



Watch Works

Charles County
Sheriff's Office

Sheriff Troy Berry
January/February 2015

Winter Driving Tips

We have no idea the kind of weather we will get this winter. It's always best to be prepared.

- Check your antifreeze.
- Change your wiper blades and make sure your washer fluid reservoir is full.
- Make sure you have four good tires on your car. It doesn't matter if your car is front wheel drive or rear, make sure you have four good tires.
- Make sure your spare tire is in good condition and full of air.
- Do you know where your jack is and if it works?
- Pack a set of jumper cables, a small bag of sand or kitty litter, extra gloves and a hat. A good ice scraper and flash light are also important items to have.
- Keep a few high energy bars in case you are stranded for awhile.
- Never let the gas tank in your vehicle fall below half. Not only will a fuller tank of gas give your car more weight, it could also mean staying a little warm if you are caught in a snow storm.

When you are driving:

- Know your route and keep abreast of weather conditions.
- Slow down. Blasting through snowdrifts may look cool in TV advertisements, but it's way too hard on your vehicle to be worth it. Equally important: Don't go too slow. Your vehicle needs momentum to keep moving through snow on grades.
- Know how to recover from skids. When braking on a slippery road, it's all too easy to "lock up" your wheels by stepping on the brakes a little too hard. If you start to skid, steer the vehicle gently in the direction you want the front of your vehicle to go and don't touch your brakes.
- Keep your tires properly inflated. Cold weather reduces tire pressure, so check and adjust frequently.
- Make frequent rest stops. Winter travel is much more fatiguing than summer cruising, so stop every hour or so. It takes only five minutes to significantly improve your level of alertness.

- If you get stuck, stay in your vehicle. Stay warm and wait for assistance. Make sure that your exhaust pipe is clear of any obstruction, including snow and ice; if you don't, carbon monoxide gas can build up inside the vehicle.

If you absolutely do need to go out in a storm, try not to go alone. Take someone else with you. Two people can usually get a car unstuck, when one person can't. Dress warmly, in several layers. Even though it will be warm in the car while you are traveling, if you do end up stuck somewhere, it may get cold very quickly. Remember cell phones don't always have signals.

If you have to travel alone, let someone know the route you will be taking and when you plan on arriving at your destination. Stay on that route and avoid shortcuts. If for any reason you need to use another route (detours, accidents) call and let someone know which way you are going.

Be courteous to other drivers. Do not drive too close to other vehicles. If it's snowing, stay home if you don't need to travel.

Dates to Remember

January 1: New Years Day

January 19: Martin Luther King Jr. Day

February 14: Valentine's Day

February 16: Presidents Day



Photo Credit: William Milner/Shutterstock.com



The Weather Outside is Frightful!



This is usually the time of year when we get the coldest weather and want to bundle up and make our homes as toasty and warm as possible. Some with a fire in the fireplace and others with portable heaters or electric blankets.

If this is the first time you have built a fire in your fireplace this year, make sure the flue is open. Have you had your chimney cleaned lately? This is something you might want to have done. Is the wood you are burning dry or is it full of sap? Do you have a place to empty

the ashes so that they do not catch something (deck, woods, field) on fire if there are still hot embers mixed in?

If using electric heaters make sure you read the instructions and warnings. Do not place them near curtains, bedding or other flammable materials. Keep them away from furniture and out of the area you walk so that they are not easily knocked over. Keep an eye on children while you have them plugged in and running. Read and follow all instructions on kero-

sene and propane heaters. Don't use heaters inside that are made for outside only.

When using an electric blanket you should again read all instructions. Don't turn them all the way up and then forget about them. Keep the cords away from where you walk so that you aren't tripping on them.

Whatever you do to keep warm, please read all instructions and warnings and think about what you are doing. Don't be the one that says "I knew I shouldn't have done it that way." Be safe.

Expired Prescription Drugs

Happy New Year! Did you make a New Years resolution? When cleaning up the Christmas decorations we tend to start getting rid of things we didn't use the year before. Clothes, shoes and household items. Some change the batteries in their smoke detector on New Years to remind them of when it is changed each year. If you are going through closets and cabinets, don't forget the medicine cabinet or wherever you keep your over the counter medicine and prescriptions. Check the dates on all your medications and check to see if you have prescriptions that you no

longer take. Keeping expired prescriptions or those you no longer take in your home makes it easy for someone to take them without you even noticing. You'd never want to cause your child or grandchild to have violent seizures, projectile vomiting and diarrhea. But look in your medicine cabinet. You may have prescription medications that could cause these horrible effects or worse if abused by your child. Prescription medications should only be taken by the person for whom they are prescribed. These medicines, including painkillers, tranquilizers, and stimulants

can have serious side effects, when used improperly, including addiction and even death. Unfortunately, many kids who abuse prescription drugs start by experimenting with whatever they happen to find around the house. Talk to your healthcare professional. If you are taking any prescription medications that he or she thinks could be abused, you may want to keep them in a secure place only you know about. You can dispose of your medication at any of the Charles County Sheriff's Office district stations. We do not accept liquids and needles. Have a happy and safe New Year!





A word from your Community Organizer: Connie Gray.....301-932-3080

2015 a new year and a new start. We have all done our resolutions in the past and found it hard to keep a few or them. This year I thought I'd do at least one (go out of my way) nice thing every month. Visit a nursing home. Donate to charity (St. Jude). Go through my house and donate to a non

profit thrift store. This not only counts as my good deed for the month, but it helps me clean out all the stuff we don't use and makes room for all the new Christmas stuff. Visit elderly friends that I know are shut ins during the winter. Send out Valentines, St. Patrick's Day or just Thinking of You

cards. It doesn't have to cost a lot or take up a lot of time to make someone's day. Think about how you would be able to make someone's life a little bit easier or happier.

Happy 2015 to you all!



Are We Really Prepared?

A major winter storm hits the area dumping 3 feet of snow. Roads are closed, stores are closed and the electric is out. Are you prepared? Of course this is only a slight possibility, if any, but you never know when a disaster will hit. What if 911 just happened and a snow storm hit the same day. Any terrorist attack or a natural disaster would be awful by itself. It would just be in your interest to be at least a little prepared to spend some-time in your house with at minimum the bare essentials. Water, heat, food and some way to stay informed about what is going on and how long it's going to be before things get back to at least close to normal. Keeping extra water and non-perishable food is not as difficult as it seems. Peanut butter and jelly, tuna and soup are easy enough

to store. Powdered milk and shelf stable milk are some of the non-perishables that would be of great help. Some of you keep emergency supplies available and up to date. Others are tired of buying things for "just in case" reasons.

The American Red Cross recommends everyone should assemble a disaster supplies kit and keep it up to date. Review your kit at least once a year.

- Three-day supply of nonperishable food and manual can opener.
- Three-day supply of water (one gallon of water per person, per day).
- Portable, battery-powered radio or television and extra batteries.

- Flashlight and extra batteries.
- First aid kit and manual.
- Sanitation and hygiene items (hand sanitizer, moist towelettes and toilet paper).
- Matches in waterproof container.
- Whistle
- Extra clothing and blankets.
- Kitchen accessories and cooking utensils.
- Photocopies of identification and credit cards.
- Cash and coins.
- Tools, pet supplies, a map of the local area, and other items to meet your unique family needs.





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