KNOW BEFORE YOU GO

WINTER TRAVEL NEWS PACKET

WINTER 2025 – 2026

Winter Weather Tips Page

OREGON DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

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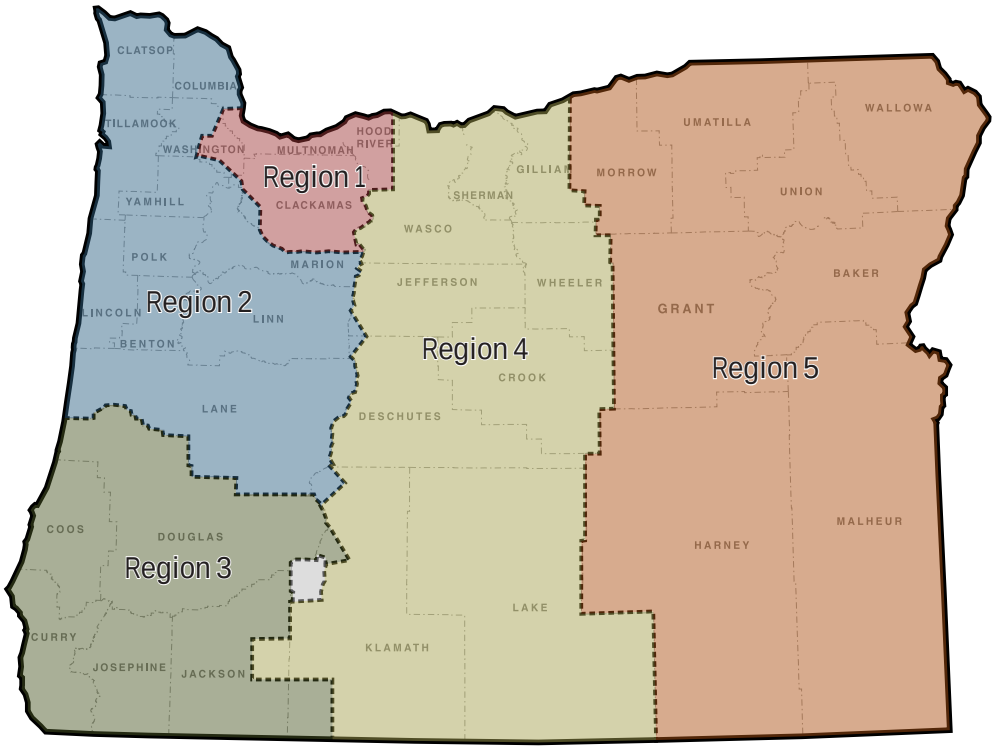

ODOT highway regions

General ODOT information

AskODOT
1-888-275-6368
Ask ODOT online

Sign up for FlashAlerts

Go to FlashAlert.net and sign up for alerts from the Oregon Department of Transportation on road conditions, highway closures and incidents. You can also get information on state office closures by signing up for notifications from the Department of Administrative Services.

Social media*

On X (Twitter) (@oregondot): X.com/OregonDOT
On Facebook: facebook.com/OregonDOT
On Instagram (@oregondot): www.instagram.com/oregondot

**Social media accounts are generally staffed weekdays from 8 a.m. - 5 p.m. except in extreme conditions.*

ODOT winter maintenance photos and videos:
www.flickr.com/oregondot/
Winter Resource Album: flic.kr/s/aHsjsncL1P
www.youtube.com/OregonDOT
Winter Video Playlist: tinyurl.com/mvrduvxz

Photos provided through ODOT's official Flickr or Dropbox accounts, as well as those provided in official news releases, are permissible for use by news agencies.

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Oregon's weather can change quickly and without warning. For road conditions in Oregon, call 511 or 800-977-ODOT (6368). Outside Oregon, dial 503-588-2941. Reports are updated continuously and available 24 hours a day.

Visit TripCheck.com for information on road and weather conditions, incidents and traffic delays. Links to cameras on many mountain passes and major routes give real-time views of road conditions. The site also provides links to bus, train and airport information as well as Sno-Parks, rest areas and other traveler services.

For questions about winter road maintenance or other issues, contact ODOT by phone at 888-ASK ODOT (888-275-6368) or by email at Ask.ODOT@odot.oregon.gov.

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Know before you go — winter travel information

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Plan ahead and check conditions and forecasts before traveling.
- TripCheck offers real-time conditions, alerts, cameras and more.
- See something concerning on the road? For emergencies, call 911. Non-emergencies, call *677.

Additional downloadable resources:

- Graphic: TripCheck features.
- Graphic: TripCheck logo.
- Graphic: TripCheck home page.

To help you better prepare as a traveler, we offer several ways to get the latest in vital traveler information.

TripCheck.com home page.

Online: For the latest travel conditions, visit TripCheck.com, ODOT's mobile-friendly travel information website. The site features:

- Maps updated in real time that display road conditions, color-coded traffic speeds on most roads across the state, trouble spots, weather, construction, maintenance and traffic incidents. You'll also find alerts prominently displayed.
- Images from more than 1,000 cameras throughout Oregon, southern Washington, northern Nevada, western Idaho and northern California.
- The ability to create and bookmark custom camera pages with up to 10 different cameras for quick checks of specific routes.
- Links to information on scenic byways, rest areas and more.
- Waze user reports and traffic jams.
- Current travel times throughout the Portland metro area.
- Updated highway closure information; it's now easier to view highway closure information on I-84 and I-5.
- Links to public transportation providers, Amtrak Cascades passenger rail and more, so you can explore car-free options.

TripCheck information is available via X/Twitter. Visit TripCheck.com and click on the On The Go tab to learn more. TripCheck TV allows users to create a custom display of road condition information and cameras.

By phone: Travelers in Oregon can dial 511 to access road and weather information.

- You can select updated reports about driving conditions by highway, mountain pass or major city from easy-to-use menus. The 511 system responds to voice and touch-tone commands.
- Most wireless companies in Oregon provide 511 service. If you cannot use 511, call toll-free 800-977-ODOT (6368) for road and weather information. Outside Oregon, dial 503-588-2941.
- Remember, in Oregon, drivers are allowed to use hands-free devices but not texting devices or handheld devices. ODOT encourages motorists to pull off the road and park in a safe area before using mobile devices.

