

Winter Accident Safety Tips

DRIVING

Give yourself some extra time so you don't have to rush. Roads and highways may be slippery or snowy. Build in a few extra minutes so you can take your time and be careful during your winter travel, especially when it's snowing or especially cold and the roads may be icy.

Check your tires. One of the best ways to be safe in the winter is to have good tires. Have them inspected for holes and general wear and tear. Replace any tires that have low treads to make sure your car will have good traction on wet and icy roads.

Don't text and drive. This applies all year round, but especially in the winter, when you need to be extra cautious of the driving conditions around you. That text can wait a few minutes so you can stay safe.

OUTSIDE

Thoroughly clear all sidewalks, driveways, and pathways. Most winter falls are due to people slipping on ice or snow. During cold or snowy weather, make sure you are shoveling your walkways and applying sand, salt or kitty litter to melt any additional snow or ice.

Shoveling is like any other exercise – make sure you stretch. Before heading outside, do some light stretching, especially for your back and legs. Taking an extra five minutes may help prevent a back or other injury.

Use proper shoveling technique to avoid injury. You're heard it before...use your legs and not your back. This means bending your knees to load your shovel, then straightening up to lift. Dispose of snow by walking it over to the grass area; don't twist your torso, or you can cause an injury. And most importantly, don't overload your shovel.

Keep your hands out of your pockets. We know it's cold. But while walking on slippery surfaces, it's important to have your hands available to help you maintain your balance. And if your hands are cold in your gloves, try a pair of mittens!

Wear proper footwear. If you're going to be walking outside, make sure your shoes or boots have good treads or other traction. Always leave a little extra time so you can take your time.

HOME

Get a carbon monoxide detector for your home. Most carbon monoxide-related health issues occur in January and February. Make sure your detectors are in good working order with fresh batteries.

Have your fireplace inspected each year. Having a professional inspection will ensure your fireplace is safe, clean, and in good working order. This way you can sit back and enjoy the warmth of the fire without worrying.

Speaking of fire... keep flammable items away from your fireplace or lit candles. Most household fires are caused by flammable items (like curtains or clothing) being too close to candles or other open flames. When burning a candle or lighting the fireplace, make sure there is nothing nearby that could possibly start a fire.

Make sure you have an emergency kit in your car. Unfortunately, breakdowns or flat tires happen. Having an emergency kit in your truck will help you be prepared in case of an emergency. Here are a few things to keep in your kit:

- Jumper cables
- Small tools or a multi-purpose utility tool
- Flashlight with extra batteries
- Something reflective to make your car more visible
- First aid kit
- Warm blanket
- Non-perishable food items like crackers, granola, or trail mix
- Bottled Water
- Duct Tape
- Snow brush
- Shovel
- Extra Sweatshirt





