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Friday Safety Brief

October 10th, 2025

Driving Tips to Stay Safe in Wet Weather

Rain and Fog: *Rain* can quickly create dangerous driving conditions. During the first few hours of a rainstorm, accumulated oil and engine fluids can float on the rainwater and create a slippery road surface before they are eventually washed away.

Fog is another hazard driver's face: it can rapidly reduce a driver's vision. To help navigate when driving in heavy fog—or in any situation with reduced visibility - you can use the right edge of the road or painted road markings as a guide.

Snow: One of the best rules for driving in snow is to take it slow: everything should be done gradually.

Black Ice and Freezing Rain: "Black Ice" is a thin layer of frozen water that is almost completely transparent, appearing to be the same color as the road surface. This situation can occur very quickly when precipitation or moisture comes into contact with a frozen road surface.

Make yourself more visible: Even if you don't need them to see the road, your headlights will make your vehicle more noticeable to other drivers. A good rule to follow is if your wipers are on, your lights should be as well. Even better, always put on your headlights during any sort of precipitation to let others better see you, including pedestrians.

Maintain a safe distance: Never tailgate during a rainstorm: it can take up to three times the distance usually required to stop your car when road surfaces are wet. Use caution when approaching trucks and buses, as the spray created by their tires can reduce visibility - both yours and theirs - and pass as quickly as possible when conditions allow.

Prepare your car for wet weather: Check your windshield wipers to see if they need replacing and check your tires to be sure they are in good condition.

Slow down and stay safe: Driving in wet weather presents challenges, but they are not impossible. Here's a simple rule to remember: increased speed increases the risks. Brake earlier and more gradually than you would normally. Plan to drive at a slower pace when roads are wet and remember traffic is more likely to be moving slower.

General wet weather tips

What to do if your car skids? If your car starts to skid, resist the natural instinct to slam on the brakes, which could lock your wheels and make the situation worse and eliminate any control you have over your vehicle. Regain control by steering in the direction of the skid while pumping your brakes to gradually reduce speed. If your car has antilock brakes apply steady, even pressure to the brake pedal and avoid pumping them.

What to do if your car starts to hydroplane? If you feel the car starting to hydroplane, where all 4 wheels lose contact between the tire and the road, don't brake abruptly or turn the wheel. Release the gas pedal slowly and steer straight until the car regains traction. If you must brake, lightly apply pressure to the brake pedal. If your vehicle has antilock brakes, apply steady pressure to the brake pedal. You can help reduce the likeliness of hydroplaning by following the "tracks" made by the vehicle in front of you.

Use caution when crossing running water! Flowing water can quickly move your car, even an SUV. It is often safer to turn back and find another route rather than taking a chance. Also, if you cannot tell how deep a puddle or standing water is, choose a different route or drive around it, as there could potentially be a deep pothole underneath.



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