

Safety Focus | Changing Driving Seasons

The winter season adds many challenges to driving - visibility, road conditions and vehicle performance. The Panther Safety Compliance Team offers these winter driving tips utilized with your good defensive driving skills will help you safely survive the challenges of the winter season.

Prepare your vehicle

Perform a thorough pre-trip inspection of your vehicle before every trip:

- Wiper washer fluid - Take a flashlight & snow scraper.
- Lights - Drive with your lights on and keep them clean.
- Brakes
- Heater/Defroster
- Wiper Blades - Keep your windows and mirrors clean.
- Emergency Equipment
- Tire Chains - Ensure you have the correct number of tire chains that are in good condition.

Prepare yourself and plan to stay warm

Take survival supplies:

- ANSI Class 3 Reflective Vest
- Coat/Gloves/Hat
- Hand Warmers
- Blankets
- Non-perishable food & drinks
- First-aid kit
- Flashlight

Slow down and increase your following distance

- Slow down before curves and change lanes gradually.
- Add at least one additional second to your following distance.
- Keep moving at steady speeds.
- Try to time traffic lights to keep on moving.
- Do not pass or try to squeeze through on a closed road or lane.
- Avoid quick or sudden turns, brake applications and hard accelerations.

Watch for changing conditions

- Stay constantly alert for changing road conditions.

- Use common sense and adjust your driving to conditions.
- Watch for melting or hard-packed snow and strong side winds.
- Do not use your cruise control in heavy traffic or slippery conditions and/or the engine brake.
- Watch for slippery conditions in parking lots and truck stops.
- Watch for "black ice", especially on bridges and overpasses.
- Check the [National Traffic and Road Closure Information](#) website and listen to the radio for current information about the weather and road conditions.

Always expect the unexpected

- Watch for other vehicles having problems with conditions.
- Give snowplows plenty of room and do not pass near a bridge.
- Avoid riding in packs of traffic - maintain a safe space cushion.
- Plan and get the big picture.
- Do not get yourself into situations you cannot safely negotiate your way through - leave yourself an out.
- Utilize defensive driving techniques every time you are behind the wheel.

Safety begins with you... Make a difference