

Press Release

Greene County Combined Health District

A Safe Communities Grantee of Ohio Department of Public Safety, Ohio Criminal Justice Services-Traffic Safety Division

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Tune-up your car and driving skills as winter weather arrives in Ohio

(Xenia, OH) – You drive over a patch of black ice. Do you know what to do? Your tires are bald, it’s icy outside. Is it safe to drive? Your car breaks down in a desolate area. Do you have the proper items in your vehicle to survive? Being prepared for winter weather also pertains to your vehicle and knowing how to drive in blustery weather.

“Winter weather has definitely arrived in Greene County. If you must be out during severe winter weather, knowing how to operate your vehicle can help you arrive safely at your destination,” said Laurie Fox, Greene County Safe Communities Coordinator. “Make sure your vehicle is in proper working order before heading out, and have a safety kit in the vehicle in the event of an emergency.”

Make sure you get a car winter tune-up now, prior to severe winter weather if possible. Tune-ups should include:

- ❖ Tire check - consider snow- or all-season tires if tread is worn
- ❖ Battery test – you don’t want to be stranded in severe weather
- ❖ Wiper blades check and replacement, if needed
- ❖ Radiator, engine and all fluid levels check
- ❖ Brake line and pad inspection
- ❖ Headlight, brake light and turn signal inspections

Prepare a winter emergency kit for each vehicle and keep it in the trunk. Kits should include:

- ❖ Two blankets or sleeping bags
- ❖ Waterproof matches and candles
- ❖ Extra clothing – especially boots, mittens and hats
- ❖ Dry food rations, like raisins, nuts and candy
- ❖ Flashlight with spare batteries
- ❖ First-aid kit and a supply of necessary medications
- ❖ Emergency flares
- ❖ An extra gallon of window washer fluid in the trunk
- ❖ An extra cell phone battery and vehicle charger – if a cell phone isn’t available, keep pocket change for pay phone use
- ❖ A brightly colored cloth for use as a signal for assistance
- ❖ A steel shovel and rope to use as a lifeline
- ❖ A few large plastic garbage bags – which take little space, but could be used as insulation to block the wind if forced to leave a stranded vehicle

Some tips to keep in mind while traveling in winter:

- ❖ Check weather reports prior to departing and allow extra travel time for weather and/or traffic delays.
- ❖ Know how your vehicle reacts on slick roads...front-wheel drive vehicles generally handle better than rear-wheel drive.
- ❖ If the vehicle is equipped with an **Anti-lock Braking System (ABS)**, be sure to **STOMP** (firmly depress brake pedal), **STAY** (on the brakes – don't pump brakes) and **STEER** (where you want the vehicle to go).
- ❖ With ABS, it's normal to hear noise and feel the brake pedal vibrate while applying continual pressure.
- ❖ Clear all windows (inside and out), head-, tail-, brake- and backup lights and turn signals.
- ❖ Allow ample stopping distance between you and the car ahead of your vehicle – stopping time and distance increase greatly on wet and slippery surfaces.
- ❖ Stay alert for "black ice" and other slippery road surfaces on bridges.
- ❖ If severe weather is possible, it's best to stay off the roads. If you must leave, be sure to advise those at your destination of a departure time, anticipated arrival time, and the planned travel route. Also provide a cell phone number in case they need to contact you.

Enjoy the snow and winter season by being prepared for snow and ice. Drive safely and always remember to buckle up.

For further information on ways you can stay safe on the roads this winter, visit the Ohio Department of Transportation at www.ohio.gov.