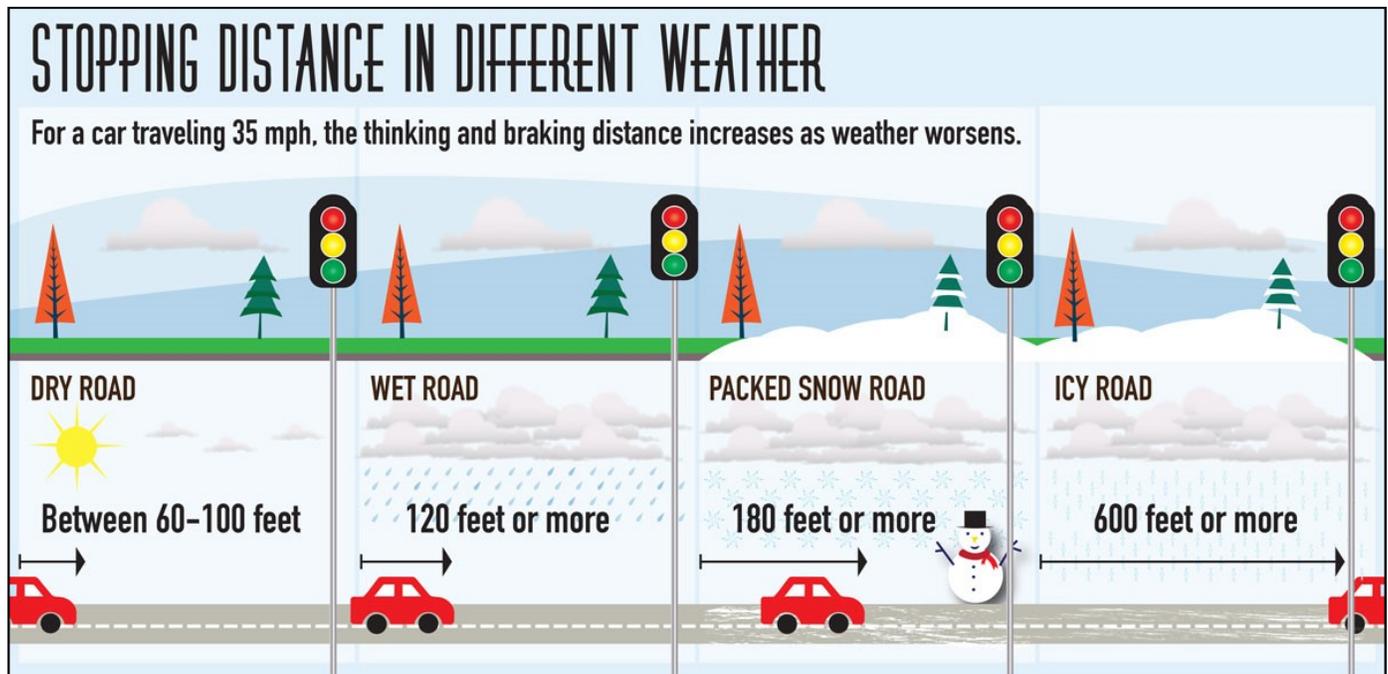
Safe Driving Practices

Motorists are reminded that wet and icy roads affect how you drive and the distance you'll need to stop. Practice the following while driving this winter:

- Do not pass or get between trucks plowing in a plow line (several trucks plowing side by side).
- Do not drink and drive, and always wear your seat belt.
- Slow down and increase following distance.
- Do not use cruise control while driving on snow-covered roads.
- Avoid sudden stops and start.

Preparation is also key to successfully navigating winter roads. Winter weather can bring unexpected conditions. Make sure that both you and your vehicle are ready for ice and snow.

Remember, your stopping distance changes with different types of weather. How much stopping distance will you need? Safe stopping distance also varies by vehicle. For a car traveling 35 mph on dry pavement, it can take anywhere from 60 to 97 feet for thinking and braking distance. Double that for driving on wet pavement. Triple it for packed snow. Ten times for icy roads. This stopping distance will assist you in planning for winter driving.



For further information, go to the PennDOT Winter Driving Webpage at <https://www.penndot.gov/TravelInPA/Safety/TrafficSafetyAndDriverTopics/Pages/Winter-Driving.aspx>.

Remember, be sure to check road conditions on www.511pa.com before you travel. You'll be able to check road conditions, traffic delay warnings, weather forecasts, average traffic speeds on urban interstates, and access more than 500 "live" traffic cameras.

