

Dispelling Myths of Winter Driving

based on Safety articles from the DriverCare Quarterly newsletter published by CEI

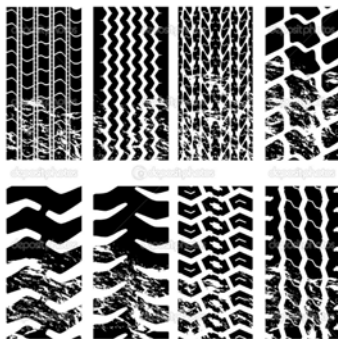
More Accidents Happen During a Snow Storm.

- Actually, fewer collisions occur during a snowstorm than after. The reason? Drivers are more cautious when snow is falling than when skies are clear.
- In fact, roads are at their most dangerous after a thaw and melted snow and ice refreeze. Drivers should be especially wary as winter sunset approaches and temperatures fall.
- Remember: surface temperatures are always lower than the temperature of the air. Ice can form on road surfaces when the air temperature is as high as (37°F).



Lower Tire Pressure Increases Traction.

- Traction – the grip your tires have to keep you on course – is one of the biggest driving safety factors. In winter, colder temperatures make all tires less grippy even without snow or ice on the road because rubber hardens. Some people think making tires less rigid by reducing tire air pressure means you'll get a bigger surface connecting to the road, and so more traction.
- The truth is, most safety experts argue that the minimal extra traction you might gain is more than offset by the risk that your tires will be underinflated. This reduces the control they provide from sidewall stiffness, raises the risk of a blowout and can cause damage to your tires.
- Remember that, as it is, tires lose about 1 pound of pressure for every 54° F the temperature falls.



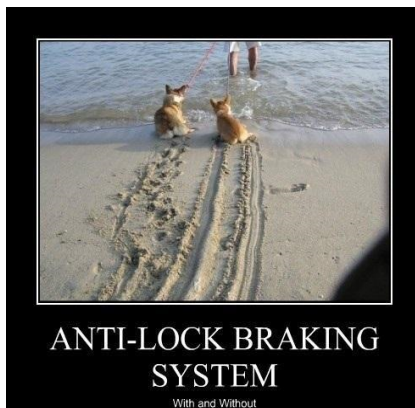
Four Wheel Drive Means It's Safe to Drive Faster in Snow.

- Four-wheel drive helps you get more traction from a standing stop, but it does nothing to increase traction on snow and ice at driving speeds.
- Next time it snows, check out how many four-wheel drive vehicles have spun out into ditches.
- No matter how many drive wheels you've got, to maximize control on snow and ice drive at half the posted speed limit or less.



Anti-Lock Brakes (ABS) Make Braking Distance Shorter

- Actually, anti-lock brakes make stopping distance longer. They're designed not to stop in a shorter distance, but to keep your tires from losing traction. To do this, they rapidly "pulse" the brakes, just like a driver without ABS who pumps his or her brakes.



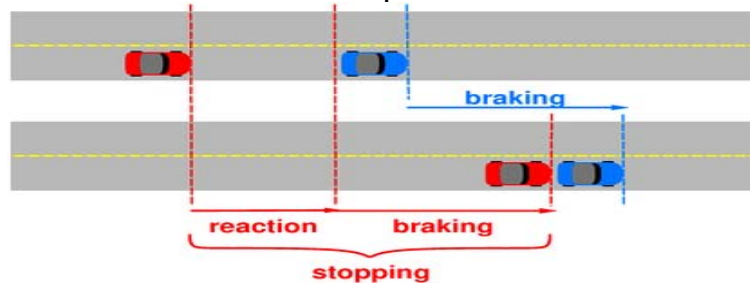
You Can Always See Ice on the Road Ahead



- Black ice is the bane of the overconfident driver, because it's just as slippery as white ice, but you can't see it. In fact, it most frequently forms after most of the white ice has melted. It's formed by a thin sheet of water that refreezes.
- Expect it wherever shade covers the roadway: near bridges and tall buildings that block the direct rays of the sun in early morning and late afternoon.

On Snow and Ice, we can use Normal Following Distances??

- The rule of thumb to avoid causing a rear-end collision in good weather is to be at least two seconds behind the driver ahead of you. In foul weather, make that 6 to 10 seconds, because you need extra distance to stop.



With the right equipment on our cars we can avoid skidding on snow and ice

- In general, any abrupt changes in speed or direction will cause you to skid, but this is magnified during bad weather conditions.
- To avoid skidding; Drive gently, avoid harsh acceleration, hard braking, abrupt downward gear changes, or abrupt steering movements. These can all cause a skid.
- Lifting your foot gently off the accelerator and using the gearbox to slow down and then gently accelerate is much safer than braking during icy conditions.



Conclusion

- No amount of equipment can substitute for driving with a greater level of awareness and care during inclement weather.
- Some features like winter tyres may help in the right conditions, but the individual driving style is by far the most effective protective feature you can have.

