

Winter Driving Hazards

Use this listing to help identify hazards, assess risks, and understand control measures. See the Employer Toolkit for an easy step-by-step guide to help you minimize the risks of winter driving.

This listing is not exhaustive; feel free to add other hazards that may be affect your workers. Use the “Notes” column to record workers, worker groups or locations that may be affected, or other hazards that may not be listed here. See roadsafetyatwork.ca for a year-round road safety risk assessment tool.

DRIVERS		
Hazard	Actions to eliminate or minimize risk of incident	Notes
Experience <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inexperienced (e.g. < 2 winters) driving in winter conditions (rain, fog, snow, slush, reduced visibility, black ice) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Re-assign trip to more experienced drivers Provide winter driving skills training Make sure workers know winter driving hazards and what to do to reduce risk. See Free Workplace Safety Resources for education materials 	
Attitude <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complacent about winter driving hazards Not prepared to drive in winter conditions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Re-schedule or re-assign trip to prepared drivers Make sure workers understand your winter driving policy and safe work procedures Make sure workers know winter driving hazards and what to do to reduce risk. See Free Workplace Safety Resources for education materials 	
Fitness to drive <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stressed (work or personal) Tired/fatigued Impaired (prescription/illegal drugs) Sick Poor vision Poor general health 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Re-schedule or re-assign trip to drivers better fit to drive Assess individual worker risks; support/intervene as required 	

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FLEET VEHICLES

Hazard	Actions to eliminate or minimize risk of incident	Notes
No winter tires	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cancel, re-schedule, or re-assign trip to drivers with vehicles equipped for driving in winter weather conditions • Put winter tires on fleet vehicles. See Winter Tire Specs 	
Not properly maintained for winter weather	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cancel, re-schedule, or re-assign trip to drivers with vehicles equipped for driving in winter weather conditions • Prepare vehicles for winter weather. See <i>Preparing your Fleet</i> in Employer or Supervisor tip sheets 	
Not subject to pre-trip inspections	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make sure workers understand and follow winter weather pre-trip check procedures. Distribute Worker tip sheet, Vehicle Preparation Capsule Tip and Driver Preparation Capsule Tip 	
No winter driving survival kit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cancel, re-schedule, or re-assign trip to drivers with vehicles equipped for driving in winter weather conditions • Provide winter driving survival kit in all fleet vehicles (see Winter Driving Survival Checklist for items to include) 	

PERSONAL VEHICLES USED FOR WORK PURPOSES

Hazard	Actions to eliminate or minimize risk of incident	Notes
No winter tires	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cancel, re-schedule, or re-assign trip to drivers with vehicles equipped for driving in winter weather conditions • Use fleet vehicles equipped for driving in winter weather conditions • Have workers put on winter tires. See Winter Tire Specs 	
Not properly maintained for winter weather	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Re-schedule, or re-assign trip to drivers with vehicles equipped for driving in winter weather conditions • Confirm vehicles are winterized. See <i>Preparing your Fleet</i> in Employer or Supervisor tip sheets 	
Not subject to pre-trip inspections	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make sure workers understand and follow winter pre-trip check procedures. Distribute Worker tip sheet, Vehicle Preparation Capsule Tip and Driver Preparation Capsule Tip 	
Vehicles lack winter driving survival kit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Re-schedule, or re-assign trip to drivers with vehicles equipped for driving in winter weather conditions • Supply winter driving survival kit for personal vehicles OR... • Communicate requirement for winter driving survival kit and ensure worker provides kit. (see Winter Driving Survival Checklist for items to include) • Use fleet vehicle equipped for winter weather 	

TRIPS

Hazard	Actions to eliminate or minimize risk of incident	Notes
Roads <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Isolated (less frequently used, rural) • Poorly maintained • Resource roads 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cancel trip • Re-route trip to well-travelled roads • Supply winter driving survival kit • Ensure workers know working alone and emergency procedures. Distribute Winter Driving Survival Checklist • Ensure workers have cell phones or two-way radios 	
Unfamiliar routes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Re-route or re-assign trip to drivers who are familiar with the route • Revise work schedules to ensure adequate trip time 	
Night driving	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Re-schedule trips to minimize night travel • Ensure workers know the proper use of high beams, and use them as required 	
Urban or congested driving conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Re-route or re-schedule trips • Instruct drivers to reduce speed to meet conditions • Instruct drivers to leave more space between vehicles 	
Long hours	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revise trip schedules to reduce hours • Schedule rest breaks – every 2 hours if possible • Instruct workers to modify trip schedules if weather conditions worsen • Make sure workers know where rest stops are located 	

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<p>Long distances</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider alternative means of travel, for example use air travel • Schedule adequate rest breaks – every 2 hours if possible • Make sure workers know where rest stops are located 	
<p>Time pressures</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reschedule or re-assign trip to driver with more time • Revise work schedules to ensure adequate trip time 	
<p>Stranded</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Road closures • Vehicle breakdown 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make sure workers know working alone (check-in) and emergency procedures. For example, make sure they know to stay with their vehicle. • Distribute Winter Driving Survival Checklist 	
<p>Motor vehicle incident</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Single motor vehicle incident, for example sliding off of road • Multi vehicle incident 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make sure workers understand road safety incident procedures 	

WEATHER AND ROAD CONDITIONS

Hazard	Actions to eliminate or minimize risk of incident	Notes
<p>Changing weather conditions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Winter weather expected (snow, freezing temperatures, ice, mist, fog and/or rain) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cancel or re-schedule trips • Check road and weather conditions as often as necessary to keep on top of changing conditions • If workers must drive, remind them to check DriveBC.ca before setting out • Conduct weather-related Toolbox Talks • Distribute weather-related Capsule Tips 	
<p>Challenging road types and surfaces</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wet, black ice, snow, slush • Rapidly varying traction areas (due to sun/shade) • Slopes or steep grades • Sharp bends • Exposed bridges • Low-lying roads (flooding) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cancel or re-schedule trips • Re-route trips to stay on major routes which may be better maintained, and avoid roads that can be hazardous in winter conditions • Install winter tires; supply chains if necessary • Ensure vehicles are equipped for driving in winter weather conditions • Ensure workers understand winter driving hazards • Ensure workers are trained and prepared in how to drive for winter conditions 	