



STATE OF DELAWARE  
**OFFICE OF HIGHWAY SAFETY**  
[www.ohs.delaware.gov](http://www.ohs.delaware.gov)

**Newsletter Article**

**January**

## Winter Driving

Winter is here! And with the cold weather comes a variety of treacherous roadway conditions. Winter driving can be hazardous and scary. Dangers include snow and ice on the road, and reduced visibility from precipitation. It is important for drivers to be prepared and exercise caution while driving in adverse weather. Drivers should take time to plan and prepare for their trip. In addition, drivers need to be focused while driving and take steps to protect themselves and prevent crashes.

There are several steps that you can take prior to venturing out in winter weather. Check the weather, road conditions, and traffic. Allow plenty of time to get to your destination safely so that you do not have to rush. Plan your route. Be familiar with the directions and let others know your route and anticipated arrival time

Preparing your vehicle can make the trip safer and help motorists deal with an emergency. Maintain your car by checking the battery, tire tread, and windshield wipers. Keep your windows clear, put no-freeze fluid in the washer reservoir, and check your antifreeze. Make sure you have plenty of gas. Keep emergency supplies on hand. Have a flashlight, jumper cables, shovel, snow brush and ice scraper, warning devices such as flares and a blanket. Bring a cell phone that is fully charged, food, water, and necessary medications.

Take Steps to protect yourself and prevent crashes. Buckle up and use child safety seats properly. Slow down and increase distances between cars. Know what kind of brakes you have and how to use them properly. In general, when stopping, apply firm, continuous pressure if you have antilock brakes. Pump the brakes gently if you do not have antilock brakes. If you find yourself in a skid, stay calm and ease your foot off the gas while carefully steering in the direction you want the front of your vehicle to go. Avoid fatigue and get plenty of rest before the trip. Take breaks when travelling long distances and rotate drivers if possible. Keep your eyes open for pedestrians walking in the road. If you are planning to drink, designate a sober driver.

If road conditions are hazardous, you should avoid driving if possible. Wait until road and weather conditions improve before venturing out in your vehicle. If you must travel, following the steps above will help you to have a safe trip. For more information on these and other traffic safety programs, go to [www.ohs.delaware.gov](http://www.ohs.delaware.gov).

**Drive Safe. Arrive Alive DE.**