Winter Preparedness for Pets

Winter is a season of bitter cold and numbing wetness. Make sure your four-footed family members stay safe and warm by following these simple guidelines:



Keep pets sheltered

Keep your pets inside with you and your family. Under no circumstances should pet cats be left outdoors, even if they roam outside during other seasons. Dogs are happiest when taken out frequently for walks and exercise but kept inside the rest of the time.

Pets who spend a lot of time outdoors need more food in the winter because keeping warm depletes energy. Routinely check your pet's water dish. Make certain the water is fresh and unfrozen. Use plastic food and water bowls. When the temperature is low, animals' tongues can stick and freeze to metal.



Bundle up, wipe down

No matter what the temperature is, wind-chill can threaten a pet's life. Exposed skin on noses, ears and paw pads are at risk for frostbite and hypothermia during extreme cold. For this reason, short-haired dogs often feel more comfortable wearing a sweater—even during short walks.

Rock salt and other chemicals used to melt snow and ice can irritate the pads of your pet's feet. Wipe all paws with a damp towel before your pet licks them and irritates their mouth.



Remove common poisons

Antifreeze is a deadly poison, but it has a sweet taste that may attract animals and children. Wipe up any antifreeze spills immediately and keep it out of reach. This is good advice for any household chemicals. Coolants and antifreeze made with propylene glycol, rather than ethylene glycol, are less toxic.

Dogs are at particular risk of salt poisoning in winter due to the rock salt used in many areas - often when licking it from their paws after a walk. Store de-icing salt in a safe place and, as soon as possible, wipe your dog's paws, even after short walks. If your dog ingests rock salt, call a veterinarian immediately.



Protect outdoor animals

If there are outdoor cats, either owned pets or community cats in your area, remember that they need protection from the elements as well as food and water. You can make your own cat shelter quickly and easily with a plastic tub.

Cars are one of many hazards to small animals—warm engines in parked cars attract cats and small wildlife, who may crawl up under the hood. To avoid injuring any hidden animals, bang on your car's hood to scare them away before starting your engine.



Speak out

If you encounter a pet left in the cold, politely let the owner know your concerns. Some people genuinely don't know the risk that cold weather poses to their pets and will be quick to correct any problems you address. If someone you raise these concerns with responds poorly or continues to neglect their animals, report them to your local law enforcement agency.

The Chilling Dangers of Cold Weather

Despite a few more minutes of sunshine each day, we are smack dab in the coldest months of the year on average. While we can deal with cold most of the time, periods of extreme cold can lead to problems. Weather records show temperatures have plummeted as low as the negative 40s in parts of Pennsylvania during the coldest spells. Wow! Extreme cold often comes as a mass of arctic air entering the Commonwealth, or it could be cold air accompanied with strong winds which produce dangerous wind chills. Regardless of the source, the hazards and dangers remain the same. Check out some tips below to prepare for the worst of the chills.

When is it coldest?

Typically, the coldest part of the day is during the pre-dawn hours into around sunrise on a calm, freshly snow-covered morning. If wind is involved, the cold air can be dangerous at any time of the day. Wind driven cold can lead to hypothermia and frostbite in a matter of minutes during extreme cold.

People, Pets, Plants, & Pipes. Protect them all!



People: Older adults and younger children are typically the most susceptible to cold. But homeless and outdoor workers or recreationists can fall victim to cold temperatures as well. Be sure to dress with multiple layers and cover all exposed body parts. Limit your time outdoors. Check on your neighbors regularly. Stay hydrated and well rested.



Pets: Animals have a limited tolerance to extreme cold over long periods of time. Limit time outdoors and keep food and water available. Protect them with special clothing if needed.



Plants: While most plants at this stage of the year are hardy enough for outdoors, some may not be able to sustain extreme cold. Covering plants can help keep some warmth during the cold stretches.



Pipes: Make sure water pipes are well insulated. If needed, run a slow trickle of water to keep the pipes from freezing on extremely cold days. Don't use an open flame or heat gun to thaw frozen pipes. Also, make sure vent pipes aren't blocked or covered with snow.

CAUTION: Don't run generators or gas heaters indoors. Don't use an oven to heat your home. Problems can include carbon monoxide poisoning or fires. In your car, make sure you keep a half tank of gas to keep you warm if you get stranded. If you haven't yet, get your car tuned up and ready for the cold snap.



