Stony Brook University

SAFETY TALK

Environmental Health and Safety Newsletter February 2026

Driving in Winter Weather

Slow down. It's harder to control or stop your vehicle on a slick or snow-covered surface. In 2023 there were an estimated 101,390 police reported traffic crashes that occurred when there was snow/sleet conditions at the time of the crash. On the road, increase your following distance enough so that you'll have plenty of time to stop for vehicles ahead of you.
Don't crowd a snow plow or travel beside the truck. Snow plows travel slowly, make wide turns, stop often, overlap lanes, and exit the road frequently. If you find yourself behind a snow plow, stay far enough behind it and use caution if you pass the plow.

What to do in an emergency:
If you are stopped or stalled in wintry weather, stay focused on yourself and your passengers, your car, and your surroundings.

- Stay with your car and don't overexert yourself.
- Let your car be seen. Put bright markers on the antenna or windows and keep the interior dome light on.
- Be mindful of carbon monoxide poisoning. Make sure your exhaust pipe is clear of any snow and run your car only sporadically — just long enough to stay warm. Don't run your car for long periods of time with the windows up or in an enclosed space.

Before you go:
Carry items in your vehicle to handle common winter driving-related tasks, and supplies you might need in an emergency, including:

- a snow shovel and ice scraper;
- abrasive material (sand or kitty litter), in case your vehicle gets stuck in the snow;
- jumper cables, flashlight, and warning devices (flares and emergency markers);
- first aid kit;
- blankets for protection from the cold; and
- a cell phone and charger, water, food, and any necessary medicine.

Plan your route:
Check your local weather and traffic reports before heading out. If your roads are not in good shape, consider postponing non-essential travel until the roads are cleared. If you do have to go out, make sure you are prepared in case you become delayed while traveling. If making a long road trip when winter weather is forecasted, consider leaving early or changing your departure to avoid being on the roads during the worst of the storm.
Familiarize yourself with directions and maps before you go—even if you use a GPS—and let others know your route and anticipated arrival time. On longer trips, plan enough time to stop to stretch, get something to eat, check your phone, and change drivers or rest if you feel drowsy.

Date:	
Department:	
Supervisor *(please print)*:	
Supervisor Signature:	
Employee Participants: ***Please Print Clearly***	*Signature*

Environmental Health and Safety

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Please share the safety talk, for the noted month, with your employees and sign off on this form. All others should read for themselves. Completed forms shall be kept on file by