



SHERIFF'S OFFICE

A TRADITION OF SERVICE SINCE 1856

San Mateo County Sheriff's Office
Public Information Office
400 County Center
Redwood City, CA 94063
Detective Rosemerry Blankswade
650-363-4800 (office)
650-421-1243 (cell)
pio@smcgov.org

NEWS RELEASE

Reminders For Driving In Inclement Weather

The rainy season is upon us. The San Mateo County Sheriff's Office wants motorists to be prepared to drive during wet conditions. Please read the following tips for driving in inclement weather.

1. **Exercise extreme caution after a long dry spell.** Engine oil and grease build up on the roadways. New rainfall can cause the road to be extremely slick.
2. **Allow for more travel time.** You should plan to drive at a slower pace than normal when the roads are wet. Keep in mind that traffic is likely to be moving slower as well. There's also the possibility that your preplanned route may be flooded or jammed. Whatever the case, rushing equals a higher risk.
3. **Drive slowly and carefully, especially while making turning movements.** Steer and brake with smooth inputs. Brake earlier and with less force than you would normally. Not only does this increase the stopping distance between you and the car in front of you, it also lets the driver behind you know that you're slowing down. When you need to stop or slow, do not brake hard and risk a skid that may cause you to lose control of your vehicle.
4. **Avoid hydroplaning by keeping your tires inflated correctly.** Replace worn tires. Worn tires provide less traction especially when driving on wet roadways. Slow down when roads are wet and stay away from puddles. If you find yourself hydroplaning, do not brake suddenly or turn the wheel. This could throw your car into a skid. Release the gas pedal slowly and steer straight until the car regains traction. If you must brake, do it gently.
5. **Don't use cruise control.** Cruise control also allows drivers to be less vigilant and to take their foot away from the pedals – not a great idea when reaction time is so important.
6. **Turn on your headlights, even when there's a light sprinkle.** It helps you see the road, and more importantly, it helps other motorists see you. However, using your high beams in the rain or fog will obscure your view further and having your headlights off during inclement weather is illegal.
7. **Watch out for pedestrians.** An ordinarily observant pedestrian may become distracted by umbrellas or trying to avoid a puddle and rain obscures people's ability to hear oncoming cars. Keep a sharp lookout for people in the road.

Now that you know how to drive in the rain, take some precautionary measures to ensure that your vehicle is prepared to get you through a downpour.

- Stay on top of your car's condition. Brakes, tire pressures, tire tread depth, and defroster operation should be checked regularly so that you'll be ready to deal with heavy rain when the time comes.
- Make sure that your wipers are in good condition and functioning properly. If the blades are brittle or damaged, replace them before you're caught in a downpour. Some wipers are definitely better than others, so ask your retailer for recommendations.

Release Date: October 1st, 2018