ODOT

Driver responsibilities: Be prepared, drive healthy

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Make sure you and your vehicle are well prepared before traveling this winter.
- Make sure you have a well-stocked emergency kit.
- Carry chains and know how to use them before you hit the road.

Here are some important things that you can do as a driver to be better prepared for whatever winter throws your way.

Emergency kit for your car.

Driver's responsibilities:

- Focus on driving. Park your electronic devices. Keep your hands on the wheel and your mind on the road.
- Drive sober. You can become impaired by things other than alcohol: marijuana, opiods, methamphetamines or even over the counter medications.
- Don't drive drowsy. If you feel tired, take a break.
- Check road conditions before you head out — visit TripCheck.com or call 511.
- Tell someone where you are going, what route you are taking and update them on major changes.
- Watch out for pedestrians and bicyclists who may be harder to see in fog, rain or snow.
- Slow down and give extra room for snowplows, trucks and other large vehicles. Don't pass snowplows or sanders, and don't follow them too closely; they will pull over!
- Know your route. Some roads, like state highways, are regularly maintained. Other roads, such as Forest Service roads, are maintained less frequently.
- Turn off your cruise control.
- If you drive an electric vehicle, turn off your regenerative braking.
- If you lose traction, gradually slow down.
- Use caution when driving on bridges or concrete highways. These surfaces are the first to freeze.
- Slow down ahead of shaded areas, especially on curves. Shaded areas are cooler and may have ice that is hard to see.

Prepare your vehicle:

- Fill up your vehicle or charge your battery before you head out.
- Ensure the heater and defroster are working properly.
- Test all lights. Carry spare light bulbs.

Additional downloadable resources:

- Photo: Emergency kit.
- Video: Five essentials for your winter car kit.
- Video: Reminder that it's people who drive snowplows.
- Graphic: Sharing the road with a snowplow.
- Graphic: Be prepared for winter travel checklist.
- Graphic: Check your car's systems checklist.

Driver responsibilities: Be prepared, drive healthy

- Use antifreeze that's good to -25°F.
- Check and fill washer and other fluids and make sure hoses aren't loose or brittle.
- Keep wipers clean and in good condition.
- Make certain your battery is fully charged (also check battery age and make sure cables are not loose or corroded).
- Ensure your tires, and spare, are in good condition and properly inflated for best traction.
- Carry chains or use traction tires.
- Keep a safety kit in your vehicle that includes:
    - Ice scraper and snow brush.
    - Cell phone and charger.
    - A flashlight (rechargeable or with extra batteries).
    - Tools: jack, lug wrench, shovel, flares, pocketknife, jumper cables.
    - Maps.
    - Blanket or sleeping bags.
    - Extra warm clothes: boots, coat, hat, gloves.
    - Extra food, water and medicine for you and your pets.
    - First aid kit (including prescription medication).
    - Matches or lighter.
    - Paper towels.
    - Extra washer fluid.

If you travel with an infant or toddler, remember to use your child safety seat properly. Bulky winter coats can reduce the effectiveness of your child's safety seat. To keep them warm, add layers over them once they are buckled in.

Know before you go

Visit TripCheck.com, Oregon's travel information website, for up-to-the-minute road conditions and more information on Oregon's chain law and chain requirements. You can also get the latest road conditions by calling 511.

ODOT

Oregon winters: Be ready for any weather

Always slow down in rain and wet pavement

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Any amount of moisture can create driving hazards, especially in the shorter, colder, darker days of winter.
- Rain makes pavement slicker, making stopping and vehicle handling more difficult, and heavy rain decreases visibility.
- Slowing down increases your time to react and decreases your stopping distance.

Additional downloadable resources:

- Graphic: Driving in wet weather.
- Video: Driving in rain safety reminder.
- Photo: Cars driving on a wet highway.

Any amount of rain, from the lightest drizzle to a roaring downpour, creates a wide variety of driving hazards. You may be used to Oregon's wet winters, but that means adapting your driving as well.

Driving in wet weather.

Rain can reduce visibility, especially on shorter, darker days of winter. Even a hint of moisture on pavement can reduce traction between tires and the road, which increases stopping time and decreases predictable vehicle handling.

When it's raining, plan more time for your trip and drive cautiously. Here's how:

- Slow down for any amount of moisture on the pavement. Lowering your speed helps you prepare for sudden stops caused by disabled cars, debris and other wet-weather hazards. Lower speeds also decrease your vehicle's stopping distance.
- If it hasn't rained in a while, expect road surfaces to be especially slick. Engine oil and grease build up on the road over time. The first few hours of a fresh rain can be the most dangerous.
- Slow down even more for heavy rain. Driving through pooled water at high speed can cause you to lose control of the car; it could also splash water into the engine and stall it.
- If you hydroplane, ease off the gas, gently apply the brakes and steer straight ahead. Hydroplaning occurs when your front tires ride on a film of water. It can occur at speeds as low as 35 mph, especially if tires are worn.
- Turn on your headlights to improve visibility.
- Turn off cruise control on wet pavement, as well as snow or ice.
- Keep your distance. A car needs two to three times more stopping distance on wet roads.

##ODOT##

KNOW BEFORE YOU GO

Oregon winters: Be ready for any weather

If you must travel in snow, add time and caution to the trip

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Driving in the snow requires skills and knowledge that can save lives.
- Never pass snowplows on the right, and wait to pass until a plow pulls over for traffic to pass on the left.
- Check TripCheck and prepare your vehicle and yourself before you drive over mountain passes.

No matter where you live in Oregon, or how often you travel over snow, driving in the snow requires skills and knowledge that can save lives.

Message board tells drivers to use caution.

Give snowplows plenty of space for safety

First, be aware that it is illegal in Oregon to pass a snowplow on the right on state highways because it is dangerous.

Also keep in mind that many snowplows have wing plows that stick out more than 8 feet from the right front edge of the truck.

Think twice before passing on the left. The road ahead hasn't been plowed as recently as your position behind the plow. Ruts in the snow can grab tires, and icy conditions make it difficult to control any vehicle at higher speeds.

