



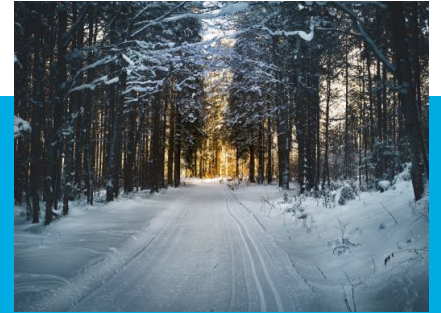
John Meola's Safety First! Safety Meeting Topics for WSA Members



November Safety Info

- Take Care re: Stress of Approaching Holidays
- Winter Cold Weather Precautions
- Deer Season — Extra Caution on Rural Roads
- Weather Turning Cooler — Acclimate, Adjust, Hydrate
- Vehicle Dynamics in Cold Weather
- Load Carrying Advice
- Slip & Fall Cautions

EXTRA CARE, COMPASSION, NEEDED DURING HOLIDAYS



- Thanksgiving is only a few weeks away. Along with shorter days....
- Generally, stress levels increase around the holidays, for myriad reasons
- Empathy is a highly prized attribute, particularly in these times.
- There are multiple reasons for us to be thankful, even in adversity.
- All persons handle stress differently. From irritant to trauma level, try to keep a balanced view. Stress can be managed.
- Counselors generally advise to talk out an issue before it gets 'under the skin'.
- Confide in a trusted person to balance out an issue.

PREPARE FOR THE APPROACHING WINTER

- The science is unclear but if the past 10 years are a guide the snow shovel will stay mostly under the deck.
- We may not get a 'pass' entirely. The freeze-thaw cycle is actually more treacherous and destructive overall. We are still learning to adapt.
- Highway drainage structure maintenance is critical, esp. on bridges, grades, turns, etc.
- DOTs generally do a good job, but all drivers need to learn what to look for. Defensive driving measures in icy rain conditions for example.
- On the roads: Snow-birds; inexperienced and distracted drivers, 4WD SUV's on their roofs

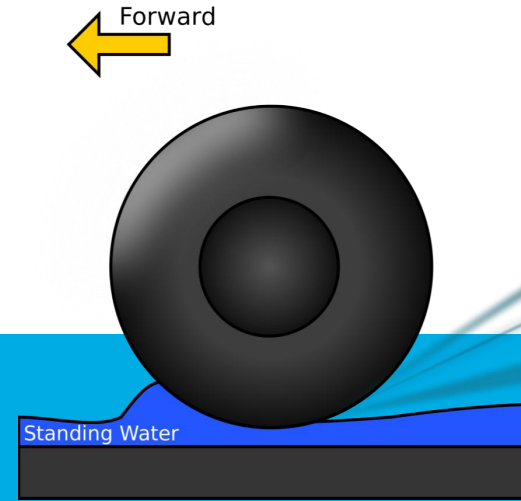


DEER SEASON



- Deer can show up practically anyplace, any time and are naturally camouflaged. Hard to see even in daylight.
- The hazard is two-fold: the risk of hitting the animal is first, followed by you or other drivers swerving to avoid the carcass. Or for that matter, any object in the road.
- **If you see a deer and avoid it, be aware there are usually others in the vicinity.**
- Avoid the reactive tendency to make a sudden 'swerve'. This can result in a far worse outcome than a deer collision.
- Leave ample space (4 seconds) to vehicle ahead.
- If you see sudden brake lights on vehicles ahead of you, immediately back it down. They may have seen or hit one.
- **Infrastructure makes a difference.** 2 lane undivided roads require extreme caution. Moderate speed to stay close to posted limit; shorter daylight hours –keep headlight lens clean; use high beam courteously.

VEHICLE DYNAMICS IN COLD WEATHER



- An empty or lightly loaded truck is less stable on compromised surfaces, i.e., tendency to hydroplane, less braking friction; steering on gravel , etc.
- In most driving environments, this is not a big deal — until it becomes a big deal.
- In cold temps, allow vehicle to warm up the cab a bit.
- Avoid bulky garments while driving. NO HOODIES! They impair peripheral vision.
- Carry spare washer fluid; ice-scraper, snow broom and de-frost/de-ice glass before driving.
- If using 4 WD on highways, decrease travel speed proportionately
- Bridge decks and flyovers will freeze long before the roadway—overnight typically
- In snow, ice, sleet, rain –SLOW DOWN well before you need to take a turn. Avoid braking in a turn.

WINTER: HAND & FINGER CARE

- *Best Practice:* a few minutes of light-gauge calisthenics before carrying gear, swinging a tool, etc. 'Limber up'!
- Blood flow to muscles is important for walking, stand, lift, carry, reach, grasp, etc. Dexterity is reduced in cold.
- Dry skin is slippery-select the best grip type glove for the job,including driving a vehicle, tool handling, etc.
- Range of motion is restricted by bulky garments. Dress in several light layers for best insulation from cold.
- The body will begin a period of adjustment as seasonal temps cool down. Stay properly hydrated, maintain regular sleep interval,keep a balanced diet.
- Be aware of upper body weight, positioning, balance, equilibrium, on uneven surface, slope, crossing ditch line, etc.
- When possible, break a load down to smaller units. Or get some help. Or reconfigure the activity. **DO NOT PUSH IT!**

SLIP AND FALL AVOIDANCE

- **Check your footwear. Worn edges – soles & heels – have less ‘grip’. On compromised surfaces, this can lead to SLIP, loss of balance.**
- **Use the proper type of boot for site & weather conditions. High top lace-up for best lower leg and foot stability.**
- **Be aware of upper body weight, positioning, balance, equilibrium, on uneven surface, slope, crossing ditch line, etc.**
- **Use appropriate caution when carrying heavy or awkward loads on uneven terrain.**
- **When possible, break a load down to smaller units. Or get some help. Or reconfigure the activity. DO NOT PUSH IT!**
- **Soft tissue injury – i.e., strain, sprain, pinched nerve, etc. is avoidable.**