

# Fleet Vehicle Winterization & Cold-Weather Driving



Winter weather significantly increases crash frequency, breakdowns, and employee exposure to cold-related hazards. In accordance with OSHA General Duty Clause requirements and U.S. Department of Transportation vehicle safety expectations, employers must provide safe equipment and reduce recognized hazards associated with winter driving conditions.



## Winter Vehicle Inspection Checklist

### Tires & Wheels

- Tread depth meets manufacturer and DOT minimums
- No visible sidewall damage or cracking
- Tire pressure adjusted for cold temperatures
- Spare tire present and properly inflated

### Braking System

- No warning lights illuminated
- No abnormal noises or odors
- Adequate brake response

### Battery & Electrical Systems

- Terminals clean and secure
- No corrosion or loose connections
- All lights operational

### Windshield, Wipers & Visibility

- Windshield free of vision impairment
- Wiper blades intact
- Winter washer fluid filled
- Defroster and heater operational

### Fluids & Engine Systems

- Winter-appropriate engine oil
- Antifreeze at proper concentration
- Brake, power steering, and transmission fluids topped off
- No visible leaks

### Safety & Emergency Equipment

- Snow/ice scraper
- Flashlight with spare batteries
- Jumper cables
- First-aid kit
- Reflective warning devices
- Blankets or cold-weather gear
- Extra windshield washer fluid

### Winter Driving Operational Controls

- Reduce speed and increase following distance
- Avoid sudden maneuvers
- Avoid severe weather when feasible
- Combine trips to limit exposure
- Park vehicles indoors when possible
- Avoid distractions while driving

### Key Loss Control Takeaway

Winter vehicle safety is a shared responsibility between management and drivers. Formal winter inspection checklists and driver safety protocols reduce claim frequency, severity, and operational disruptions.

Check out our [Safety Tips page](#) for more safety information.

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