The safest way to pass a snowplow is to be patient. Snowplow drivers get off the road regularly to allow vehicles to pass safely. In the meantime, they are making the road safer and easier to drive.

Safe snow driving

Here are a few other things to know and prepare for when driving over a pass or around the state where snowy winter conditions prevail:

- Check road conditions on your route before you go at TripCheck.com or 511. Plan your trip accordingly. If conditions are questionable, wait it out.
- Allow extra time to get where you're going — travel is going to be slower than at other times of the year.
- People who ride bikes should be extra careful around motorized vehicles, which take longer to stop in the snow, while motorized vehicles must be extra watchful for bicyclists, who can't maneuver as easily when conditions are slick.
- Turn off cruise control.
- Allow extra stopping distance. There is less traction on slick, snowy roads.
- Turn on your headlights to increase your visibility (low beams).

Additional downloadable resources:

- Graphic: Sharing the road with a snowplow.
- Graphic: Be prepared for winter travel checklist.
- Graphic: Check your car's systems checklist.
- Video: Five tips for driving in the snow.

If you must travel in the snow, add time and caution

- Brake gently to avoid skidding or sliding. If the wheels lock up, ease off the brakes.
- Turn off regenerative braking if you drive an electric vehicle.
- Carry chains and know how to use them. Oregon law requires you to carry chains or traction tires in snow zones when snow is possible – even if you don't need them on that trip.
- Make sure your vehicle is in top operating condition, with clean headlights, good brakes, working windshield wipers and good tires.
- Slow down when approaching off-ramps, bridges and shady spots where the snow often lingers longer.
- Be prepared for delays by having your emergency kit filled and up-to-date. Let someone know where you're going and when you plan to be there.
- Be well-rested. If you get tired, get a room and finish your trip when you're refreshed — you could save a life.

##ODOT##

Oregon winters: Be ready for any weather

Ice: Often unseen, always slippery for travelers

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Even at low elevations, ice can form, creating dangerously slippery road surfaces.
- Ice — like black ice — can be difficult to see, so be extra cautious on cold days.
- Slow way down on ice — stopping and steering are tricky on ice even with chains or other traction devices.

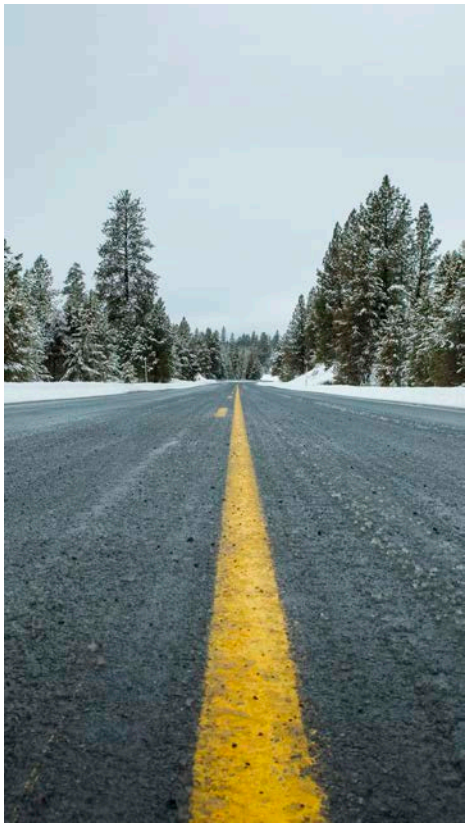
Additional downloadable resources:

- Photo: Ice covered road.
- Photo: Road covered in black ice and blowing snow.

Even on low elevation highways across Oregon, ice can show up anywhere. Ice on the road prevents tires from gripping, which makes steering difficult, stopping hard and driving unpredictable.

When conditions are icy, even having a four-wheel drive vehicle won't help much — unless you have chains on the tires.

Chains or other traction devices are the best way to travel on ice, if you have to travel. But even with chains, stopping distance is still several times greater than on dry pavement with ordinary tires.



A road covered in ice.

Black ice can fool you

Driving gets even more challenging when black ice forms.

Black ice is a thin layer of ice on the roadway and it is particularly hazardous because the road looks wet, not icy. Black ice isn't really black; it's so thin and transparent that the darker pavement shows through. It often has a matte appearance rather than the expected gloss.

Black ice is most common at night and very early in the morning, when temperatures are typically their lowest. It is usually thin enough that it melts soon after sunlight hits it, but it can last much longer on shaded areas of roadways and parts of the road where traffic isn't traveling.

Bridges and overpasses are more prone to black ice. They do not receive as much heat from the ground and lose more heat to the air. They can drop below freezing even when the rest of the roadway doesn't.

If you need to travel when roads and bridges are icy, remember these tips:

- Turn off cruise control, be alert and drive cautiously to avoid ice on the road ahead.
- Slow down and keep your distance from vehicles in front of you — at least three times as much. Continue to adjust your speed for the conditions. Always give trucks extra room.
- Look for signs of ice off the roadway: on windshield wipers, side

view mirrors, road signs, trees or fences. If ice has formed on any of these things, it may be on the road.

- Watch shaded corners. These areas may stay icy longer even when the rest of the road looks clear.
- If your vehicle feels like it's floating, gradually slow down. Don't slam on your brakes or you may skid out of control.
- Turn off regenerative braking if you drive an electric vehicle.
- Do not drive through snow drifts: they may cause your vehicle to lose traction.
- Put on chains or other approved traction devices when signs say "Chains required."

ODOT

Traction tires: You have options

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Because studded tires damage pavement, ODOT encourages drivers to use chains or non-studded traction tires.
- Make sure you are following applicable laws if you use studded tires and always follow chain requirements.
- If you use chains, make sure you check your vehicle's owners manual for the right option for your car.

Additional downloadable resources:

- Video: Tire options b-roll.
- Video: How to install tire chains.
- Video: Five tips for using chains.
- Graphic: Tips for installing tire chains.
- Photo set: Traction tire options.

Need traction for your vehicle this winter? Tires that meet Rubber Manufacturers Association standards for use in severe snow conditions carry a special symbol on the tire sidewall: a three-peaked mountain and snowflake. Here are your options and things to consider:

Symbol indicates tires that meet standards set by the Rubber Manufacturers Association.

