

## Safe Winter Safety Tips

Winter trucking safety tips for truckers: driving a tractor trailer in serious winter conditions, demands a specific set of skills for all drivers, especially big rig drivers. Too many drivers on the highways do not alter their driving skills, when driving in poor weather conditions, on snow-covered or icy roads. Good maneuvering and skid control skills are essential in poor weather. Knowledge and implementation of proper, preventative safety skills for driving in poor conditions, can truly separate the professional drivers from the rest of the pack. They have the smarts for making good decisions and knowing when conditions are not safe, and it's time to 'get off the road'. Driving in bad weather, especially in snow and on ice, is risky due to more 'stop time' required, poor visibility, poor traction and the increased unpredictability of other drivers on the road. The job of a trucker becomes increasingly challenging, when handling a tractor trailer and load in foul winter weather.

- **Slow down** - At fault accidents are mostly due to excessive speed. Driving at the speed limit may be legal, but is always too fast for snow covered or icy road conditions. Take as much time as necessary.. **DO NOT HURRY. Speed kills. This rule should ALWAYS be at the top of any winter trucking safety tips list.**
- **Keep a safe following distance** - Leave plenty of room between your vehicle and the vehicle in front of your truck, and beside your truck, when possible (approx. 1/4 mile).
- **Don't travel as part of a pack** - Traffic seems to move in 'packs' on the highway. Find a safe way to get away from the pack and travel alone, with the goal being to maximize the distance around your vehicle.
- **Don't follow the tail lights of the vehicle ahead** - When the snow is so heavy, visibility is low, seeing the tail lights of the vehicle ahead...means following too closely.
- **Keep a safe driving distance** back at all times, especially in bad weather. If the leader makes an error, you will too. Trucks can leave the road, and yours could follow the lead truck off the road.
- **Use good, solid judgment** — If the weather is so severe that you need to get off the road..... do it. Find a place to get off the road safely and wait until conditions are safe.
- **Don't stop on the shoulder of the road** -- Especially in low visibility situations, when driving in winter, especially 'blinding snow', other vehicles can mistake your position for being on the road and as a result, may slam into the back of your rig.

**Don't try to be a hero** -- When the road conditions are severe, you need to recognize that it's very dangerous to be out there. Hours of service rules, dispatchers etc., are extra pressures when in a difficult, dangerous position. Don't feel that you're letting anyone down by not meeting a scheduled appointment. Communicate delays.

**Braking** - Some drivers like to use the jake brake in less than perfect weather conditions. Some don't. **DO NOT ENGAGE THE JAKE BRAKE ON ICY ROADS.** Try to avoid overusing your foot brake, unless the entire unit is absolutely 'straight' on the road. Don't over brake when the entire unit isn't straight... the trailer can slide and spin you out of your position.....the truck slows down, and the trailer does not. This is especially true, when the trailer is empty.

**Ensure 'all systems' are a go** — Be absolutely certain during your circle check before you leave, that the defroster and heater are working properly. Wipers, wiper motor, lights, esp. brake and tail lights, washer fluid is topped up, drain moisture from the air tanks, all brakes are set up and windows and mirrors are completely clean before departure.

**Keep fuel tanks topped up**, for extra weight over the drive tires, to aid with traction. **Good quality lug tires**, with the proper tire pressure, are essential for good traction for the best safe winter driving.

- **Keep tractor and trailer lights clean** — When you're able to stop in a safe place, clear the lights off of snow and ice, which builds up in foul weather....they are vital, more than ever when visibility is poor. LED lights especially accumulate snow and crud. **Keep everything clean, so you can BE SEEN.**

Pack winter driving essentials -- Besides the mandatory roadside emergency kit for trucking safety.

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## Safe Driving Tips

- \* **3 Points of Contact:** Remember to employ three points of contact at all times when entering or exiting the tractor, trailer, or climbing onto or down from the catwalk. This means always having both hands and one foot or both feet and one hand in contact with your equipment. Making this a habit can prevent slips, trips and falls!
- \* **Seven Second Rule:** Consider seven seconds to be the minimum safe following distance under ideal conditions. Remember to leave extra space if conditions are less than ideal.
- \* **Cruise Control:** Do not use cruise control in less than ideal conditions. Using cruise control can be dangerous on wet or icy roads, as well as in areas where many speed corrections need to be made, such as on winding or hilly roads, in heavy traffic, and in urban areas.
- \* **Avoid Distractions:** Keep both hands on the steering wheel in the 9&3 o'clock position. This allows the maximum steering wheel movement in either direction without having to reposition your hands, giving you the most leverage and control of your vehicle.
- \* **School Zones/Construction Zones:** For everyone's safety, slow down to posted speeds when approaching school and construction zones and be prepared to stop. Obey all signs and workers who are directing traffic.
- \* **Tractor & Trailer Lights:** Keep your headlights and clearance lights on at all times when driving. Also, always make sure to keep your lights clean. Being visible is extremely important to your safety. Driving with lights on will allow a fellow motorist to see your equipment sooner. This will allow other drivers more time to adjust to any potential hazards.
- \* **Seatbelts:** Wear a properly adjusted seatbelt at all times. In a team driving environment, as a sleeper-berth occupant, use belts and/or netting during operation of the truck. Do not occupy the upper bunk unless the truck is parked. Seatbelts are the most effective vehicle safety device, saving thousands of lives annually.
- \* **Speed Limit:** To ensure your personal safety and the safety of those around you, travel at or lower than speeds of 65 mph or the otherwise posted speed limit of the roadway being travelled. Always adjust your speed to a safe level as determined by the various driving conditions.
- \* **Sunglasses:** Blinding glare caused by low sun, sunlight reflecting off snow, other vehicles and/or buildings can be potentially lethal. This danger can be greatly reduced by wearing sunglasses with polarized lenses that filter glare. Choose sunglasses that have curved lenses to protect in front and to the sides, and thin frames to free up peripheral vision. Always remove sunglasses when entering tunnels.

