

## **WINTER DRIVING VEHICLE MAINTENANCE**



Winter driving presents many challenges both to you and your vehicle. Make sure your vehicle is in top condition especially now that the weather conditions are harsh. If you break down the consequences can be very dire. With low temperatures tow services become scarce and sometimes even if available they won't come out in the middle of a storm. As a precaution in case of an emergency, keep a first aid kit handy, blankets, food and water.

Make sure you follow these tips to make sure your vehicle won't fail you:

- **Perform a thorough Pre-trip inspection:** it's understandable that with below zero temperatures anyone can get a little lazy about standing outside in the cold to check the unit, however in 15 to 30 minutes you can make sure your vehicle is up to speed, especially checking that your hoses, belts, and tires are in good condition and it can save you from having to call a tow truck or a costly road service.
- **Check your batteries:** batteries tend to lose power as temperature goes down and they require more power to start the engine.
- **Check the cooling system:** purchase antifreeze to protect your vehicle in these temperatures. Not only does it protect your engine during the winter but it also keeps the cooling system from rusting, saving you money down the road. Make sure you don't have a leak of coolant or engine oil. If you do, repair it immediately as these are the type of failures that will cause a break down.
- **Fuel tank:** keep your diesel tanks close to full. Don't run closer to empty because if an emergency situation occurs like a road closure and you have to shut down where you are you'll run out of diesel.
- **Tire chains:** make sure you carry the amount of chains required by law depending on each state and learn to use them before having to.
- **Alcohol on the brake lines:** add some alcohol to prevent your lines from freezing and make sure you drain your lines to get rid of water build up that could cause a brake failure.
- **Don't ignore any alerts the truck is showing you:** if your ABS alarm goes off or any other warning comes on make sure you get it checked out.
- **Plan your route:** listen to the weather channel, if you know you're headed towards a storm plan ahead and move only if it's safe to do so.
- **Anti-gel:** make sure you add anti-gel to prevent the diesel from gelling up.