Chains

- Chains are more effective than studded tires and are easier to use.
- Check your vehicle's owners manual for recommendations.

Fabric alternatives to chains

- If your vehicle cannot be fitted with tire chains, one potential option is "snow socks" that slip over your tires.
- These provide temporary traction to get out of snow and are only intended for short stretches of road.

Other traction tires

- Traction tires provide increased traction in winter conditions over regular all-weather tires.
- They work about as well as studded tires on ice, but work better than studded tires or regular tires in most other winter conditions.
- Traction tires cause no more damage to roads than regular tires.

Studded tires

- Studded tires have small metal spikes in the tread to provide extra traction on ice and snow.
- You can use studded tires in Oregon from Nov. 1 through March 31. Driving with studded tires outside those dates carries a fine of nearly $200.
- Studded tires are more effective than all-weather tires on icy roads. But they are less effective in most other conditions because they may reduce traction between the road and the tire.
- Studies show that studded tires damage roads causing holes and ruts that can create icy patches and that damage requires more frequent repaving to fix holes and ruts.

ODOT

Practice chaining up before you slip and slide

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Chains are often required on icy passes. Make sure you follow chain requirements to keep yourself and other drivers safe.
- If you haven't used chains before, practice before you need them.
- Make sure you select the right type of chain and follow safety protocols.

New to using chains or need a refresher? Here are some tips on chaining up and driving with chains:

Installing tire chains.

- Practice installing your chains at home when the weather is fair. Then when road conditions require chains, you'll know how to use them and won't create delays for other drivers.
- Check your vehicle operator's manual for the right type and size of chains to use. Then follow the manufacturer's installation instructions.
- Ensure chains are the proper size. Don't deflate tires to install chains.
- Don't wait until you lose control of your vehicle before chaining up.
- Pull over to a safe and level area not in a travel lane to mount or remove chains.
- Carry a waterproof tarp or plastic sheet to help keep you dry.
- Keep children and pets safe in your car to avoid distraction and injury.
- Pull over in a safe place and retighten your tire chains after you have driven a short distance.
- Pull over and stop immediately if any part of your chain fails or comes loose.
- Don't drive faster than 30 mph when using chains. Accelerate and decelerate slowly. Avoid spinning or locking your wheels.
- Remember: You can slide even with chains, so drive carefully and slowly.
- Make sure you check TripCheck for the latest conditions and chain requirements before you head out.

ODOT's YouTube channel can help! Learn how to install chains by watching youtu.be/0JvGi7g4PBs.

Additional downloadable resources:

- Video: How to install tire chains.
- Video: Chain up ahead overhead sign b-roll.
- Video: Five tips for using chains.
- Graphic: Tips for installing tire chains.
- Photo: Chaining up by the road.
- Addtional downloadable resources available in our Winter Flickr album.

ODOT

Abandoned vehicles are a hazard and will be towed

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Abandoning your vehicle can create hazards and be a hassle.
- Plan ahead and maintain your vehicle to avoid having to leave your car behind.
- If you do have to abandon your vehicle pull off the road and signal for help.

There are many reasons why people abandon vehicles on or next to highways, from severe weather to breakdowns or other emergencies. While it may seem easy to simply leave your car, abandoning your vehicle can be dangerous and costly.

Abandoning your vehicle during a storm can be dangerous — and costly.

- **Be prepared.** Check the weather and use TripCheck.com or call 511 for the latest road conditions so you can make sure that you and your vehicle are ready for what lies ahead.
- **Maintain your ride.** Make sure to keep up on regular maintenance with your vehicle; many abandoned cars are left after a breakdown.
- **Don't be a hazard.** If you must leave your vehicle, try to pull as far off the road as possible. Cars that are blocking traffic will be towed immediately.
- **Signal for help.** If you are leaving your car, make sure to give law enforcement a heads up. Let them know where your car is, why you left it, and when you plan to return. If you don't have a way to call, leave a note on your dash with contact information and your plan. This may not stop your vehicle from being towed but will make it easier to communicate about what happens next. If you have no way to leave a note, leaving your hood up, cones out behind your car or hazard lights on is a good way to signal that something went wrong and that you need help.
- **If your vehicle is towed on a state highway**. If you are outside Multnomah County, you can call ODOT or OSP (677). Dispatchers can look up where the vehicle was towed. In addition to taking calls, we also mail a certified letter to the vehicle's owner notifying them of the tow. We use license plate information to determine who the owner is. This letter is mailed within 24 hours after the vehicle was towed and includes information on when and why the vehicle was towed. If your car was abandoned in Multnomah County visit AutoReturn to learn where your car was towed and how to retrieve it.

ODOT

Use your headlights: Nighttime and low visibility

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Your headlights make you more visible to others on the road when visibility is low.
- Make sure to drive cautiously during low visibility, watching your speed and giving others space.
- If you can't see, pull over but do so safely and never stop in travel lanes.

Whenever natural light is low, turning on your headlights can significantly increase your vehicle's visibility — and your safety.

Rain, fog, snowfall, dust or smoke can all make it harder to see the road and for others to see you. Many vehicles come with daytime running lights so the low-beam headlights are always on when the vehicle is running to improve visibility. While we all turn on our headlights at night to see and be better seen, turning on your low-beam headlights during the day can help make your vehicle more visible to other drivers, bicyclists and pedestrians.

Visibility can change in an instant during winter. Be prepared.

Additional downloadable resources:

- Photoset: Low visibility conditions.

