



KITSAP COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

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Sunday, Nov. 28, 2010

Safe winter driving class

Silverdale, Wash. -- If last week's sudden drop in temperature, coupled with the snowfall and resulting traffic snarling nightmare taught us anything, it should be that winter driving can be unpredictable.

Anyone can have a collision. Will it be you this winter?

Be prepared!!

The Kitsap County Sheriff's Office is conducting an upcoming class on ***Safe Winter Driving***.

Location: Inside Kitsap Mall, next to J. C. Penny Department Store,
10315 Silverdale Way NW, Silverdale.

Time & date: 6:30 p.m., Tuesday, Nov. 30.

The class is open to the public. No pre-registration required.

For additional information, please contact Deputy S. Montague at: 360-692-7746.

Sponsored by:



- Last winter there were more than 12,000 motor vehicle collisions in Kitsap County.
- Learn how to prevent a collision. Don't be a statistic!

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BE “WINTER-WISE” IN YOUR DRIVING!

A winter automotive checklist

As we know only too well, winter often brings snow, wind and treacherous ice. Advance preparation and planning for winter driving can make the difference between a minor inconvenience and a potentially dangerous situation. This winter checklist is a guide to readying yourself and your car for the challenges ahead.

Winterize your vehicle.

Now is a perfect time to familiarize yourself with the basic functions of your motor vehicle and where essential components are located. Your best reference is the vehicle owner’s manual, which details the ins-and-outs of your car, down to the maintenance schedules and fluid replacements. Once you’ve consulted the owner’s manual, be sure to have a certified automotive technician check the following:

**** Wipers, Tires and Lights** – Wiper blades should be replaced every six months. The windshield should be full without cracks. Tires should be inspected for wear and be sure they are properly inflated according to manufacturer’s recommendation. Before hitting the road all lights and signals on the vehicle should be operational.

**** Engine** – Your motor vehicle’s oil filter should be changed every 3,000 miles or three months, whichever comes first. The air filter should be inspected, too, and replaced as needed. Fuel filters should be checked for clogs or leaks. A thorough inspection of the ignition system should include spark plugs and wires, distributor, emission system components and the fuel-injection system. If necessary, have an auto technician tune the engine.

**** Battery** – Have the battery load tested for weakness. Be sure all contacts are clean and cables are secure.

**** Cooling System** – Check the level and freezing point of your vehicle’s radiator fluid. The freezing point should test to at least 35 degrees below zero. If necessary, add a 50/50 mixture of antifreeze and water (the water reduces the corrosive nature of antifreeze). Check all hoses; they should not be excessively soft or brittle. The cooling system should be flushed every other year.

**** Braking System** – Check the brake fluid level. If your car’s brakes squeal or pull the vehicle to one side when applied, or if the pedal feels soft when pumped, have the brake system inspected.

**** Transmission** – Check the transmission fluid of your vehicle. Add fluid and change the filter if necessary. On rear-wheel drive cars, check the level of fluid in the differential.

**** Underneath the Car** – Lubricate the steering linkage according to the owner’s manual. Have the exhaust system inspected for leaks that could affect the engine performance and possibly allow deadly fumes to seep into the car.

**** Doors and Locks** – Make sure that all working parts on your vehicle’s doors are properly lubricated. Frozen door locks can be overcome by using commercially available lock de-icers, never use hot water. Other methods to open frozen locks include aiming a hair dryer at the frozen lock or heating the key with a lighter or a match.

Plan Trips

Listen to weather and traffic reports on television / radio and allow extra travel time. Avoid unnecessary trips by making a plan to accomplish multiple tasks while you are out. Advise a family member or friend of your plans and your route. Plan for alternate routes if needed. Call 9-1-1 for true emergencies only.

1-800-695-ROAD (or 5-1-1 from your cell phone) for current road conditions.

1-800-84-FERRY for current information concerning the Washington State Ferries.

Plan for the Unexpected

Carry warm clothing or blankets. Keep extra non-perishable food and drink in your vehicle with you in the event that you are stranded away from your residence. If you have infants in your vehicle, plan to keep baby formula and diapers. Consider medications. Think of optional places to stay. Keep phone numbers of friends and relatives with you in your vehicle.

