the fuelcard people

7 WET WEATHER DRIVING TIPS

WHAT TO DO IF YOUR CAR SKIDS

If your car starts to skid, resist the natural instinct to slam on the brakes, which could lock your wheels and make the situation worse eliminating any control you have over your vehicle. Instead, regain control by steering in the direction of the skid while pumping your brakes to gradually reduce speed. If your car has antilock brakes apply steady, even pressure to the brake pedal and avoid pumping them.

WHAT TO DO IF YOUR CAR STARTS TO AQUAPLANE

If you feel the car starting to aquaplane, where all four wheels lose contact between the tyre and the road, don't brake abruptly or turn the wheel. Instead, release the accelerator slowly and steer straight until the car regains traction. If you must brake, lightly apply pressure to the brake pedal. If your vehicle has antilock brakes, apply steady pressure to the brake pedal. You can help reduce the likelihood of aquaplaning by following the "tracks" made by the vehicle in front of you: just don't follow too closely.

USE CAUTION WHEN CROSSING RUNNING WATER

Flowing water can quickly move your car, even a 4x4. It is often safer to turn back and find another route rather than taking a chance. Also, if you cannot tell how deep a puddle or standing water is, choose a different route or drive around it, as there could potentially be a deep pothole underneath, which is something you don't want to find out the hard way.

MAKE YOURSELF MORE VISIBLE

Even if you don't need them to see the road, your headlights will make your vehicle more noticeable to other drivers. A good rule to follow is if your wipers are on, your lights should be as well. Even better, always put on your headlights during any sort of precipitation to let others see you better, including pedestrians.

MAINTAIN A SAFE DISTANCE

While tailgating is not a good idea in any weather, it's especially dangerous when roads are wet. Never tailgate during a rainstorm: it can take up to three times the distance usually required to stop your car when road surfaces are wet. Use caution when approaching trucks and buses, as the spray created by their tyres can reduce visibility - both yours and theirs - and pass as quickly as possible when conditions safely allow.

PREPARE YOUR CAR FOR WET WEATHER

Check your windshield wipers to see if they need replacing and check your tyres to be sure they are in good condition. Keep your petrol tank at least half full to avoid petrol line freeze-up. Carry a supply of salt, sand or even cat litter, as these materials can come in handy if you get stuck. If you do get stuck, place some of the materials around the drive wheels to help gain traction and slowly accelerate. If you live in an especially snowy climate, consider keeping a small shovel in your vehicle to remove snow from around the tyres to help gain traction. If the forecast calls for freezing rain, take extra precaution, even to the point of not making the drive.

SLOW DOWN AND STAY SAFE

Driving in wet weather presents challenges, but they are not impossible. Here's a simple rule to remember: increased speed increases the risks. Brake earlier and more gradually than you would normally. Plan to drive at a slower pace when roads are wet and remember traffic is more likely to be moving slowly as well, so you'll need more time to arrive at your destination. If it's raining so hard you can't see the road or cars in front of you, pull over and wait for the precipitation to lessen. If they are calling for icy conditions stay home if possible. By being aware of the road conditions, reducing speed, and preparing for challenging situations you'll greatly reduce the likelihood of a wet weather accident.