

Snow Safety

By Karla Merola, LPTA

Although Virginia is not known for the snow accumulations like those seen in the north, the snow fall here is enough to cause safety concerns on roads and walking paths. The best practice is to be prepared for all wintery weather and deal with accumulating snow early. Begin by keeping the path to and from your house clear. Treat the sidewalks with ice melt before the snow begins to fall (use ice melt as directed). Once snow starts to accumulate, start to shovel before the snow gets too heavy (see shoveling safety techniques). A snowblower can make the work much easier during heavy snow falls. Then put down another layer of ice melt. Watch out for puddles that get shady in the afternoon as these may become a thick layer of ice. If you must walk on snow, avoid compacted snow as this tends to be more slippery than freshly fallen snow.



Safe shoveling technique:

- Wear shoes with adequate traction
- Stand close with area you want to shovel
- Keep your back straight and bend at the hips and knees
- Use shovel to break up snow if it is deep
- Scoop small amount and lift while avoiding lifting with your back
- Turn by moving your feet to where you want to drop snow (avoid twisting!)
- Avoid holding your breath when lifting.

Winter Car Safety

By Kelley Grant, LPTA



As the Winter months/weather approach, so do the risk of car accidents and car emergencies such as- breakdowns, flat tires, or other malfunctions. Once the snow and/or ice begin to accumulate it is always better to err on the side of caution and to make sure you're as prepared as possible for any situation that may arise. Here are a few helpful tips for driving safely and preparing a car emergency kit to keep you prepared for anything Old Man Winter throws at us this season.

Winter Driving Tips:

- Stay home. Only go out if necessary. Better safe than sorry.
- Make certain your tires are properly inflated and have plenty of tread.
- Keep headlights on to increased visibility.
- Keep at least half a tank of fuel in your vehicle at all times.
- Do not use cruise control when driving on any slippery surface, such as on ice and snow.
- Drive slowly. Always adjust your speed down to account for lower traction when driving on snow or ice. Remember: It takes longer to slow down on icy roads.
- Increase your following distance to five to six seconds from the car in front of you in preparation for having to stop suddenly or someone loses control of their car.
- Know your brakes apply firm, steady pressure on the brake pedal or slowly
- Don't speed up on hills or stop. Applying extra gas on snow-covered roads will just make your wheels spin. Try to gently accelerate for going up and gently reduce your speed by letting off the gas pedal to go slowly down the hill.

Winter Car Emergency Kit:



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