

Snow and Ice Driving Tips

Winter is upon us and with that comes snow and ice on the roadways. Under these conditions, motorists need to be extra cautious when venturing out onto Kansas roadways. AAA offers the following tips to keep you safe when driving in snow and ice.

- Accelerate and decelerate slowly. Applying the gas slowly to accelerate is the best method for regaining traction and avoiding skids. And take time to slow down for a stoplight. Remember: It takes longer to slow down on icy roads.
- Drive slowly. Everything takes longer on snow-covered roads. Accelerating, stopping, and turning - nothing happens as quickly as on dry pavement. Give yourself time to maneuver by driving slowly.
- The normal dry pavement following distance of three to four seconds should be increased to eight to ten seconds. This increased margin of safety will provide the longer distance needed if you have to stop.
- Know your brakes. Whether you have anti-lock brakes or not, the best way to stop is threshold braking. Keep the heel of your foot on the floor and use the ball of your foot to apply firm, steady pressure on the brake pedal.
- Don't stop if you can avoid it. There's a big difference in the amount of inertia it takes to start moving from a full stop versus how much it takes to get moving while still rolling. If you can slow down enough to keep rolling until a traffic light changes, do it.
- Don't stop going up a hill. There's nothing worse than trying to get moving up a hill on an icy road. Don't power up hills either. Applying extra gas on snow-covered roads just starts your wheels spinning. Try to get a little inertia going before you reach the hill and let that inertia carry you to the top. As you reach the crest of the hill, reduce your speed and proceed downhill as slowly as possible.
- Do not use cruise control when driving on snow or ice. Even a light tap on the brakes at higher speeds can send you into a spin.
- Stay home. If you really don't have to go out, don't. Even if you can drive well in the snow, not everyone else can. Don't tempt fate: If you don't have somewhere you have to be, watch the snow from indoors.