Whether at night or in other low-visibility conditions, follow these safety tips:

- **Slow down** and don't use cruise control.
- **Increase following distance**.
- **Keep your headlights clean** and your windshield clear. Get in the habit of cleaning off your lights at the gas station.
- **Eliminate distractions** so you can focus on the road.
- **Use your low beams in fog or during snowfall.** High beam lights could reflect light back, making visibility worse for you and other drivers.
- **Use your fog lights in foggy conditions** — but remember, Oregon law says you must turn them off when within 500 feet of an oncoming vehicle and within 350 feet when following another vehicle.
- **Avoid entering an area if you cannot see a safe distance ahead.**
- **Pull off the pavement as far as possible** if you suddenly encounter a severe loss of visibility. Stop, turn off your lights, set the emergency brake. Take your foot off the brake to be sure the taillights are not illuminated. Turn on your emergency flashers.
- **In dense fog or blinding snow**, if you can't pull off the road, slow down, turn on your lowbeam headlights and sound the horn occasionally. Use the white fog line or roadside reflectors if necessary to help guide you and don't change lanes or attempt to pass.
- **Never stop in travel lanes.**

ODOT

Use common sense when using GPS navigation

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Don't follow GPS blindly during winter storms, you could get stranded.
- Make sure you check weather conditions and closures before you head out.
- Consider altering your travel plans if you can.

When roads are closed and your GPS navigation system directs you onto a detour route, keep in mind that the device you count on could guide you into trouble. Most navigation tools don't take current road or weather conditions into consideration. They may direct you onto remote roads that are not maintained or passable.

Always use common sense when using GPS navigation.

Here are a few tips to consider when using GPS:

- Be aware that the app on your phone or in your GPS device might not have the latest information — don't follow it blindly!
- Use TripCheck.com (available on your computer and on your phone) to get the latest on state road conditions, or call 511. You can also subscribe to Flash Alerts for the latest closures.
- Remember, in winter conditions (or during fire season), roads can be impassable.
- If you are not familiar with an area and current road conditions, stay on state roads and don't attempt alternate routes.
- Alter your travel plans. If you are not sure of the route and road conditions your GPS device directs you to, ask locals for information or consult a map. It is better to stay the night in town than be stuck on a remote road.

ODOT

Remember your travel options

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- If you need to travel this winter, options for buses, trains or rideshares are available.
- The Transit & More tab on TripCheck.com has links to additional travel resources.

Oregonians have options when it comes to travel. We have bus service in all the major metropolitan areas, and in some of our smaller communities. Throughout the state, regional bus services offer connections.

A passenger bus crosses a foggy bridge.

Here are some options:

- Plan your trip using GetThereOregon.org. You can enter your starting and ending locations and select a transit option to find information on routes.
- Use the Ride Board feature in GetThereOregon.org to find a one-time shared ride.
- Amtrak Cascades train and Cascades POINT bus offer lots of options in the Willamette Valley and beyond (Eugene to Albany, Salem and points in Portland, also on to Seattle and Vancouver, B.C.): amtrakoregon.com (POINT bus tickets are sold by Amtrak.)
- POINT intercity bus service makes connections all over the state: oregon-point.com.

Know before you go

Visit TripCheck.com, Oregon's travel information website, for up-to-the-minute road conditions and more information on Oregon's chain law and chain requirements. You can also get the latest road conditions by calling 511.

Additional downloadable resources:

- Photo: Passenger train in the snow.
- Photo: Passengers on a train.
- Photo: Bus crossing foggy bridge.
- Addtional downloadable resources available in our Winter Flickr album.

ODOT

Safe cycling in winter

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Remember to wear the right clothes and use the right equipment. Stay warm and dry and be visible.
- Carry an emergency kit.

When the sun goes south for the winter, it doesn't necessarily mean solitary confinement for the Schwinn. With a few precautions, bicycling in the winter offers the same benefits as fair-weather cycling, such as saving gas money, reducing highway damage (and therefore costs!), and using one less car parking space. Bicycling is also good for your health and great for the environment. Here are some tips to make your winter cycling experience safe and successful:

Take steps to ensure safe cycling in wintertime.

Wear the right clothes, including:

- A good, bright colored wind jacket over layers of clothing.
- Reflective gear.
- A pair of wind pants or long underwear.
- Windproof mittens over insulating liners or gloves on milder days.
- A neck gaiter and warm hat under your bicycle helmet.
- A helmet cover with an ear band.

Use the right equipment, such as:

- A mountain bike with sturdy tires.
- A set of fenders.
- In icy conditions, studded bicycle tires.
- A bright halogen light on the front of your bike and a red light on the back.
- A reflective vest and reflective tape on your helmet and elsewhere.
- An emergency kit with a pump, tools, a spare tire and a patch kit.

Additional downloadable resources:

- Graphic: Tips for cycling in winter.
- Photo: Cyclist riding alongside a road on a foggy day.

ODOT

Maintenance service levels

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- We prioritize where to send equipment and resources during a storm based on safety, traffic volume and impacts to freight.
- Our goal is to keep roads passable, not completely free of ice and snow.
- Plan ahead when there's a storm. Consider staying at home or altering your plans if you can.

Additional downloadable resources:

- Downloadable resources available in our Winter Flickr album.

ODOT's statewide Winter Level of Service Plan allows us to prioritize where to send equipment and resources and determine which roads will be treated and plowed and how often. Priorities are based on safety, the relative amounts of traffic that the highways carry and the anticipated impact to commerce and industry.

There are five Statewide Levels of Service. Highways tagged for high-volume priority service are plowed first; medium- and low- volume highways are handled as soon as possible thereafter.

Clearing snow in the Siskiyous.

Our goal is to keep roads passable, not completely free of ice and snow. During a one-day storm, ODOT may use approximately 600 truckloads of sand and 150 loads of de-icer.

What can drivers do? Plan ahead:

- Stay home during winter storms if you can.
- Consider altering your travel plans to leave early or stay late.
- Carry chains and know how to use them.
- Have food, water, medicine and other emergency supplies in your car.
- Keep your cell phone charged.
- Have a full tank of gas or a full charge on your electric vehicle.
- Visit TripCheck.com for up-to-the-minute road conditions and more information on Oregon's chain law and chain requirements. Or get the latest road conditions by calling 511.

ODOT's winter maintenance practices may not reflect the practices used on city or county roadways. Contact your city or county for that information.

ODOT

Why we can't just close highways for storms

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Our ability to close a highway is limited to small sections, such as a mountain pass, a crash site or around a landslide.
- Travelers best tool for severe weather is information – check TripCheck.com when you plan your trip and before you hit the road.
- Consider postponing your trip if the forecast looks severe.

