



Western Nevada College ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

SPOTLIGHT ON SAFETY

Winter weather creates treacherous conditions responsible for thousands of injuries and accidents annually. Adopting specific, proactive safety measures is crucial to preventing slips, falls, and vehicle crashes.

Walking on snow and ice requires caution, special footwear, and adjusted walking techniques.

- **Walk Like a Penguin:** Take short, shuffling steps, keep your center of gravity directly over your feet, and point toes slightly outward to increase stability.
- **Use Proper Footwear:** Wear rubber-soled boots with good traction. Avoid leather or plastic soles. Consider adding ice cleats, Yaktrax, or spikes over shoes for enhanced grip on ice.
- **Keep Hands Free:** Avoid walking with hands in pockets. Use your arms for balance and to break a fall.
- **Stay Focused:** Avoid texting or reading while walking. Scan the ground for black ice or uneven, snowy surfaces.
- **Use Extra Care:** When entering/exiting cars or using stairs, use handrails and maintain multiple points of contact.
- **If You Start to Fall:** Toss what you are carrying, bend your knees and elbows, protect your head, and roll with the fall.

Driving in winter requires significantly slower speeds and increased following distances.

- **Slow Down & Increase Distance:** Decrease driving speed. Winter speed limits should be lower than in normal conditions. Allow at least three times more space (8-10 seconds) between you and the car in front of you.
- **Smooth Movements:** Avoid quick stops, starts, or fast turns. Accelerate and brake gently to avoid skidding.
- **Handle Skids Properly:** If you begin to slide, steer in the direction of the skid and lift your foot off the accelerator. Do not slam on the brakes.
- **Brake Techniques:** If you have ABS (Antilock Brakes), apply firm, continuous pressure. If you do not have ABS, pump the brakes gently.
- **No Cruise Control:** Never use cruise control on snow or ice, as it can cause you to lose control.
- **Clear All Snow:** Clean your entire vehicle - windows, mirrors, lights, roof, and hood before driving to maximize visibility and prevent snow from falling onto your windshield.
- **Watch Out for Black Ice:** Be extra cautious on bridges, overpasses, and shaded areas, which tend to freeze first.

WINTER SAFETY TIPS



Survival Kit: Keep a winter survival kit in your car: ice scraper, brush, sand/kitty litter (for traction), shovel, flashlight, blanket, jumper cables, water, and food.

If Stranded: Stay with your car, keep the exhaust pipe clear of snow to avoid carbon monoxide poisoning, and run the engine sparingly.

Clear Walkways: Use salt or sand to keep walkways, stairs, and driveways safe.

Best Advice: If road conditions are severe, the safest option is to stay home.

CONTACT:
Katherine Strain (EH&S)
775-445-3348
katherine.strain@wnc.edu