

# Safety Fact Sheet



These programs offered by the Utah Safety Council offer practical strategies to reduce collision related injuries and fatalities on Utah roadways.

## WINTER STORMS

Winter storms can bring sleet, snow, ice, cold temperatures and dangerous driving conditions.

### WHAT YOU CAN DO TO PREPARE:

**Plan Ahead:** Have your car checked to be sure everything is working correctly and is ready for winter. When possible, keep your gas tank at least half full in case you get stuck or stranded. Be sure that each member of your family has a warm coat, hat, mittens or gloves, and insulated, water-resistant boots. Have extra blankets handy.

Put together an emergency kit for your vehicle which should include:

- Battery powered portable radio and extra batteries
- Bright colored-cloth (preferably red)
- Blankets
- Bottled water
- Cones, warning triangles or emergency flares should be kept in the trunk
- Duct tape
- Emergency cash (\$20 or more)
- Extra set of clothing, socks and underwear for each family member
- Empty gas can
- First aid kit
- Fire extinguisher (5 lb., A-B-C type)
- Flares
- Flashlight with spare batteries
- Fuses
- Jack for tires
- Jumper cables
- Maps
- Pocketknife
- Portable radio with spare batteries
- Pre-moistened towelettes
- Roll of paper towels
- Reflective vest
- Scissors
- Snack food (high-energy, non perishable foods: canned nuts, granola bars, peanut butter)
- Shovel
- Small card with information about family medical allergies or conditions emergency phone numbers of family and friends
- Spare tire: Be sure to have your spare tire checked each time you have your tires rotated.
- Tire pressure gauge
- Tool box with screwdrivers, wrenches and a small hammer (keep this in glove compartment)
- Tow rope
- Window scraper for ice
- Insurance: health and car insurance card, phone number of agent, 1-800 number of company

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## Know what winter storm watches, warnings and blizzards are:

- A winter storm **WATCH** indicates there may be a winter storm in your area.
- A **WARNING** occurs when a winter storm is definitely coming.
- A **BLIZZARD** means strong winds, wind-driven snow, and dangerous wind chills are expected... stay inside!

## During a Winter Storm Watch...

- Stay tuned for continuing information. Listen to your local TV and radio stations for storm updates.
- Be aware of changing weather conditions.
- Travel only if necessary. If you must travel, be sure to have your winter travel survival kit. Keep your gas tank as full as possible for emergency use, as well as to avoid fuel line freeze-up. And, tell someone where you are going, what your route will be, and when you expect to arrive.
- Stay indoors. If you must go outside, dress in layers. Several layers of lightweight clothing will keep you warmer than a single heavy coat. Also, remember to wear gloves and a hat. During severely cold weather, place a covering over your mouth to protect your lungs.
- Know the hazards of wind-chill. Wind-chill combines the cooling effect of wind and cold temperatures on exposed skin. As wind increases, heat is carried away from the body at a faster rate, reducing body temperature.

When shoveling after a storm, use caution. It is physically demanding work, so avoid lifting too much and be sure to take frequent breaks.

## If You Get Stranded While Traveling...

- Stay with your vehicle
- Do not try to walk to safety - you're safer staying in your vehicle.
- Call for help on your cell phone
- Make yourself visible
- Tie a brightly colored (preferably red) banner or cloth on your antenna or hang it out a window. After the snowfall ends, raise the hood of your engine to indicate trouble.
- Run vehicle for ten minutes every hour
- Operate the heater and keep your overhead light on to remain visible for rescuers. Keep the exhaust pipe clear to prevent fumes from entering the vehicle, and always leave a down-wind window open slightly to avoid carbon monoxide poisoning. Also, keep the radiator free of snow to prevent overheating.
- Keep moving
- From time to time vigorously move your arms, fingers, legs and toes to keep blood circulating and to stay warm. Avoid overexertion. It is important not to get hot and sweaty because wet clothing loses its insulating ability. If you are with others, huddle together for warmth and sleep in shifts.