



**Goals:** This safety session should teach employees to:

- Understand the special hazards of foul weather driving.
- Know techniques to minimize foul weather driving risks.

**Applicable Regulations: General Duty Clause Sec. 5 (b)**



### **1. Bad Weather Creates Added Driving Hazards**

- Rain, snow, and ice make roads slippery and can reduce tire traction.
- Visibility is reduced.
- Many drivers become tense and worried, which may make them drive less safely.

### **2. Prepare for Bad Weather**

- Clean off headlights regularly to improve visibility.
  - Check periodically to make sure no bulbs are burned out.
- Replace windshield wiper blades; they're not effective when they're worn.
- Check tire condition and inflation.
  - Worn tires can't grip the road and may blow out; replace them.
  - Tire pressure falls with the temperature. Check tires before driving, and inflate them to manufacturer's recommended level.
- In cold climates, add the following to your vehicle emergency kit:
  - Spillproof container of sand or cat litter
  - Ice scraper, snow brush, and small folding shovel
  - Blanket (to keep warm while waiting for help after a breakdown)

### **3. Slow Down in the Rain**

When it rains:

- Reduce speed and stay four seconds (not the usual two) behind the driver in front
- Use windshield wipers and headlights (not parking lights)
- Use defroster if the inside windows steam up
- Be aware that roads are most slippery in light rain or when rain first starts
  - The mixture of rain with oil and dirt on the road makes it slippery.
- Slow down for large puddles, which can reduce braking ability
  - Drive through slowly, tapping the brake.
  - Test brakes once you're through, after checking that no one's close behind.
- Avoid hydroplaning (tires driving on the water, not the road) in puddles
  - If you start to lose control, take your foot off the gas. Don't brake suddenly.
- Be aware of passing trucks; their spray could temporarily limit your ability to see
- Be prepared to respond quickly if other drivers lose control



#### **4. Show Extra Caution in Ice and Snow**


- Clear snow off windshield, windows, hood, roof, and lights before starting out.
- Wear sunglasses during the day to reduce glare.
- Use windshield wipers and defroster.
- Reduce speed and stay four seconds behind the driver in front.
- Brake gradually.
- Watch out for icy patches.
  - Bridges tend to ice up faster than other road surfaces. Shady spots stay icy longer.
- If you skid, take your foot off the gas and steer gently into the skid. Try to get the tires rolling in the direction you're headed, then turn gradually to the direction you want to go.
  - Keep your foot off the brake unless you have anti-lock brakes (ABS).
- Watch out for other drivers; many people panic and drive poorly in snow or ice.

#### **5. Focus on Fog**

If it gets foggy and you can't see far in front of you:

- Slow down gradually, so that you don't hit the vehicle in front and that the vehicle behind doesn't hit you
- Turn your headlights on low beam and use your windshield wipers and defroster
- Avoid passing
- Use the painted lines on the road as a guide
- Consider getting off the road until the fog passes
  - Don't stop in traffic lanes.

#### **Discussion Points:**

-  – Focus on the weather problems most common in your area or the season of the year when you conduct the session.

#### **Conclusion: You Need Extra Skill and Caution for Foul Weather Driving**

The combination of wet roads, poor visibility, and nervous drivers leads to accidents in bad weather. Slow down, stay far behind the vehicle in front, and be extra cautious and alert.

#### **Test Your Knowledge**



Have your employees take the foul weather driving quiz. By testing their knowledge, you can judge their understanding of the necessary precautions and whether they need to review this important topic again soon.



## **Foul Weather Driver Alert!**

- Be sure your lights, windshield wipers, and tires are in good working condition.
- Carry snow and ice removal and traction materials in cold winter climates.
- Slow down—and stay at least four seconds behind the vehicle in front.
- Be prepared to respond quickly if other drivers lose control.
- Use lights, windshield wipers, and defrosters.
- Keep in mind that roads are most slippery when they're just a little wet.
- Slow down when you go through puddles. Tap your brakes, and test them once through the puddle.
- Clear any snow and ice off the car before you drive.
- Remember that ice forms first on bridges and lasts longest in shady spots.
- If you skid, take your foot off the gas and the brake (unless you have ABS) and steer gently into the skid to get the wheels rolling again.
- Slow down gradually in fog and avoid passing.

