

WHERE THE RUBBER MEETS THE ROAD

A Newsletter from the Bay-Valley Driving Safety Instructors

January 2009

“Stormy Weather Driving”



We are so fortunate to live and work in one of the nicest areas in the country when it comes to the weather. Clear skies and mild temperatures are fairly normal here. In fact, they even write songs about how “It never rains in California”. However, as we all know, sometimes it does and when that happens we as drivers need to be prepared.

Weather conditions often change quickly. It may be sunny and then all of a sudden it starts to rain. The best defense is to slow down immediately. Weather hazards reduce visibility, reduce vehicle traction and reduce steering control.

Some defensive driving solutions are as follows:

- Use the windshield wipers.
- Use the windshield-wiper fluid.
- Use headlights whenever the windshield wipers are on.
- Clear all windows and windshield of condensation or moisture.
- Use the defogging and defrosting settings on the heating/cooling system.
- SLOW DOWN. In some conditions even the legal speed limit is too fast.
- Use the low beam headlights to see and be seen, even in foggy conditions. (module 3, National Safety Council Defensive Driving Course)

Poor weather can increase the chances of skidding or sliding. In these conditions we need to recognize where and when to expect slippery conditions and know how to defend ourselves against them. To avoid skidding or sliding:

- Slow down and keep a “six second” following distance between your vehicle and the one in front of you. DO NOT TAILGATE.
- Do not slam on the brakes.
- Steer smoothly
- Don’t turn or steer with quick motions.

If your vehicle begins to skid:

- Ease your foot off the accelerator
- Keep your foot off the brake
- Turn the steering wheel in the direction you want the front of the vehicle to go.
(module 3, National Safety Council Defensive Driving Course)

So, to be sure of reaching your destination safely, add these bad weather driving tips to your professional driving skills today.