Additional downloadable resources:

- Photo: Closing part of a highway due to drifting snow.
- Photo: Diverting traffic from the highway.
- Photo: Incident Response controlling traffic during a snowstorm.

If we can close Interstate 5 for snow on the Siskiyou Pass in southern Oregon, why can't we close highways in Portland and other cities when there is a severe storm?

Crews divert traffic on Interstate 84.

Even with a dire weather forecast or during a severe storm, our ability to close highways is limited to small sections, such as a mountain pass, a crash site or around a landslide.

The number of highway entry points in an urban area vastly outnumbers those on a mountain pass. A single road crew can close one access to a section of highway, but we would need dozens of crews to staff on-ramps in and around a city just to close part of a single highway.

At lower elevations, where most Oregon residents live and travel, we focus our road crews on preparing for storms with deicer and sand, as well as responding to emergencies and plowing major highways.

Our priority is to keep Oregon moving safely for travelers, freight, agriculture, emergency services, pedestrians, cyclists, people with disabilities, and everyone who depends on transportation for their livelihoods.

With a severe forecast, we recommend that the safest option for travelers is to reschedule their trip.

Another difference between a city and a mountain pass is that snow is a certainty at higher elevations in Oregon. Locations like the Siskiyou Pass on Interstate 5 near the California border need full-time crews to keep I-5 open as much as possible every winter. Temporary holds, in which traffic is stopped for 30-60 minutes, can help crews on the Siskiyou Pass catch up or get ahead of snowfall — and prevent people getting stuck in the first place.

Know before you go

Visit TripCheck.com, Oregon's travel information website, for up-to-the-minute road conditions and more information on Oregon's chain law and chain requirements. You can also get the latest road conditions by calling 511.

ODOT

A look inside ODOT's winter storm toolbox

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- ODOT uses a variety of tools to treat roads before and during storms.
- We consider the environment and conditions.
- Not every tool is right for every storm.

ODOT crews have a variety of options in our winter storm toolbox to help keep our roads passable. Our goal is to use the right tool, at the right time, in the right place to protect travelers and the environment.

An ODOT truck spreads gravel on the highway.

Liquid deicer

We typically use deicer before and during a storm to prevent ice and snow from sticking to the pavement. We use the lowest application rate needed to be effective. To protect water quality, we only use deicers that meet strict specifications.

Solid salt

We use salt, which is an effective deicer, on all interstates in Oregon, as well as some connecting highways.

We don't use salt for every snow or ice storm and we're continuing to study how it affects the environment, along with roads and vehicle surfaces. To help prevent corrosion, always wash your car after a winter storm, including the undercarriage.

Sand

When deicer is not the best option, we use sand to provide better traction. When appropriate, we may mix sand with liquid deicer to help it stick to the road. We place barriers near waterways to capture scattered sand. We pick up sand after placing it — often repeating the drop and pickup cycle several times during a storm. Sand takes three to five times as long to pick up than it does to place.

Snowplows

Plowing is the most efficient way to remove snow and ice from roads. It is most effective when liquid deicer or salt is used before plowing. We are always looking for ways to innovate our snow removal tactics.

Additional downloadable resources:

- Photo: A jar of magnesium chloride next to a jar of rock salt.
- Photo: The interior of an ODOT salt shed.
- Photo: Close up of a deicer truck.
- Video: A look into a blower.
- Video: Following a plow on U.S. 26.
- Video: A snowplow leaves the ODOT yard to work on the highway.
- Addtional downloadable resources available in our Winter Flickr album.

ODOT #

Snow zone signs tell you what's required

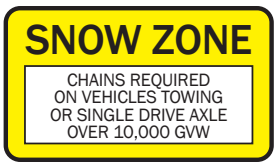
KEY TAKEAWAYS

- When you see a Snow Zone sign as you drive along Oregon's highways, pay special attention.
- These signs provide valuable information during the winter months

Snow Zone signs let drivers know about the current requirements for using chains and traction tires. Lighted message signs or signs like these may be displayed throughout the winter months:

"Carry Chains or Traction Tires"
When signs say you must carry chains or traction tires, the chains or traction tires must be in or on your vehicle. They must be the right size for your vehicle and of sufficient number to comply with the chain rules.

"Chains Required on Vehicles Towing or Single Drive Axle Over 10,000 GVW"
When this message is displayed, you must use chains if your vehicle is rated 10,000 pounds gross vehicle weight or less and is towing, such as a pickup towing a boat; or is a single drive axle vehicle rated over 10,000 pounds GVW whether towing or not, such as a delivery truck. Chains must also be used on the trailer or vehicle being towed if it has a brake that operates while in tow to comply with the chain rules.



"Chains Required on Vehicles Towing or Over 10,000 GVW"
When this message is displayed, vehicles towing or rated for more than 10,000 pounds GVW must use chains. Chains must also be used on a trailer or vehicle being towed if it has a brake that operates while in tow to comply with the chain rules.

"Chains Required: Traction Tires Allowed on Vehicles Under 10,000 GVW"
Vehicles towing or rated over 10,000 pounds GVW must use chains. Chains must also be used on a trailer or vehicle being towed if it has a brake that operates while in tow to comply with chain rules. Vehicles rated 10,000 pounds GVW or less and that are not towing must use chains or traction tires.

Terms to know

"Chains" include link chains, cable chains or any other device that attaches to the wheel, vehicle or outside of the tire that is specifically designed to increase traction on ice and snow.

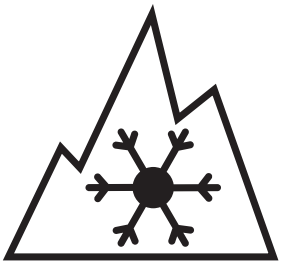
"Traction tires" are studded tires, retractable studded tires or other tires that meet tire industry standards for use in severe snow conditions.

Additional downloadable resources:

- Photo set: Snow Zone signs.
- Photo set: Traction tire options.
- Addtional downloadable resources available in our Winter Flickr album.

Snow zone signs tell you what's required

Tires designated by the tire industry as suitable for use in severe snow conditions are marked with a symbol of a three-peaked mountain and a snowflake on the sidewall like this:



"Retractable studded tires" are tires with embedded studs that retract to at or below the wear bar of the tire and project not less than .04 inch beyond the tread surface of the tire when extended.

