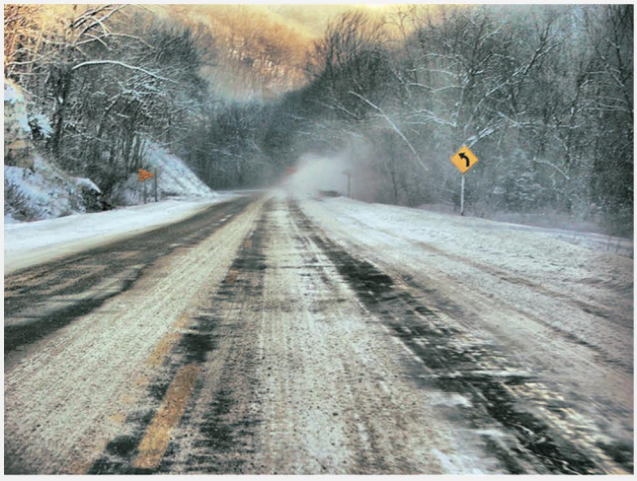
North American Transport Services

DRIVING ON SLIPPERY SURFACES

Winter driving presents many challenges. When snow is present, roads become dangerous since ice patches can form or snow can melt making the road slippery. It will take longer to stop, and it will be harder to turn without skidding, when the road is slippery. You must drive slower to be able to stop in the same distance as on a dry road.

On wet roads you should double the stopping distance. A good rule of thumb is to reduce your speed by about one-third (from 55 to about 35 mph) on a wet road, and on packed snow, to reduce your speed by half or more depending on the weather conditions. If the surface is icy, reduce your speed to a crawl and stop driving as soon as you can safely do so.



In Some situations it's hard to know if the road has become slippery. An easy way to check for ice is to open the window and feel the front of the mirror, mirror support, or antenna. If there's ice on them, the road surface is probably starting to ice up.

- Shaded Areas: If you see areas that are shady then that could be black ice. Avoid going over those patches, and stay over the tracks of vehicles that have gone before you.
- Bridges: When temperatures drop, bridges will freeze before the road. Shaded areas are common on bridges.
- Melting Ice: When the sun comes up ice starts to melt making it more slippery than ice that is not wet.
- Black Ice: Black ice is a thin layer that is so clear that you can see the road underneath it. It makes the road look wet. Any time the temperature is below freezing and the road looks wet, watch out for black ice.
- Just After Rain Begins: water mixes with oil left on the road by vehicles making the road very slippery.
- Hydroplaning: when it's raining hard, water or slush starts to collect on the road. When this happens, your vehicle can hydroplane. The tires lose contact with the road and have little or no traction at all. You may not be able to steer and to use your brakes will make things worse. You can control your vehicle by releasing the accelerator and pushing in the clutch. This technique slows your vehicle and let the wheels turn freely. Remember, it does not take a lot of water to cause hydroplaning. Hydroplaning can happen at speeds as low as 30 mph if there is a lot of water. Hydroplaning is more likely if tire pressure is low, or the tread is worn, so keep your tires in good condition.