

DRIVING SAFETY

Summer time in the south and that means the potential for afternoon thunderstorms. Listed below are the special hazards associated with foul weather driving and some techniques to minimize these hazards:

1. BAD WEATHER CREATES ADDED DRIVING HAZARDS

- Rain makes roads slippery and can reduce tire traction.
- Visibility is reduced.
- Many drivers become tense and worried, which may make them drive less safely.

2. PREPARE FOR BAD WEATHER

- Clean off headlights regularly to improve visibility and check periodically to ensure no bulbs are burned out.
- Replace windshield wiper blades; they're not effective if they are worn.
- Check tire condition and inflation; worn tires can't grip the road and may blow out; replace them.

3. SLOW DOWN IN THE RAIN

- Reduce speed and stay at least four seconds behind the driver in front.
- Use windshield wipers and headlights, not parking lights.
- Use defroster if the inside windows fog up.
- Be aware that roads are most slippery in light rain or when rain first starts, it's the mixture of rain with oil and dirt on the road that makes it slippery.
- Slow down for large puddles, wet brakes reduce breaking ability. Drive through slowly, tapping the brake. Test brakes once you're through, after checking that no one's close behind.
- Avoid hydroplaning; which is defines as tires riding on the water not the road. If you start to lose control, take your foot off the gas. Don't brake suddenly.
- Be aware of passing trucks; their spray could temporarily limit your ability to see.
- Be prepared to respond quickly if other drivers lose control.

4. FOCUS ON FOG

- When entering an area with fog, slow down gradually, so that the vehicle behind doesn't crash in to you.
- Turn your headlights on low beam and use your windshield wipers and defroster.
- Avoid passing.
- Use the painted lines on the road as a guide.
- If the fog is thick consider getting off the road until the fog lifts. Don't stop in traffic lanes.

The combination of wet roads, poor visibility, and nervous drivers leads to accidents in bad weather. Slow down, stay far behind the vehicle in front, and be extra cautious and alert.