Equipment

During winter months drivers should consider carrying some additional equipment in their vehicles, such as: tire chains; a shovel; first aid supplies; communications equipment; gloves, a flashlight and an ice scraper are good to have in your vehicle.

Driving Tips

Always wear your seat belt and slow down!

- Increase your following distance.
- Avoid unnecessary lane changes.
- Warm your vehicle prior to driving to avoid stalling and to allow windows to properly defrost.

- Keep the fuel tank at least half full.
- Drive with vehicle lights on to increase visibility.
- Be especially cognizant for the presence of black ice, during morning commute hours, on overpasses and bridges and in areas that receive very little sunlight.

If you are unable to continue driving due to icy road conditions, make every effort to move your vehicle off of the roadway. Many times drivers leave their vehicles in the traveled portion of the road.

Remember that you are responsible for keeping your vehicle on the road and avoiding collisions. Adjust your speed according to the conditions and increase your following distance. The only difference between someone who drives too fast, slides off of the road and hits nothing, compared to someone who drives too fast, slides across the center line and kills someone in a head-on collision, is luck. The cause of these two collisions is the same: speed. You will be issued a traffic notice of infraction.

If you are involved in a traffic collision, stay in your vehicle. More collisions will occur if the road is icy. The safest place is in your vehicle. If you collide with another vehicle and there are no injuries, move the vehicles to a safe location to exchange information. Keep in mind that emergency resources will be operating at capacity when conditions are hazardous.

Remember: if you operate an all wheel drive vehicle... they do not stop any better than two wheel drive vehicles.

If road and weather conditions are not favorable and you don't have to go out, stay home. If you must go out, be prepared and be patient.

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WAC 204-24-030
Standards for studded tires.

Studded tires shall meet the following specifications:

- (1) Studs shall be metal, tipped with tungsten carbide.
- (2) Metal studs shall be inserted only in a new tire or a newly-recapped tire which has molded in the tread the "pin-holes" into which metal studs are to be inserted. Studs shall not be inserted in any new tire or newly-recapped tire after it has been driven on a vehicle.
- (3) Metal studs may be installed only by the tire manufacturer, or by a tire dealer or tire jobber who shall install the metal studs in conformance with the manufacturer's specifications.
- (4) When a tire is sold or offered for sale as a studded tire or when studs are installed in a new tire or a newly-recapped tire, there shall be a minimum of seventy metal studs evenly spaced around the tread of the tire.
- (5) A tire shall contain a minimum of fifty-six metal studs at all times in order to qualify as a "studded tire" or as an approved traction device.
- (6) Metal studs shall not be installed in any tire of a vehicle which has a gross vehicle weight of ten thousand pounds or over.
- (7) School buses and fire department equipment tires are exempt from subsection (6) of this section.

WAC 204-24-040
Traction devices.

The following equipment items are approved by the state patrol for use as traction devices wherever traction devices are required by the department of transportation:

- (1) Tire chains meeting the standards in chapter 204-22 WAC.
- (2) Studded tires meeting the standards in WAC 204-24-030.
- (3) Approved traction tires. An approved traction tire shall have the following tread characteristics:
 - (a) A minimum of 4/32 inch tread, measured in the center portion of the tire at three locations equally spaced around the circumference of the tire.

(b) A relatively aggressive tread pattern designed primarily to provide additional starting, stopping, and driving traction on snow or ice. The tread shall have ribs, lugs, blocks or buttons the edges of which are at an angle greater than thirty degrees to the tire circumferential centerline.

(c) On at least one side of the tread design, the shoulder lugs protrude at least 1/2-inch in a direction generally perpendicular to the direction of travel.

(d) Tires manufactured to meet these specifications shall be permanently labeled on at least one sidewall with the words "mud and snow" or any contraction using the letters "M" and "S" (e.g. MS, M/S, M-S, M & S, etc.).

(4) Special tires specifically designed to improve stopping, traction, and cornering abilities of the tire on ice or snow may be approved by the state patrol as an approved traction device.

WAC 204-24-050

Use of tire chains or other traction devices.

