

## Safety Tips for Driving in Rain

Please take time today to review and discuss safe driving techniques in rain. Be sure to **take your rain gear with you** to be ready for the intermittent showers.

Utilize these tips along with the skills learned in Defensive Driving, Smith System Driving and Driver Ride-Along Program to assure a safe arrival at your destination without incident and injury.



1. **Ask yourself ... can I drive and arrive safely?** We can in most cases, with proper planning and preparation.
2. **Check your tires** - Speed should be directly related to the style and condition of your tires. Perform a tire check during your PM inspection.
3. **Check your windshield wipers** - Fill your wiper fluid tank with a mixture of water and cleaner to ensure easy removal of grime and gunk from your windshield.
4. **Cruise control OFF** - Do not drive with cruise control on during rain and fog events. If you lose traction on slick roads you have less chance of recovering safely from a skid with cruise control on.
5. **Seat Belts Buckled** - All occupants in vehicles and all operators on equipment
6. **Lights on for Safety** - At TxDOT we ask you to drive with headlights on for safety, day and night. Driving with your headlights on makes you more visible to other drivers and in heavy rain can improve your ability to see the road ahead of you.
7. **Keep both hands on the steering wheel** - Keep all distractions, such as cell phones or even the radio, off and away from you.
8. **Maintain your safety cushion** - While focusing to your front, scan side to side and utilize your mirrors to maintain a 360° view of drivers and hazards around you. Scan the area for oncoming hazards.
9. **Increase your following distance and space cushion** - Based on speed, a minimum 4 second following distance is required at all times. Add an additional second per factors such as limited visibility, rain, limited traction, towing equipment, etc. Increasing your space cushion gives you an escape route and time to react to conditions or other drivers.
10. **Base your speed limit on conditions** - Slowdown in heavy rains and ensure you have space for an out and to react to others. If you cannot see to drive ... don't drive. Pull to a safe area and wait out the downpour.
11. **Be aware of hydroplaning** - When your vehicle travels on top of the water, you are left with little contact with the ground for traction. To safely get out of a hydroplaning situation, let off the gas and do not make sudden motions or sharp turns. Avoid sudden acceleration, hard braking and remain calm.
12. **Turn Around Don't Drown** - Not all rains result in flooding, but if rains are heavy remember to never drive through standing or flowing water in a road way.
13. **Turn on the defroster if the windshield begins to fog** - In hot, muggy weather, cool air will usually clear the inside of the windshield faster than warm air. When a cold front blows in, use warm air to clear the windshield.
14. **Be aware that brakes can be affected by water** - Wet brakes are especially prone to decreased stopping power after driving through deep water.
15. **Watch for splashing from potholes** and pools of water that accumulate in low areas of the pavement. Try to position your vehicle to avoid "ruts" while remaining in your lane to avoid hazards, potholes and loss of steering.
16. **Be on the lookout for debris on the road** - Get the big picture and maintain situational awareness to avoid these hazards.
17. **Plan Departure On Arrival** - stage so backing is not required if backing is required, use a spotter. Upon arrival, park safely, turn off the vehicle, set your parking brake, take the keys and secure the vehicle/equipment.

If you have questions about this safety brief please contact your local safety officer/coordinator or the Occupational Safety Division.