## January Birthdays

Leonard Marchman	1st
Edward Montano	
James Waters	2nd
Robert Fouts	
Stephen Washington	
Jeffrey Ellis	
Calvin Davis	3rd
Bonnie Heft	5th
Ernesto Quintana	
Jonathan McCurdy	
Matthew Sudduth	6th
Raymond Gonzalez	7th
Otis Coker	8th
Pete Miller	
Olson Louissaint	
Gregory Lewis	9th
Janet Reynolds	10th
Joshua Singleterry	
Richard Blye	
Joseph Bowers	11th
William Gossett	
David Reece	
Rawn Brooks	12th
Lee Davis	
Pawel Chabinka	13th
Jason Beaudet	14th
Roger Bibler	16th
Booker Collins	19th
Dorin Kish	22nd
Adam Sisseck	
Robert Burgett	23rd
Norberto Urbano	
Randy Gilberry	24th
Ryan Mohr	
Alex Velez	
Wayne Kirkland	27th
Kenneth Follette	28th
Robert Jean	29th
Renard Duckett	30th
Darien Sanders	



## Reminders:

- Payroll cut-off is Monday at 11:59 p.m.
- Receipts for Transflo need to be on 1 page.
- When renewing your MVR, TWIC or passport, Lorrie in Winter Haven needs a copy.
- Recertification of your physical should go through Lorrie in Winter Haven.
- Any accidents or incidents need to be reported to the Safety Department immediately
- Check your permit book periodically .
- All roadside inspections, tickets and citations need to be faxed to the Safety Department.
- On Qualcomm do a Loaded call, empty call, arrived at consignee, arrived at shipper, and pre plan commitment.
- Personal conveyance is 90 minutes in a 24 hour period—personal use only, bobtail, and you must end where you started from.
- You need a pre-trip and post trip on duty each day.
- In inclement weather slow down.
- Ice no dice.
- Fog lay like a log.
- Snow go slow.

### Brain Teaser

Which travels faster? Hot or cold?

## Fun Facts

- Every winter, at least one septillion (that's 1 followed by 24 zeros) snow crystals fall from the sky.
- Chionophobia is the persistent fear of snow, especially becoming trapped by snow. The term is derived from the Greek words chion and phobos, meaning "snow" and "fear," respectively.
- The first Winter Olympics were held in Chamonix, France, in 1924. No country in the Southern Hemisphere has hosted, or even been an applicant to host, the Winter Olympics.
- The most snow ever recorded in 24 hours in the United States was at Silver Lake, Colorado, in 1921 at 76 inches. Coming in second is Georgetown, Colorado, in December 4, 1913, at 63 inches
- Around 12% of Earth's land surface is covered in snow and ice.
- Winter in the Northern and Southern Hemispheres is caused by Earth's axis in that hemisphere being tilted away from the sun
- All snowflakes have 6 sides
- You can only call a snowstorm a blizzard when visibility is impaired for at least a quarter mile and winds are 35 mph or more.
- A New Zealand insect called the Weta freezes completely solid during winter. When the temps go up, it resumes its business.

### Brain Teaser Answer

Hot is faster, because you can catch a cold.

## Winter Weather Checklist

To prepare for winter weather driving conditions its crucial for drivers to equip your vehicles with a varie-ty of survival, safety and maintenance items. Many of these are materials that you may already have on hand or are easy to find. With a little bit of effort, vehicles can be stocked up, making a huge impact on winter driving safety.

**Be sure you have on-hand the following items:**

- ✓ Flashlights with extra batteries
- ✓ Cell phone power charger and external batteries
- ✓ First aid kit with pocket knife
- ✓ Extra blankets and sleeping bags
- ✓ Matches
- ✓ Extra sets of mittens, socks, hats, gloves and winter jacket
- ✓ Rain gear
- ✓ Small sack of sand to aid tire traction
- ✓ Small shovel
- ✓ Set of tools: pliers, wrench, screwdriver
- ✓ Booster cables
- ✓ Tire chains or traction mats
- ✓ Canned fruit and nuts
- ✓ Manual can opener
- ✓ Bottled water

Part of being a professional driver is to be prepared for any driving conditions, especially winter weather. Here is a list of a few reliable weather information channels:

- ☐ CNN TV station national weather updates on the 1/2 hour
- ☐ The Weather Channel—[www.weather.com](http://www.weather.com)
- ☐ USA Today newspaper o [www.usatoday.com](http://www.usatoday.com)