

El Niño Storms Driving Safety



Driving in Wet Conditions

75% of the 1.3 million weather-related vehicle crashes that occur each year happen on wet pavement — not snow, sleet or ice — as one would expect.

When driving on wet roads, one should worry just as much about hydroplaning as they would about skidding.

A car can start to float in six inches to a foot of water and only a fraction of an inch of water can create hydroplaning.

One way to check that you have adequate tread on your tires is to insert an upside-down quarter into the tread of your tire. If you can see above George Washington's head then it is time to get new tires. Also make sure your tires are properly inflated. Check the inside panel of the driver's side door. Usually the recommended tire pressure is listed there.

Prepare

Ready.gov suggests preparing a car kit that includes:

- Snack foods
- Water
- Matches or a fire starter
- First-aid kit
- Pocket knife or a multi-tool
- Blankets
- Warm clothing, including hats and mittens
- Tow chain or rope
- Fluorescent distress flag
- Flashlight (extra batteries)
- Battery-powered radio (extra batteries)

Driving Tips

- Do not drive through flooded areas. It's hard to tell what's beneath the water's surface or how deep it is
- Be vigilant driving on roads where the flood waters have receded; roads could be weakened by the rains
- If your windshield wipers are on, your headlights should be too
- Gas up your car now before the storm hits (in a power outage, most gas stations cannot pump fuel)
- In the unlikely event a power line falls on your car, stay inside the vehicle and wait for a trained professional to help you
- Stay alert for vehicle hydroplaning
- Gently apply brakes and avoid sharp turns
- Leave extra distance between your car and the next motorist

Sources: National Safety Council and ready.gov