

November 14, 2023

# Rainy Weather Driving

AJK&A Family,

Starting tomorrow and the next few days, we will experience our first rainstorms for the season. I just wanted to pass on some tips for driving in the rain.

Safety starts before you drive, and your goal should be to see and be seen. Replace worn windshield wiper blades. Make sure all headlights, taillights, brake lights and turn signals are properly functioning so other drivers will see you during downpours. Turn on your headlights whenever you drive.

Proper tire tread depth and inflation are imperative to maintaining good traction on wet roadways. Check tread depth with a quarter inserted upside down into the tire groove. If you can see above Washington's head, start shopping for new tires. Check each tire's pressure, including the spare, at least once a month... and be sure to check the pressure when the tires are cold.

## **Avoid Cruise Control**

Most modern cars feature cruise control. This feature works great in dry conditions, but when used in wet conditions, the chance of losing control of the vehicle can increase. To prevent loss of traction, the driver may need to reduce the car's speed by lifting off the accelerator, which cannot be accomplished when cruise control is engaged.

When driving in wet weather conditions, it is important to concentrate fully on every aspect of driving. Avoiding cruise control will allow the driver more options to choose from when responding to a potential loss-of-traction situation, thus maximizing your safety.

## **Slow Down and Leave Room**

Slowing down during wet weather driving can be critical to reducing a car's chance of hydroplaning, when the tires rise up on a film of water. With as little as 1/2 inch of water on the road, tires must displace a gallon of water per second to keep the rubber meeting the road. Drivers should reduce their speed to correspond to the amount of water on the roadway. At speeds as low as 35 mph, new tires can still lose some contact with the roadway. Try to drive in the middle lanes of traffic if possible, to avoid large puddles on the side of the road.

To reduce chances of hydroplaning, drivers should slow down, avoid hard braking or turning sharply and drive in the tracks of the vehicle ahead of you. Also, it's important for motorists to allow ample stopping distance between cars by increasing the following distance of the vehicle in front of them and beginning to slow down to stop for intersections, turns and other traffic early.

## **If your Car Hydroplanes**

The best way to stop hydroplaning is to **take your foot off the gas**. Do not brake or attempt to steer. Most of the time, hydroplaning lasts for only a second or two. If you do hit the brakes out of pure instinct, ease up on the brakes until it's over.

## **Responding to a Skid**

Even careful drivers can experience skids. If a driver feels their car begin to skid, it's important to not panic and follow these basic steps:

- Continue to look and steer in the direction in which the driver wants the car to go.
- Avoid slamming on the brakes as this will further upset the vehicle's balance and make it harder to control.

If you feel the car begin to skid, continue to look and steer in the direction you want the car to go. Don't panic and avoid slamming on the brakes to maintain control.

Overall, you want to be extra cautious in wet weather. Slow down, avoid hard braking or turning sharply and allow ample stopping distance between you and the cars in front of you. Also, do these things one at a time. Brake, then turn, then accelerate.

Remember to always leave for work or personal things earlier than usual to account for accidents and slower driving. Take your time, avoid road rage and get to work safely.

Drive safe out there!

## **Safety Steve**



### **Steven Dietzel – *Safety Manager***

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