PEMA is Social!

Find us, visit us, like us, tweet us, retweet us!



Twitter

<https://twitter.com/ReadyPA>

<https://twitter.com/PEMAdirector>

Facebook

<https://www.facebook.com/BeReadyPA>

PEMA Can Also be Found on the Web!

Be Informed, Be Prepared, and Be Involved!



www.Ready.PA.gov



pennsylvania

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY

www.pema.pa.gov

Preparedness Events in MONTH

Martin Luther King Jr. Day of Service

(<https://www.nationalservice.gov/serve-your-community/mlk-day-service>)

2019 PA State Farm Show

(January 5th through January 12th)

(<https://www.farmshow.pa.gov/Pages/default.aspx>)

**Are you ReadyPA? Visit us at the ReadyPA Booth at the 2019 PA Farm Show.
We are located in booth #243 in the Weis Exposition Hall**

Additional Resources

Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency: www.pema.pa.gov

ReadyPA: www.Ready.PA.gov

SERVPA: www.Serv.PA.gov

Federal Emergency Management Agency: www.fema.gov

Office of the State Fire Commissioner: www.osfc.pa.gov

Pennsylvania Department of Human Services: www.dhs.pa.gov

Pennsylvania Department of Health: www.health.pa.gov

PA State Animal Response Team: www.pasart.us

PA Department of Transportation: www.penndot.gov

PA511Connect: www.511pa.com

Pennsylvania State Police: www.psp.pa.gov



THE 10 MUSTS for WINTER-DRIVING



EMERGENCY VEHICLE KIT

- Ice scraper/snow brush
- De-Icer
- Small snow shovel
- Warning devices (flare/triangles)
- Bag of salt or sand
- Flashlight
- Battery cables
- Tire chains
- Paper towels
- Blanket
- Non-perishable food

1. *Don't drive unless it's absolutely necessary*

Long-distance trips are especially risky in a snowstorm; question whether the trip is really crucial. The Turnpike will sometimes restrict travel to emergency vehicles – if necessary.

2. *Recognize that travel takes longer in bad weather*

If you choose to travel, know it could take significantly longer to get there. Plan ahead, and build in extra travel time. Be prepared with an emergency vehicle kit just in case.

3. *Thoroughly remove snow & ice from your vehicle*

All windows and mirrors should be completely clear to improve visibility; but don't forget to clear the hood, roof and trunk. State law states that if snow or ice from your vehicle strikes a vehicle or person and causes death or injury, you can be prosecuted.

4. *Turn on your headlights during a storm*

You need to see well to drive safely.

STATE LAW states if your wipers are on, your headlights should be too. It lets you see and be seen during a snowstorm. Remember, low beams often make it easier to see in heavy or blowing snow.

5. *Slow down and don't tailgate*

Drive at a speed suitable for conditions and avoid sudden starts and stops. During a storm, the posted speed limit is usually too fast. It's the driver's responsibility to slow down to a safe speed. It's also your responsibility not to hit the vehicle in front of you, so allow plenty of stopping distance between vehicles.

6. *Never pass an active snow plow*

The equipment operator cannot see you; and your visibility is limited because of snow spray from the plow. Besides, the roadway is untreated and slick in front of the truck, so what's the point? It never pays to pass a plow.

7. *Be prepared for fast-changing conditions*

Conditions often vary widely during a snowstorm; dry pavement can quickly change to slick or icy pavement because of drifting snow, temperature drops and plow cycles. The opening hours and closing volley of a storm tend to bring the most severe fluctuations. Use extra caution on bridges and ramps where ice can often form without warning.

8. *Watch for reduced speed limits and trailer bans*

If conditions warrant, the speed limit on the PA Turnpike will be lowered to 45 mph during a storm. In addition, the Turnpike will impose bans on empty and double trailers and other types of commercial and passenger vehicles.

9. *Never leave a vehicle unattended*

Our equipment operators cannot adequately clear the road with disabled vehicles blocking the way, so all abandoned vehicles are immediately towed during a weather emergency. If you do breakdown during a snowstorm, be sure your vehicle is as far from active travel lanes as possible.



10. *Ignore distractions and remember seatbelts*

Focusing on driving and buckling up are two of the best ways to ensure everyone's safety. When the weather is bad, they're doubly critical. Put the smartphone down and the seatbelt on.