

## **STAYING PREPARED:**

### **Venturing Out into a Severe Winter Storm**

Before venturing out into a severe winter storm, ask yourself if it is really necessary for you to be doing so. Keeping streets and roadways clear of snow is only as good as the number of vehicles on them at the time or are stuck in a place that makes snow removal difficult. So, avoid driving in severe winter storms if at all possible.

If it is an absolute necessity to be on the road during a severe winter storm there are a few things you can do to be prepared:

- Ensure your car has been serviced (including tires checked) and ready for winter weather.
- Develop a fuel plan that ensures you will never be on the 'road' with less than a half-tank.
- Review the steps for changing a flat tire (which includes actually locating the tools needed for changing the tire)

Put on clothes for the weather, dressing in loose-fitting, light-weight, warm clothing in several layers (including gloves/mittens, and headwear). Be prepared while traveling to remove layers to avoid overheating, and put more layers back on if you get chilled.

Before leaving the house, tune in to the latest weather information so you will know where and what you will be facing while driving.

If you have a vehicle outside covered in snow and ice, take the time to remove as much snow off the vehicle as possible before driving. Do not forget to remove the snow pack sitting on the hood, roof, and trunk lid before moving. That snow you ignore there becomes a blizzard to the car behind you while you drive.

Start your car and allow it to warm up, and along with warming up the inside for comfortable travel, it also gets heat to your windshield defroster system.

While your vehicle engine is warming, thoroughly scrape the ice off the windshield and windows front, back and sides, so there is no chance of visual obstruction while driving. This also gives your windshield wipers a fighting chance to work with road splatter, or when the snow sitting atop the car driving in front of you blows off and engulfs your vehicle. When you have that snow and ice removed, also do a once over the head and tail lights to remove snow, ice, or mud that may have encased them.

Place your vehicle emergency kit from its usual storage and place it inside your vehicle so you can get to it without venturing outside.

Listen on the vehicle radio station broadcasting while driving for the latest weather information to keep informed on the conditions around you.

Also, remember your travel in a severe winter storm can take you from 4 to 10 times longer than normal, so start early and take your time to get to where you want to go safely.

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On behalf of the 'Preparedness Volunteer Group' of Volunteer Partners