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ASSOCIATION OF  
NURSERIES

# Safety ALERT!

An important safety bulletin from the OAN Safety Committee

January 2009

## *Safe Driving in Inclement Weather*

*-Eleventh in a series*

### ***Snow, Ice, Rain... Oh My!!***

According to SAIF Corporation, motor vehicle accidents remain the most serious type of accident an agricultural operation can sustain. After our recent snow storm in Oregon, it is time to plan ahead for the next cold weather event. Whether for your daily commute, traveling, or employees on the road, here are tips for safe driving in inclement weather.

### ***Winter Driving***

When driving in inclement weather it is key to remember to slow down and allow plenty of time to arrive at your destination. If the weather is icy or snowing, perhaps a delayed start time will help to get your employees safely to your worksite. An hour or two delayed start will only cause a minimal dent in your production, but allow roads to be cleared or melt and employees can arrive safely.

Two of the biggest causes of bad weather condition accidents are not allowing sufficient stop time and being in too big of a hurry... **SLOW-DOWN!** The key to driving in inclement weather is smooth, slow and steady movements. It is especially important to slow-down in advance of curves, bridges and shaded areas, as these have more potential for slippery and icy conditions. Keep distance

between you and other cars to allow time to stop, if necessary. Use your brake and turn signals in advance of turns or stops to warn other drivers. Also, avoid over-steering or braking while turning.

Gradually slow-down and do not apply the brakes too fast or hard. Staying off your brakes and adjusting your speed with the accelerator is the best solution for slowing the vehicle. Always be prepared for sliding or hydroplaning as both hands should be kept on the steering wheel. If you need to take a phone call, be sure to pull safely off the road.

If your vehicle does begin to slide, it is important to remain calm and focused. Steer the vehicle in the direction of the skid, keeping off the brakes as much as possible. Look in the direction that you want the car to go.

### ***Be Prepared***

Before you drive in inclement weather, winterize your vehicle. Ensure that the vehicle is in proper working order, including working brakes, proper tire inflation, and adequate tread on tires. Check that windows and mirrors are clean. Windshield fluid is an important tool for maintaining visibility when those messy roads begin to thaw, check that the reservoir is filled. It is important to carry

traction devices and know how to install them.

Before you head out on the road know the weather conditions. If severe weather conditions are expected, perhaps delaying your trip would be best. If you must depart, be prepared with some essentials in case you get stuck along the way.

- Traction devices
- Shovel
- Flashlight
- Gloves & warm clothes
- Deicing fluid, ice scraper
- First aid kit
- Water and food
- Blankets

➤ Cell phone

Keep your family and employees safe when inclement weather occurs. Drive with smooth, slow and steady movements to prevent slipping and sliding. A little preparation now can help prevent you from getting stuck in the cold.

Respectfully,

Laurie Rogers-Roach  
Fisher Farms  
OAN Safety Committee Member

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*The OAN safety committee is looking for new committee members. The committee is a great way for people to learn new OSHA rules, new ideas on safety training and to network with other nursery people involved with safety programs. The committee meets 6 times per year at the OAN office in Wilsonville. If you or anyone else at your nursery is interested in becoming involved, please contact Krista Jeli at the OAN at 503-682-5089 or email [kjeli@oan.org](mailto:kjeli@oan.org).*

**Additional Resources:**

- OAN online safety resources: <http://www.oan.org/displaycommon.cfm?an=1&subarticlenbr=69>
- Your workers compensation insurance provider and/or broker
- Oregon OSHA: <http://www.orosha.org/> or at (503) 378-3272



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