



MISSISSIPPI STATE UNIVERSITY™  
MS AGRICULTURAL AND FORESTRY  
EXPERIMENT STATION

# MAFES DAWG TRACKS

Happy New Year everybody! It sounds like we may get a little snow soon. But even if we don't, there will be freezing temperatures. All our Yankee friends say we Southerners are bad winter drivers, and granted, they aren't necessarily wrong.

Our biggest hazard in the south seems to be black ice. With crazy temperatures that can range from 60 to 10 degrees within a 24-hour span, any wet areas on the road can quickly freeze resulting in black ice. This, seemingly, invisible ice on the pavement is most prevalent on bridges, over-passes, and shaded road areas. It is also a concern when winter weather varies ... during the day sun is out melting snow/ice, but then the road areas that are still wet can easily re-freezes at night as temperatures drop.

While staying inside & off the roadway is best during harsh winter conditions, it is not always possible.

## Be safe if out driving in winter weather by following a few tips:

- ✓ Turn on your headlights to be more visible to another motorist.
- ✓ Avoid using the cruise control.
- ✓ Slow down. It's harder to control your vehicle on a slick or snow-covered surface.

- ✓ Increase your following distance enough so that you'll have plenty of time to stop for vehicles ahead of you.
- ✓ Brake early and gently to avoid skidding and never slam on the brakes.

## Be Prepared before you go on the road.

- ✓ Keep your gas tank close to full whenever possible.
- ✓ When the temperature drops, it's hard on vehicle batteries. A battery already toward the end of its life-cycle may not have the power needed to crank when temperatures drop. Also, electric and hybrid-electric vehicles' driving range will be reduced, especially running the heater.
- ✓ Make sure the heater, defroster and windshield wipers work properly.
- ✓ Carry items in your vehicle to handle common winter driving-related tasks, and supplies you might need in an emergency, including:
  - windshield scraper,
  - jumper cables, flashlight,
  - blankets for protection from the cold,
  - a cell phone charger & USB cord,
  - water, food, and any necessary medicine.

For more info contact:  
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## Sources:

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