

## ROAD ICING: Are You At Risk Of An Accident?

**Fact:** Everyone is at risk. Road icing kills more than twice as many people every year than tornadoes, hurricanes, lightning and severe thunderstorms...combined.

Weather's worst hazard is one that most Americans will face every year. The lowly snowflake – and even more so, the super-cooled water droplet producing freezing rain and drizzle are the country's most prolific weather-related killers.

**Fact:** It doesn't take much snow or freezing rain to turn a bridge or overpass into a vehicle trap. Some of the worst accidents happen during minor snow or ice events by catching drivers off guard.

**Fact:** No one has the skill to drive at normal speeds on icy roads. A factor in many serious and fatal crashes is overconfidence in one's abilities. Some may feel they have sufficient experience in winter driving and can continue normally (at or above the speed limit). A fishtail on ice that occurs at highway speeds is usually unrecoverable by even the most quick-witted and experienced drivers. Four-wheel drive SUVs, tractor-trailers, sports cars; traction control, antilock brakes, proper tires –it doesn't matter, no vehicle is immune.

The best way to avoid an accident in icy conditions is to not drive. Unfortunately, we all know the reality is that on occasion, it cannot be avoided. If you must drive during inclement weather keep these tips in mind:

- Always wear your seat belt;
- Keep your speed in check;
- Allow extra time to reach your destination;
- Plan your route to avoid the most hazardous area's including bridges and inclines;
- Go easy on the brakes;
- Gently turn into a slide;
- Cars tend to fishtail and slide toward the inside of a curve, putting you in the oncoming lane of traffic;
- Good tires can help you move on icy road, they don't help you stop or keep you from losing control;
- Don't count on gravel roads providing any more traction than a paved road in icy conditions.

Icy road accidents occur in multiplies. Your own accident is not always your greatest threat—additional out of control vehicles often are.