"Studded tires" are tires with studs that are made of a rigid material that wears at the same rate as the tire tread. The studs must extend at least .04 inch but not more than .06 inch beyond the tread surface. Studded tires are only legal for use in Oregon from Nov. 1 through March 31.

Using chains

Cars and light trucks must use chains on one tire on each side of the primary drive axle. Chains also must be on one tire on each side of one axle of a trailer or vehicle being towed if it is equipped with a brake that operates while in tow. Traction tires may be used in place of chains when the car or light truck is rated less than 10,000 GVW and is not towing or being towed.

In most winter conditions, four-wheel and all-wheel-drive vehicles are exempt from the requirement to use chains if the vehicle is not towing, has an unloaded weight of 6,500 pounds or less, is carrying chains, has mud and snow, all-weather radial or traction tires on all its wheels, is being operated to provide power to both the front and rear wheels, and is being operated in a safe manner.

Conditional road closures

In very bad winter road conditions, all vehicles may be required to use chains regardless of the type of vehicle or type of tires being used. This is known as a "conditional road closure." A conditional road closure may occur on any of Oregon's highways.

Drivers who disobey the signs requiring that chains or traction tires be carried are subject to a class C traffic violation. Not using chains or traction tires when signs indicate they are required could result in a specific fine traffic violation with an $800 fine. More information about Oregon's chain and traction tire laws is available at TripCheck.com.

ODOT

Winter tips and resources for commercial vehicle drivers

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- All commercial vehicles over 10,000 pounds GVW must carry chains whenever road conditions might require their use or Snow Zone signs are posted.
- Failure to carry chains can lead to fines, citations, postponed delivery, closed roads, long delays and loss of life.
- Before every trip, visit TripCheck.com.

Snow, ice and slick roadways create challenging driving conditions for anyone — more so when you're behind the wheel of a 70-foot-long vehicle weighing over 100,000 pounds. Oregon law requires all commercial vehicles over 10,000 pounds gross vehicle weight to carry chains whenever road conditions might require their use and Snow Zone signs are posted. You need to know Oregon's chain law and stay in compliance to keep yourself and others safe.

A chain check point on I-5 in the Siskiyous.

Winter tips and resources

- Start carrying chains before the weather takes you by surprise.
- Before every trip, visit TripCheck.com for chain information, snow zone notices, road closures, emergency alerts, and cameras showing mountain passes and highways. You can also sign up to receive automated traffic alerts via X.
- Find snow zone notices and road condition information by phone. Within Oregon, call 511 or 1-800-977-ODOT (6368). From outside Oregon, dial 503-588-2941.
- Watch this Winter Safety for Commercial Vehicles video.
- Pick up a Chain Information Card at ports of entry or ODOT Commerce and Compliance offices.
- Know how to put your chains on. Practice installing them before your trip.
- **Don't wait until the last minute to chain up.** Pull over to a safe, level area such as a designated chain-up area. Wear reflective, warm clothing and keep your legs pointed away from the travel lane.

Be winter ready

- Carry an emergency kit, shovel, flares, extra food and water, etc.
- Inspect your vehicle before you get on the road. Make sure your wipers, lights, battery, tires and brakes are working properly. Clean ice and snow off your cab, trailer, mirrors, windows and lights.
- Allow more time to reach your destination.
- Drive cautiously and wear your safety belt.

Additional downloadable resources:

- Video: Freight driver installing chains.
- Video: Truck driver Demetrius talks about importance of using chains.
- Photo: Truck driver chaining up.
- Photo: Truck chain checkpoint at the Siskiyous.

Winter tips and resources for commercial drivers

- Make use of defensive driving to avoid crashes on slick roads.
- Don't drive distracted! Focus on the road and your surroundings.

Cost to trucks that don't chain up

Drivers who disobey signs requiring chains may be fined or cited. The Oregon Legislature raised the fine for trucks failing to use chains to $880 in 2021. The estimated cost of delays caused by trucks failing to follow Oregon chain laws is over $8 million a year. If your truck loses traction, it can postpone your delivery, close roads and cause long delays for other motorists. Don't risk your life and the lives of others – chain up!

ODOT

Hazards after a storm

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Downed power lines, tree branches, rocks, mud and other debris are often in the road following storms.
- Travelers should slow down and stay alert, especially around curves or in low-visibility conditions.
- Never drive through what you can't see and avoid driving over debris. Even small items can damage your vehicle or cause you to lose control.

Additional downloadable resources:

- Photo: Clearing fallen trees.
- Photo: Trees laden with snow bend over the highway.
- Photo: An ODOT truck clears trees and debris from the highway.
- Photo: A plow clears a path through fallen trees.
- Video: Clearing a landslide on U.S. 30.

Oregon's scenic roads, especially those winding through forested areas and mountainous terrain, are a hallmark of our state's beauty. But after a storm, those same features can bring unique safety hazards to drivers, cyclists and pedestrians.

After a storm, our crews work closely with local partners to remove fallen trees, utility lines or debris. Chainsaws, heavy equipment and a lot of teamwork go into reopening roads as quickly and safely as possible, but we can't be everywhere at once. If a storm impacts a wide area, entire road segments may be closed to allow for safe cleanup.

Knowing what to expect, and how to respond, can help keep you safe.

Maintenance crews work to remove fallen trees on OR 138E.

Fallen debris

Storms and severe weather can leave behind debris on or near roads, especially in forested or mountainous areas.

- Rocks and loose soil can be dislodged by erosion, heavy rain, snowmelt and freeze-thaw cycles.
- Mud and water runoff can flood lanes or make roads slippery and cause hydroplaning.
- Wind, ice and snow can topple trees and send large branches onto the road.
- Power lines can be knocked down by ice, wind or falling trees.
- Heavy wind can blow other debris — like construction materials or trash — onto the road.

Hazard trees

Storms can weaken or damage trees near the road. These "hazard trees" are dead, dying, or structurally compromised trees that are likely to fall, but haven't yet.

Snow, ice, and high winds can break branches or bring down entire trees, while heavy rain can saturate the ground and destabilize roots.

