

In the Safety Zone™

A newsletter dedicated to safety awareness

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Happy Holidays!!!

*We would like to thank each and every TransForce driver for your individual commitment to Safety throughout the year! This is our annual edition dedicated to reducing the most serious risk of the season—SLIPS and FALLS and Winter Driving. Extra precautions are needed to be safe on the roads (and to keep your feet on the ground) in inclement weather conditions. At TransForce, we are committed to the safety of our drivers and the public. **BE SAFE AND HAVE A WONDERFUL HOLIDAY SEASON!***

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Reduce Slips and Falls This Winter

Slipping and sliding means accidents and injuries. Weather-related slips and falls become a serious hazard as winter conditions often make for wet or icy surfaces outdoors. Even wet leaves or mud can create treacherous walking conditions. Wet shoes and clothes can leave a slippery trail indoors that can also lead to slips and falls. Falls hurt—and worse, they can disable or kill. Slips and falls can be prevented by being alert. It is important to follow the basics to avoid slip and fall injuries.



Take these precautions to prevent falls and possible injuries:

- **Wear appropriate footwear** with nonslip soles on wet, icy, or snowy days.
- **Take extra care when walking on wet, icy, or snow-covered walkways.** Walk slowly and slide your feet on slippery surfaces. Avoid turning sharply when you walk on a slippery surface.
- **Hold onto the railing** when using outdoor stairways.
- **Use the 3-point rule** when entering and exiting your truck at all times.
- **Inspect the area** around your vehicle before and after you reach your destination.
- **Never, ever climb** or stand on tires to clean off the windows.
- **Be especially careful when carrying packages,** equipment, materials, etc.
- **Wipe your feet when entering a building** so that your wet soles won't cause you to slip on indoor flooring.
- **If you slip and start to fall, limit your injuries** by bending your elbows and knees and using your legs and arms to absorb the fall. Or roll into the fall, if that's more appropriate.

Walking defensively is key to avoiding slips and falls in inclement conditions. Look for wet and slippery surfaces and proceed with caution. Remove and avoid any obstacles that may place you in harm's way. The key to prevention is to always be aware of your surroundings and perform your tasks in a safe and proper manner.

Winter Driving Takes Skill!

Winter is just around the corner. With it comes all of the truck driving hazards associated with the onset of this season. Preparing yourself for winter weather well in advance of its arrival will reduce the stress of this driving season. Winter weather and driving in snow and ice is difficult. It tests the skills of every driver.

There are three core issues connected with operating a commercial motor vehicle in winter weather conditions. They are:

- Limited Traction
- Limited Visibility
- Personal Safety (staying warm and uninjured)

Managing **limited traction** is critical to safe driving in these conditions, i.e. winter. Some tips include:

- Slow down!
- Drive Smoothly - No sudden starts or stops. Remember a sliding wheel will try to take the lead and is what leads to most slick road jack-knives.
- Keep your view far down the road. Avoid tunnel vision so you can predict traffic slowing down well in advance.
- Extra following distance is a must. Extra space equals extra time to maneuver and avoid other drivers and vehicles.
- Be especially careful when temperatures are in the 32-39 degree range. Black ice can form without warning and the roads will actually only look wet. Bridges will be the first to ice without the earth beneath them to insulate them from the air temperature.

Limited visibility comes in the form of poorly cleaned cab windows and mirrors, blowing snow and ice, and passing vehicles kicking up snow and ice in front of your truck. Some tips to address limited visibility include:

- Clean your windshield, side windows and mirror before you leave and at every stop. If you can't see, you can't drive safely.
- Pre-trip the truck - carry extra fluids, especially wiper fluid.
- Be certain all hoses and belts are in good condition to prevent breaking down and being on the side of the road in the cold.

Personal Safety - staying warm and uninjured during harsh winter conditions. Some tips in this area include:

- Carry a winter survival kit to include: flashlight and extra batteries; non-perishable food and water; extra warm clothes and snow boots; extra blankets; charger for cell phone; first aid kit; and snow broom/ice scraper.
- Watch your step while entering or exiting the cab or on untreated parking lots and sidewalks.
- Dress for the weather. Stay dry and wear layers of clothes.
- Keep the cab comfortable but not too warm or too cold to assure you are alert when driving.



Safe Winter Driving Begins With a Pre-Trip Inspection

With the winter months upon us, we are reminded of the many challenges drivers face in adverse weather conditions. The first step to traveling safely in dangerous weather conditions is to complete a thorough pre-trip inspection. Several areas warrant special attention in the winter months:

- **Fluid levels.** Make certain that your truck has the recommended level of anti-freeze. Your washer fluid reservoir should be full. This should be checked at least daily.
- **Visibility.** Pay special attention to your mirrors, windshields and wipers. Be certain all are properly adjusted, clean and clear of ice, snow and debris.
- **Conspicuity.** Being seen is equally as important as being able to see. All lights should be operable and clear of any snow, ice or mud that may have accumulated on them. The conspicuity tape along the length of the trailer should be clear any ice, snow, mud or debris from them as well.
- **Tires and chains.** The proper tire pressure and tread depth are critical to avoiding loss of traction. Be sure that tire chains are on board for driving in places where you may be required to use them.
- **Hand holds, steps and deck plates.** Inspect each of these before entering your cab. They should be clear of any snow, ice or debris. This is a key aspect to avoid slip or fall injuries.
- **Securement devices.** Locks, tie-downs, ratchets and other tie down devices can freeze or may not latch properly in cold weather.

Last, don't forget to pack warm clothing and water! Be safe out there!

Tis' The Season (For Washing Your Hands)!

Don't forget about your health during the winter months. It's so easy to pick up germs and viruses. Washing your hands frequently during the day with soap and water or an alcohol-based sanitizer removes germs. It's not a guarantee that you won't get sick, but it can certainly help. When washing hands with soap and water, the Center for Disease Control (CDC) says that you should:

- Wet hands with clean running water (warm water if available) and apply soap.
- Rub hands together to make lather and scrub all surfaces. Pay particular attention to fingers, fingertips, and under fingernails where germs love to breed. Palms are heavy germ zones, too.
- Continue rubbing hands for 15-20 seconds.
- Rinse hands well under running water.
- Dry hands using a paper towel or air dryer.

