

Safety Topic: Winter Driving

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SIXTY YEARS
OF DISCOVERY
1947-2007

BROOKHAVEN
NATIONAL LABORATORY



Winter Driving

The leading cause of death during winter storms is transportation accidents.

Winter Driving

- Deadliest danger of all is "black ice"
 - Black ice forms on a roadway from melting and re-freezing
 - Drivers fail to recognize black ice conditions and drive at normal speeds since it is almost invisible
 - Always be alert to the possibility of black ice when temperatures are near or below freezing
 - Pavement that looks dry but appears darker in color and dull-looking should alert you to presence of black ice
- We had an accident here at BNL last Fiscal Year due to black ice

Winter Driving

- Failing to allow enough time to stop is a major cause of winter driving accidents
 - Stopping distances can triple during slippery conditions
 - Driving at a slower speed, anticipating stops at traffic lights and intersections, and applying brakes sooner than normal will help ensure accident-free stops
 - Always allow plenty of extra space between you and other vehicles to minimize the need for quick stops

Winter Driving

- Acceleration, turning, and passing also present dangers during winter
 - Accelerate slowly to avoid loss of traction and subsequent loss of control
 - Turn slowly to avoid sliding into a stationary object or the path of an oncoming vehicle
 - Avoid sudden movements
 - Pass with care - passing lanes are not maintained as well as driving lanes

Winter Driving

- Acceleration, turning, and passing also present dangers during winter (Cont'd)
 - Again, leave extra space so there's room to maneuver in case something goes wrong
 - During a skid, steer gently in the direction you want the car to go
 - Don't lock the front wheels – locked wheels don't turn

Tips for Winter Driving

- Always use your seatbelt
- Turn on your headlights during adverse weather conditions
 - Overcast skies and falling snow limit visibility
 - It is important to see and be seen
- Bridges and overpasses freeze before the roadway
 - Use extra caution on these roadways

Tips for Winter Driving

- Driving in winter weather conditions causes physical and mental fatigue and reduces reaction times
 - Get plenty of rest and adequate nutrition
 - Don't drive while you're sleepy or on medication that causes drowsiness
- Prepare your vehicle well ahead of time
 - Check fluid levels, tire pressure, lights, and the battery
 - Have a mechanic give your vehicle a winter check-up and make any necessary repairs

Tips for Winter Driving

- Stock an emergency kit containing heavy clothes and a blanket, traction material such as sand or kitty litter, tire chains, a small shovel, first aid kit, flashlight, jumper cables, and a bright cloth to use as a flag