



# NEWS RELEASE

## HOWARD COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF POLICE OFFICE OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS

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### **Police Issue Driving Tips on First Day of Winter**

As the calendar marks the first day of winter today, police are reminding citizens to drive safely throughout the season. Police are offering winter driving tips to help ensure safe travel on Howard County roadways in any type of weather.

- Clear leaves and other debris from the base of the windshield at the defroster air intake. Debris could interfere with the defroster's efficiency.
- Clear snow and ice from ALL windows and lights, as well as the hood, roof and trunk of your vehicle. Snow may slide or blow from your hood and roof and block your view of critical areas to the rear of your vehicle. Also, snow blowing from your vehicle limits the visibility of vehicles behind you.
- When driving on snow covered or wet roadways, increase the distance between your vehicle and the vehicle in front of you. Stopping distances increase on wet roadways.
- Use brakes carefully—don't stomp on them—and brake early. If your vehicle is equipped with ABS, apply steady brake pressure and do not pump the brakes.
- If you find the rear of your vehicle sliding, do not stomp on the brakes. Take your foot off the accelerator and steer in the direction in which the rear is sliding.
- Don't use cruise control in wintry conditions. Roads that appear clear can suddenly have slippery spots and the short touch of your brakes to deactivate the cruise control can cause you to lose control of your vehicle.
- Don't get over confident with your 4x4 vehicle. It may help you get going quicker than other vehicles, but it won't help you stop any faster.
- Stock your vehicle with basic winter driving equipment—an ice scraper, brush, blanket, extra warm clothing and a flashlight with batteries.
- Allow extra time to get to your destination. Roadways get slick when freezing air circulates above it. Bridges and overpasses typically freeze before other road surfaces, so avoid hard braking or quick accelerations or turns.
- As snow falls and accumulates on the roadways, limit road travel. Traffic inhibits the road crews' ability to clear the roadways quickly and efficiently.
- Use your headlights whenever precipitation is falling. Your headlights may not help you to see farther down the roadway, but they will certainly make you easier to be seen. Also, your taillights make you visible to others behind you.
- If you haven't changed your windshield wiper blades in the past six months, put on a new set of wiper blades. Check the windshield wiper fluid reservoir to ensure it is full of an antifreeze type of wiper fluid.

The police department wishes everyone safe travel throughout the winter weather season.

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