

Emergency Preparedness Pointer

FEBRUARY 2020

Hidden Hazards of Severe Weather Driving

Winter and early spring storms in Idaho can bring varying amounts of snow that are often accompanied by below freezing temperatures, ice, sleet, and freezing rain. Winter weather and other types of severe weather events can impact transportation in very different ways depending on the type of storm. Nearly every person in the U.S. is going to experience driving in adverse conditions in their lifetime. The National Weather Service (NWS) provides information on different types of winter weather hazards impacts on road conditions and how you can stay safe when you find yourself driving in these conditions.

Dense and Freezing Fog

Dense fog contributes to thousands of auto accidents every year. Visibility can vary and change quickly while driving. Freezing fog can cause droplets in the fog to freeze instantly to surfaces including roads. If you find yourself driving in dense fog, slow your speed and use your low-beam headlights. Give yourself extra stopping space.

Rain After a Long Dry Spell

Oil and other debris from vehicles build up on roads when there are long periods of time between rain. When it first begins to rain, roads become very slick. Slow down, and do not use cruise control when driving under these conditions. Give yourself extra space between other vehicles.

Freezing Drizzle

Freezing drizzle can cause a fine layer of ice to form on roads. It can be extremely difficult to notice, and causes slick road conditions. Slow down, and do not use cruise control. Leave yourself extra space between other vehicles.

Rain With Temperature Near Freezing

When air temperature or road temperatures are near freezing ice can form on roads. Slow down, and do not use cruise control. Give yourself extra stopping space.

Get Traction While on the Road

Weather-related auto accidents cause thousands of deaths and injuries each year. Take time to check weather and road reports before you leave on long distance trips. If road conditions are poor, choose a different route or adjust your plans. Winter and spring weather can change quickly which means road conditions can change quickly. If you find yourself in a storm, reduce your speed and drive like you are on ice. Visit the [NWS website](https://www.weather.gov) for more information on winter weather traveling.