Vehicles under 10,000 pounds gross vehicle weight.

When traffic control signs are posted by the department of transportation it shall be unlawful for any vehicle to enter the controlled area without having mounted on its drive tires the traction device specified by the sign, which must also meet the requirements of WAC 204-24-040.

Exception for all wheel drive vehicles. When "chains required" signs are posted, all-wheel drive vehicles shall be exempt from the chain requirement when all wheels are in gear and are equipped with approved traction devices as specified in WAC 204-24-040 provided that tire chains for at least one set of drive tires are carried in the vehicle.

(2) Vehicles or combinations of vehicles over 10,000 pounds gross vehicle weight rating (GVWR).

When traffic control signs marked "chains required" are posted by the department of transportation it shall be unlawful for any vehicle or combination of vehicles to enter the controlled area without having mounted on its tires, tire chains as follows: Provided, That highway maintenance vehicles operated by the department of transportation for the purpose of snow removal and its ancillary functions are exempt from the following requirements if such vehicle has sanding capability in front of the drive tires.

(a) Vehicles or vehicle combinations with two to four axles including but not limited to trucks, truck-tractors, buses and school buses: For vehicles with a single drive axle, one tire on each side of the drive axle shall be chained. For vehicles with dual drive axles, one tire on each side of one of the drive axles shall be chained.

For vehicle combinations including trailers or semi-trailers; one tire on the last axle of the last trailer or semi-trailer, shall be chained. If the trailer or semi-trailer has tandem rear axles, the chained tire may be on either of the last two axles.

(b) Automobile transporters are any vehicle combination designed and used specifically for the transport of assembled (capable of being driven) highway vehicles. For vehicles with single drive axles, one tire on each side of the drive axle shall be chained. For vehicles with dual drive axles, one tire on each side of each of the drive axles shall be chained. For vehicle combinations including trailers or semi-trailers, one tire on the last axle of the last trailer or semi-trailer shall be chained. If the trailer or semi-trailer has tandem rear axles, the chained tire may be on either of the last two axles.

(c) Vehicle combinations with five axles consisting of a truck tractor with dual drive axles and a tandem axled semi-trailer; all tires on one drive axle may be chained or one tire on each side of each of the drive axles may be chained. Chains must be applied to a minimum of four tires on the drive axles. On the tandem axle semi-trailer, the chained tire may be on either of the last two axles.

(d) Vehicle combinations with five axles, consisting of a truck and trailer, or truck tractor and semi-trailer with a single drive axle, or truck tractor, semi-trailer and full trailer: For vehicles with a single drive axle, all tires on the drive axle shall be chained. For vehicles with dual drive axles, all tires on one of the drive axles shall be chained. For vehicle combinations including trailers or semi-trailers, one tire on the last axle of the last trailer or semi-trailer shall be chained. If the trailer or semi-trailer has tandem rear axles, the chained tire may be on either of the last two axles.

(e) Vehicle combinations with six or more axles, including but not limited to truck and trailer or truck tractor and semi-trailer or truck tractor semi-trailer and full trailer: For vehicles with a single drive axle, all tires on the drive axle shall be chained. For vehicles with dual drive axles where traffic control signs marked "approved traction tires required" are posted, all tires on one of the drive axles shall be chained. For vehicles with dual drive axles where traffic control signs marked "chains required" are posted, all tires on one of the drive axles shall be chained. In addition, one tire on each side of the additional drive axle shall be chained. For vehicle combinations including trailers or semi-trailers, one tire on the last axle shall be chained. For vehicles with tandem axle trailers or semi-trailers, the chained tire may be on either of the last two axles.

(f) All vehicles over 10,000 pounds gross vehicle weight rating (GVWR) shall carry a minimum of two extra chains for use in the event that road conditions require the use of more chains or in the event that chains in use are broken or otherwise made useless.

(g) Approved chains for vehicles over 10,000 pounds gross vehicle weight rating (GVWR) shall have at least two side chains to which are attached sufficient cross chains of hardened metal so that at least one cross chain is in contact with the road surface at all times. Plastic chains shall not be allowed. The state patrol may approve other devices as chains if the devices are equivalent to regular chains in performance.

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