



NEWS RELEASE

Today's Date: October 30, 2014
District: 10 - Stockton
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

WINTER DRIVING TIPS

Stockton- Severe weather can be alarming and hazardous for drivers. The best defense is not to venture out on the roads during stormy weather, but if you must drive, use caution, common sense, and always be prepared.

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) District 10 advises motorists to prepare for the upcoming storm season. Harsh weather can bring high winds, heavy rains, and snow and ice in higher elevations. Winter weather and road conditions can change rapidly. Before winter, drivers should have their vehicle winterized. Important items to check on your vehicle are: brakes, coolant, tires, windshield wipers, defroster, heater, and exhaust systems. If possible have your vehicle checked by a professional mechanic.

In California's Central Valley dense tule fog can blanket the area's highways, especially during the months of November through January. This fog can catch you by surprise, as it hangs in the low-lying valley bottoms and can cause dramatic changes in visibility. When encountering fog, follow these tips:

- Reduce speed to allow for safe stopping distance
- Drive with headlights on low beam, never drive with just parking or fog lights.
- Use extreme caution when crossing traffic or busy intersections.
- Lower your window and listen for traffic you cannot see.
- Use windshield wipers and the defroster to improve visibility.
- Be patient! Do not pass lines of traffic.
- If visibility diminishes to the point that you no longer feel safe driving, do not stop in the traffic lanes.
- Attempt to utilize the closest off-ramp so you can stop at a safe location and wait for the fog to clear.

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All vehicles, including those with four-wheel drive or snow tires should carry correctly sized chains when traveling during snowy weather. Highway signs will indicate if chains are required. If motorists do not have chains in their possession, they may not be allowed to proceed and risk being cited or fined.

Motorists should check road conditions frequently. For State operated highways this can be done in a number of ways: visit the Caltrans website at www.dot.ca.gov to get road conditions, weekly road reports and press releases by district; check information through the automated California Highway Information Network (CHIN) by telephoning 1-800- 427-7623 (1-800-GAS-ROAD) and following the prompts; motorists can also tune to the Caltrans Highway Advisory Radio (HAR), which broadcasts road conditions on low frequency radio transmitters located along some mountain highways.

During winter storm conditions, motorists should anticipate unexpected delays and closures. Caltrans strives to reduce the frequency and the length of unplanned closures on state highways. During major storms when traffic flow is heavy, Caltrans may meter traffic to ease congestion.

The following tips will assist you in making your winter driving experience safe and pleasant:

- Allow enough time for your trip.
- Be observant of everything going on around you.
- Remember – black ice is nearly invisible!
- Keep your fuel tank full and your windows clear.
- Drive as conditions permit – slower acceleration, slower speeds, and slower braking in winter conditions.
- Reduce speed and leave extra room between you and the vehicle in front of you.
- Use headlights, not just parking or fog lights in foggy, rainy, and snowy weather. Also remember that you must have your lights on when using your wipers.
- If you get stuck, stay with your vehicle and wait for help.
- If visibility diminishes to the point that you no longer feel safe driving, do not stop in the traffic lanes.

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For the safety of workers and other motorists, please Slow For the Cone Zone.

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