



Since the inception of ICRMP in 1985, our most frequent cause of Property/Casualty claims has been auto claims. No other claim category comes close. The bad news: auto crashes are frequent and severe for Idaho local government agencies. The good news is that auto crashes can be reduced by focusing on safe driving!

### Winter Driving

Winter driving calls for special skills. On slippery roads, the keys to safety are slower speeds, gentler stops and turns, and longer following distances. Here are some safe-driving tips that will help you when roads are slick with ice or snow:

- ❄ Keep your vehicle in the best possible driving condition. The lights, tires, brakes, windshield wipers, defroster, and radiator are especially important for winter driving.
- ❄ Keep your windows clear. Don't start driving until the windows are defrosted and clean – even if you're going only a short distance. Keep your windshield washer reservoir filled with a non-freezing solution all winter.
- ❄ For safety reasons, you should not use cruise control if the road is wet and/or icy.
- ❄ Buckle up.
- ❄ Get the feel of the road by starting out slowly and testing your steering control and braking ability. Avoid spinning your tires when you start by gently pressing your gas pedal until the car starts to roll. Start slowing your car down at least three times sooner than you normally do when turning or stopping.
- ❄ When stopping, avoid sudden movements of the steering wheel and pump the brake gently. If your vehicle has anti-lock brakes, you may apply steady pressure to the brake pedal.
- ❄ Use tire chains on very slippery roads.
- ❄ Be aware of potential icy areas such as shady spots, bridges, and overpasses. Ice may form sooner or remain on bridges and overpasses longer, since they are exposed on their undersides and are deprived of ground warmth.

Use extra caution when encountering snow removal equipment; snow plow blades force snow up and off the road, potentially causing blizzard-like conditions and reduced visibility for drivers following too closely.

*Source: From Idaho Drivers Manual (2014)*

#### **Discuss:**

1. Have you or someone you know had a "close call" while driving in winter?
2. Share winter driving tips and techniques that work for you.