
MEDIA RELEASE

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Department of Public Safety Urges Ohioans to use caution as Snow Storm Moves Across the State

Columbus, OH – With slick roads and more snow expected to fall over the next 24 hours, Ohioans are urged to use caution while traveling and remain diligent to winter warnings and watches.

A winter storm can range from a moderate snow over a few hours to blizzard conditions with blinding wind-driven snow that can last several days. Winter storms can be defined differently in various parts of the state. It is important that residents check with their local emergency management offices and remained tuned to their NOAA weather radio or local meteorologist for ongoing updates and information.

“Mother Nature is unpredictable, says Henry Guzmán, Director of Public Safety. “We work closely with our National Weather Service partners to effectively monitor and assess the storm and anticipate the needs at the local level.”

It is important that all Ohioans continue to use safety precautions as the winter storm unfolds:

When preparing to drive in extreme winter conditions, take time to do the following:

- Pay attention to weather reports. Allow time in your schedule for bad weather and traffic delay. Have patience and “Take it Slow in Ice and Snow.”
- Try to keep at least a half tank of gas in your vehicle. A full tank of gas will prevent fuel line freeze-up and allow you to run the heater periodically, if stranded.
- Keep snow and ice cleared from your vehicle’s windows, mirrors, head lights, brake lights and license plates.
- Stay with your vehicle while it’s warming up. An unattended, running vehicle invites car theft.
- During winter travel, let people at your destination know your departure time, your driving route, your anticipated arrival time, and your cell phone number.
- Log on to www.buckeyetraffic.org for up to date road closures and detours.

Prepare a winter emergency kit for your vehicles. Supplies should include:

- Snow brush with ice scraper
- Blankets or sleeping bag
- Flashlight and extra batteries
- Booster (jumper) cables
- Emergency flares
- Bottled water or juice and high-energy snack foods
- Cell phone and car charger

- Sand or non-clumping cat litter to use for tire traction
- First-aid kit and necessary medications
- Tire repair kit and pump
- Extra winter clothing, boots, hats and mittens or gloves

Be aware of sleet, freezing rain, freezing drizzle, and the dense fog, which can make driving very hazardous.

Be aware of weather warning signs for icy road conditions. Any type of precipitation that falls when temperatures are close to or below freezing is a warning that icy road conditions can develop. And any type of precipitation during winter months, whether it's snow, sleet, rain or light drizzle, can make roads and driving conditions hazardous.

The following are safety tips provided on the Web site: www.weathersafety.ohio.gov.

- **Take it slow!** Driving high speeds makes it easy to lose control on ice and snow. Slowing down helps to avoid accidents.
- **Wear your seat belt.** It is a state law to wear seatbelts. Wearing seatbelts during winter driving is most crucial. An alarming number of icy road fatalities have occurred because vehicle occupants were not buckled up.
- **Pay attention to the weather.** Make the weather forecast part of your daily routine during the winter. Awareness of weather conditions will help you to be more prepared.
- **Wait for weather conditions to improve.** The best way to avoid an accident during icy conditions is to stay off the roads until the weather improves.
- **Go easy on the brakes.** Brake application is a common trigger of slides that result in a loss of vehicle control. Antilock brakes (ABS) do not work well on ice and will often lock up the wheels. If your vehicle has ABS, be sure to STOMP. Firmly depress the brake pedal. STAY on the brakes – do not pump the brakes. STEER where you want the vehicle to go.
- **Turn into a slide.** Turn your wheels in the direction that the rear of your car is sliding.

Remember, bridges and overpasses become slick and icy before roadways do. Bridges and overpasses can be 5 to 6 degrees colder than the roads, so drive with extreme caution when the temperature is near freezing.

The Ohio Department of Public Safety is proud to serve and protect the safety and security of Ohioans.

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