

Adjusting to Weather Conditions

A SAFETY TALK FOR DISCUSSION LEADERS

This safety talk is designed for discussion leaders to use in preparing safety meetings.

Set a specific time and date for your safety meeting. Publicize your meeting so everyone involved will be sure to attend.

Review this safety talk before the meeting and become familiar with its content. Make notes about the points made in this talk that pertain to your workplace. You should be able to present the material in your own words and lead the discussion without reading it.

Seating space is not absolutely necessary, but arrangements should be made so that those attending can easily see and hear the presentation.

Collect whatever materials and props you will need ahead of time. Try to use equipment in your workplace to demonstrate your points.

DURING THE MEETING

Give the safety talk in your own words. Use the printed talk merely as a guide.

The purpose of a safety meeting is to initiate discussion of safety problems and provide solutions to those problems. Encourage employees to discuss hazards or potential hazards they encounter on the job. Ask them to suggest ways to improve safety in their area.

Don't let the meeting turn into a gripe session about unrelated topics. As discussion leader, it's your job to make sure the topic is safety. Discussing other topics wastes time and can ruin the effectiveness of your safety meeting.

At the end of the meeting, ask employees to sign a sheet on the back of this talk as a record that they attended the safety meeting. Keep this talk on file for your records.

Adjusting to Weather Conditions

Professional drivers often talk about equipment, traffic conditions and the weather. But because weather is the most unpredictable and uncontrollable of these circumstances, good winter driving habits are a must. When roads are slippery, drivers must look farther ahead so they can anticipate emergencies and avoid the need for sudden maneuvers. Most skids are caused by last-second stops and turns on slick pavement. Adjust your speed and increase your care when approaching intersections and traffic signals.

Take extra caution on hills. Brake over the tops of blind hills so you can bring your vehicle to a stop if necessary. When going downhill, both gravity and loss of traction are working against you; so be careful. Pre-trip inspections are important before driving in bad weather; it is especially necessary to be aware of your brakes. Because of synthetic air lines drivers of newer trucks with air brakes must take care to protect their air supply in freezing weather. If vehicles are not equipped to automatically expel water and contaminants from the air tanks, the driver must manually drain the air tanks every day.

Professional drivers must be familiar with the equipment they are operating and know about varying axle weights. They must also watch for changes in road surfaces, especially at city limits and county and state lines. No matter how well you know the road you are traveling, it is dangerous when there is sleet, snow or ice on the roadway. So, reduce your speed on slippery roads.

Do not attempt to drive around or through an area where other vehicles have had trouble with the road conditions, because the road may be blocked. When there is no room to pass through, be prepared to stop.

During the winter months, snow- and ice-covered truck lots are prevalent in all sections of the state. Good drivers will allow more clearance between their vehicles and other vehicles or fixed objects when maneuvering on bad surfaces.

Failure to provide adequate clearance can be dangerous, because a pile of snow or an ice rut may throw a vehicle off just enough to cause it to hit a stationary object.

Foul weather driving is strenuous enough, so driving in a closed cab with the heater running is not recommended. It is too comfortable and relaxing; this can reduce your reflex capabilities.

Drivers need to rest before every trip, and while enroute, fresh air helps keep them alert. An open window is one of the oldest safety practices, and it helps drivers hear what is going on around their vehicles.

After all precautions are maintained there will still be occasions when conditions become too hazardous to proceed. A good driver will pull off the road at the first safe place, notify the company of the delay and wait until conditions improve before proceeding.