

Tips to Prepare for Winter Driving

Winter driving conditions can be hazardous due to factors such as snow and ice on the roads. It's important you and your vehicle are prepared.

Each Time You Drive

Winter driving on Alberta roads requires preparation and more time. Here are some tips to remember before you drive:

- ▶ Check weather and road conditions;
- ▶ Allow extra time to reach your destination safely and reduce your speed if necessary to give yourself more time to react; and
- ▶ Be sure to defrost your windows and remove ice and snow from your vehicle to make it easier for you and others to see.

Keep in Mind



Tires - Switching to winter tires is important as the deep treads offer better traction on snowy, icy roads. Also, temperature fluctuations can cause tires to lose pressure, you should check your tires more frequently.

Windshield Wipers & Fluid - Like winter tires, winter wiper blades just work better in winter conditions as they keep ice from collecting on the blades and resist damage from snow and ice. For improved windshield cleaning, use winter-grade washer fluid, and make sure you refill it often.

Engine Block Heater - Plugging in your block heater is a must once temperatures drop below -15 C. Use a block heater tester to make sure it's working properly before the cold weather arrives.

Gas - Keep a full tank or at least a half tank of fuel as this will help reduce moisture in the gas tank and allows you to keep your vehicle running longer if you are stranded in the cold.

Have Your Vehicle Serviced

It's best to give your vehicle a through once-over every winter, here are a few items to keep an eye on:



Battery - Power decreases as the temperature drops, meaning it takes more power to start your vehicle.

Cooling System - Ask your mechanic what antifreeze should be used for your vehicle and the appropriate coolant-to-water ratio to prevent against corrosion and potential freezing.

Engine Oil - If you don't already use synthetic oil, consider making the switch as it flows better in winter, helping reduce wear and tear on your engine.

Belts & Hoses - Temperature variations can cause engine belts and hoses to crack, bulge and leak. Have a trusted mechanic replace any which look damaged.

Brakes - While cold weather doesn't necessarily hurt your brakes, a thorough inspection can ensure the best performance when driving in winter conditions.

Emergency Preparedness

It's important to know what to do before you ever get stuck, such as not leaving your vehicle or letting it run for long periods of time but instead just long enough to stay warm.

Pack a Winter Safety Kit - Store common tools/supplies in your vehicle in case of an emergency:

- ▶ Jumper Cables
- ▶ Blanket
- ▶ Ice Scraper & Snow Brush
- ▶ First Aid Kit
- ▶ Warm Clothing
- ▶ Non-perishable Food & Beverages
- ▶ Flashlight & Batteries
- ▶ Tool Kit
- ▶ Cell Phone Charger

