

SAFETY TALK

NORTH DAKOTA LOCAL TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM-UPPER GREAT PLAINS TRANSPORTATION INSTITUTE-NDSU

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WINTER DRIVING

DRIVING ON SNOWY OR ICY ROADS

- Slow down. Drive the conditions, not the speed limit.
- Avoid doing anything suddenly, such as lane changing or braking.
- When slowing down or stopping, begin slowing well in advance of your normal slowing or stopping distance. Pump the brake pedal if you don't have Antilock Brake System (ABS). If you do have ABS, maintain a steady pressure on the brake pedal – the car's computer will automatically pump the brakes for you.
- Familiarize yourself with your owner's manual recommendations for braking and steering for skid recovery before the winter season begins.
- DO NOT USE CRUISE CONTROL.
- Keep a good distance between you and the car in front of you.
- Be extra careful approaching bridges and overpasses. They may have snow or ice on them even if the rest of the roadway is dry.

DON'T CROWD THE PLOW

Snowplows conduct an important public service – providing the traveling public with the best possible winter driving conditions by plowing and sanding roads. Snowplow operators are concentration on their task and the road conditions in front of them. Please be patient and give the plows plenty of room if you meet one on the road.

If you come upon a snowplow while driving

- Begin slowing down as soon as you see the snowplow. Plows may be moving slower than other traffic while plowing and sanding. The most common accidents are where a motorist read ends a snowplow.
- Stay well behind the snowplow. Because of the size of the snowplows, operators can't see directly behind their trucks. The sander could also be throwing sanding materials.
- Know where the plow is on multi-lane highways. The plow could be in either lane.
- Drivers shouldn't pass a snowplow or any vehicle unless they can be sure the oncoming roadway is clear of vehicles and snow drifts. As weather conditions and traffic conditions allow, the snowplow will occasionally pull over to allow traffic to pass. NEVER DRIVE INTO A WHITE OUT TO TRY AND PASS.

- Be extremely cautious when passing a snowplow. They can suddenly thrust sideways by drifts and hard snow pack.
- Watch for snowplows that may be turning on Interstate ramps or “authorized vehicles only” crossovers in the median of the Interstate.
- **REMEMBER** – Snowplows often run in conditions that are too severe for the average motorist. A snowplow on the road is no indication it is safe to travel.

TAKE WINTER STORMS SERIOUSLY

Winter storms in North Dakota can be deadly. Conditions can change rapidly from clear and sunny to treacherous with zero visibility. The key to survival is to be prepared.

- Carry a charged cell phone, but don't rely on it to get you out of a bad situation. Service may not be available.
- Carry a winter travel survival kit.
- Let someone know when you depart, your route, and your expected arrival time.
- Dress according to the weather conditions.
- Keep dry and wear clothing in layers.
- Fill your fuel tank before you leave.
- Check road conditions and weather forecasts by calling 511 (a free call) or by going online to www.dot.nd.gov

REMEMBER – If you are stranded in your vehicle during a winter storm – **stay with your vehicle.**

Content Source: NDDOT and SDDOT.