



Winter Storm & Driving Safety

Reliable transportation is a must in the winter. One should acquire a healthy respect for cold weather. Your cell phone is great to have, but it may not be reliable in a storm or your battery life may be short. The following precautions may help you avoid an unpleasant or dangerous situation while traveling.

In addition to winterizing your vehicle, you should carry a winter storm kit. The kit should contain:

IF A BLIZZARD TRAPS YOU IN YOUR VEHICLE:

- sleeping bags or blankets
- matches and candles
- winter clothing
- Food
- first-aid kit
- pocket knife
- Flashlight
- radio with extra batteries for each
- a bag of sand and shovel
- tire chains and tools
- windshield scraper
- battery jumper cables
- two coffee cans

Small supplies can be kept in the coffee cans and when you are stranded, one can be used for personal sanitation needs and the other to burn the candles in for heat. When burning a candle, leave a down-wind window slightly open for air circulation and ventilation. Carbon monoxide poisoning can happen without the victim being aware of it until it's too late.

Being stuck or stranded in a South Dakota winter storm can become a question of survival. It's serious business and you and your vehicle must be prepared.

- **Stay in the vehicle.** Do not attempt to walk in a blizzard. Disorientation comes quickly in blowing and drifting snow. Being lost in open country during a blizzard is extremely dangerous. You are more likely to be found in your vehicle and you will be sheltered there.
- **Avoid overexertion and exposure.** Exertions from attempting to push your stuck vehicle, shoveling heavy drifts, and performing other difficult tasks during strong winds, blinding snow, and the bitter cold of a blizzard may cause a heart attack...even for persons in apparently good physical condition.
- **Be aware of carbon monoxide.** Burn candles and run the engine and heater sparingly, and only with a down-wind window slightly open for ventilation. Freezing rain, wet snow, and wind-driven snow can completely seal the passenger compartment of your vehicle. Make sure that snow has not blocked the exhaust pipe.
- **Insulate.** Blankets, extra clothing, floor mats, and even newspapers and road maps can be used for extra warmth. Exercise by clapping your hands and moving your arms and legs from time to time, and do not stay in one position for long. Don't overdo it. Exercise warms you but also increases body heat loss.
- **Take turns keeping watch.** If more than one person is in the vehicle, don't all sleep at the same time. If alone, stay awake as long as possible.
- **Turn on the interior light at night.** It will help make your vehicle more visible to rescue and work crews.

