

...Winter Weather Preparedness Week Across New England And New York...
...Today's Topic, Winter Driving Safety...

All of the New England states as well as the state of New York, in partnership with the National Weather Service offices in these respective states, have designated this week as Winter Weather Preparedness Week.

If you have not already done so, now is the time to get yourself and your property prepared for the winter season.

Law enforcement and the National Weather Service recommend curtailing all unnecessary travel during inclement weather.

Driving conditions can become treacherous during the winter months with about 70 percent of all wintertime deaths due to traffic accidents on slippery roads. When the amount of snow or ice is particularly heavy or falls in a short period of time, roads may be impassable and closed to traffic. However, even the slightest amount of snow or freezing rain on a previously bare road can make for extremely treacherous travel.

If you do venture out, make sure you know the conditions of the roadways before you travel. Always drive defensively and cautiously. Maintain a slow and steady speed, avoiding sudden stops and starts. Keep alert and be prepared to handle the unexpected.

Keep a winter storm kit in the trunk of your car in case you get stranded. Some supplies you may want to include are blankets, non-perishable foods like nuts, protein, health or candy bars, flares, a shovel, a bag of sand, tire chains, a flashlight, a windshield scraper, booster cables, portable car jump starter.

If you do get stranded, stay with your vehicle and do not venture outside into the elements. By having a winter safety kit, you will have adequate supplies while awaiting assistance. Also, run the motor every 10 minutes each hour for heat, but make sure that the exhaust pipe is not blocked. Open the window slightly to avoid carbon monoxide poisoning. Make yourself visible with flares or lights. Keep moving your arms and legs to keep your blood circulating and to stay warm.

Local and state highway departments are out in force when winter precipitation arrives in an effort to make your journey a safer one. You can help by being prepared and staying off the roads unless traveling is essential.

Stay informed by listening to NOAA Weather Radio All Hazards and other weather sources. If you have internet capabilities, check weather.gov, then click on Vermont.