



City of Yakima

News Release

Subject: Winter Weather Driving Tips

Contact: Communications & Public Affairs Director Randy Beehler – 901-1142

Release Date: Thursday, December 19th, 2019

Winter Weather Means More Cautious Driving

As Yakima experiences its first significant weather event this winter, emergency responders encourage drivers to follow some simple safety measures to avoid being involved in an accident.

“The most obvious tip for driving in winter weather is to slow down,” said Communications & Public Affairs Director Randy Beehler. “Simply driving more slowly than normal increases the chance that you’ll be able to avoid being involved in an accident. Slow and cautious are the two most important words to remember when driving in winter weather conditions,” said Beehler.

Increasing the following distance between you and the car in front of you is also a simple but highly effective way to avoid accidents when snow and ice are covering roadways. A good measure of thumb regarding following distance is five to six seconds.

Braking with firm, steady pressure applied by the ball of your foot can keep your car brakes from locking up. When brakes lock up, your car is likely to slide on a road covered in snow and ice.

Drivers are also encouraged to avoid driving up or down steep hills in winter conditions. If you have to drive up a hill, apply the gas pedal slowly and consistently. Avoid sudden changes in the amount of power being applied to the wheels and you will avoid spinning your tires. Similarly, when going down a hill on ice and snow it is important to not apply brakes. Applying brakes can result in tires slipping.

Applying power to a vehicle’s wheels should be done slowly and consistently to help keep them from slipping on flat roadways as well.

When three inches of snow has accumulated, the City of Yakima will issue Snow Route Alerts and begin to deploy plows. Click <https://www.yakimawa.gov/apps/snow-routes/> for a map of the City of Yakima’s snow routes, along which cars may be towed if plows need to get through during winter storms. The map also shows the priority for citywide snow plow routes when storms drop at least three inches of snow.

“The bottom line when driving in winter weather conditions is to take your time, be aware of vehicles around you, and pay attention to road conditions,” said Beehler. “Following a few simple safe driving tips will ensure that we all get where we need to get safely.”