Flooding

Heavy rain and melting snow can trigger flooding, espcially in lower elevation areas.

Hazards after a storm

- Slow down and make sure you can see the road.
- If you can't see the road, don't drive through the water. There could be harmful hidden hazards. Turn around and use a different route.
- Obey detour and closure signs. Never drive around a barricade. Roads are closed for a reason.

Slides and rockfall

Wet soil can cause landslides and smaller slides of rock, soil, and debris along roads throughout the state. Some landslides happen suddenly during storms, while others are part of ongoing movement in known slide-prone areas. That's why ODOT closely monitors many active slide zones throughout the state to help keep roads safe. Visit our webpage for more information on slides.

How to stay safe when traveling after a storm

Whether it's debris, trees or slides, road hazards after storms can develop quickly and without warning. Follow these tips to protect yourself and help road crews do their work safely and efficiently:

Before you travel

- Plan ahead by checking weather forecasts and road conditions at TripCheck.com or by calling 511.
- If possible, delay travel during or immediately after a storm, especially in hard-hit areas.

On the Road

- Slow down and stay alert, debris or tree branches can appear suddenly, especially around curves or in low-visibility conditions.
- Never drive through what you can't see. If the road is covered by water, mud or debris:
    - Stop safely, preferably off the road.
    - Turn on your hazard lights.
    - Call 911 to report the hazard.
- Avoid driving over debris, even small items can damage your vehicle or cause you to lose control. Never drive over downed power lines.
- Keep your distance from trees or slopes that appear unstable. More debris or slides may follow.
- After a storm you may see lane closures, reduced speeds, or temporary stops. Obey all road signs and crew instructions when approaching work zones or tree removal areas. Never drive around a barricade.
- Slow down in work zones and give our crews space. Even better, if conditions are bad, delay your travel if you can. Fewer cars on the road help us work faster to restore access for everyone.

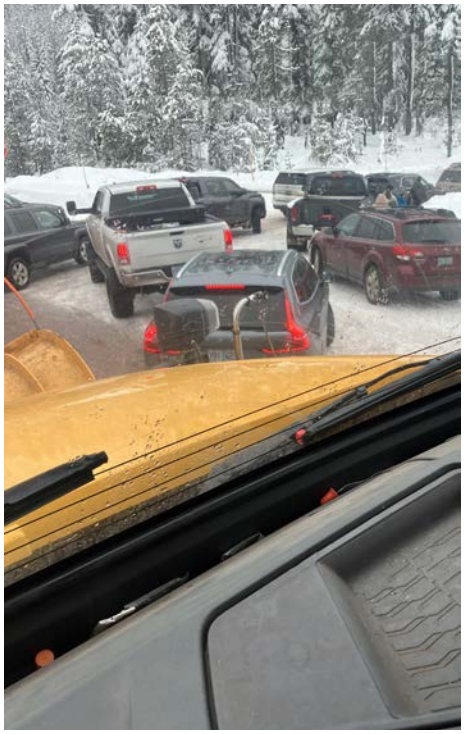
ODOT #

Parking in winter recreation areas

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- There are 100 designated winter recreation parking areas across the state known as Sno-Parks.
- Fees from Sno-Park permits help pay for snow removal.
- Parking outside designated areas can create safety issues and result in fines.

Whether it's skiing, snowboarding, sledding, or snowshoeing, Oregonians enjoy winter recreation. While parking is allowed in designated areas, such as Sno-Parks, some snow-seekers find designated parking areas filled and create safety issues by parking on roadsides.



Plows have difficulty clearing the road when cars are parked where they shouldn't be.

Here are some things to keep in mind when parking in winter recreation areas:

- Slow down and use all your best winter driving skills, especially in snowy conditions and upper elevations.
- Watch out for people next to the road – these areas are busy.
- Be extra alert for snow removal equipment. Vehicles parked at the side of the road prevent plows and other equipment from doing their job.
- Find a safe and legal place to park.
- Expect extra traffic congestion during holiday weekends.

Sno-Parks

There are about 100 designated winter recreation parking areas, known as Sno-Parks, in all mountain passes and at most recognized ski, snowmobile and snow-play areas. From Nov. 1 to April 30, parking in a Sno-Park requires a valid permit displayed in the lower left corner of your vehicle's windshield.

During heavy winter storms, most of our plows are busy plowing snow on the highways. We will get to the Sno-Parks when time and resources allow us to do so.

The Sno-Park program was established in 1977 to help pay for snow removal in these designated winter recreation parking locations — however, highways have higher priority. There are three types of Sno-Park permits:

- An annual permit is $25.
- A three-day permit (valid for three consecutive days) is $9.
- A one-day permit is $4.

Additional downloadable resources:

- Photo: Poor parking poses problems for plows.
- Photo: Parking alongside the road.
- Graphic: Map of Oregon Sno-Parks.

Parking in winter recreation areas

Sno-Park permits are sold at DMV offices and at many sporting goods stores, winter resorts and other outlets. These places may charge an additional service fee for each permit they sell. Visit DMV2U under the Permits subheading to view a list of vendors selling permits. You can also purchase an annual permit at DMV2U. If you buy an annual permit online, a printable interim permit will be emailed to you immediately. The interim permit may be used for up to 14 days until you receive the annual permit in the mail.

For questions about how to buy a permit or information about becoming a Sno-Park permit vendor, contact DMV Business Regulation at 503-945-5052.

- Sno-Park permits issued in California and Idaho are honored in Oregon, and Oregon permits (except for interim annual permits) are honored in those states. Parking in an Oregon Sno-Park without a permit may result in a $30 fine.
- Parking outside a designated area carries potential penalties too. Under state law, non-emergency parking on state highways, including shoulders, is illegal in areas marked with no parking signs. Violators risk a ticket and a tow.
- A list of Oregon's Sno-Parks is available at TripCheck.com under the Travel Center tab.

ODOT

Power failures can affect highway systems

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Power outages caused by winter storms can mean signals, lights and crossing mechanisms won't work like normal.
- Knowing what to do in these events will keep you and others safer.

Traffic crashes and winter storms can cause power failures that affect signals. Here's what to do when traffic lights are not properly working:

Treat intersections as a four-way stop when power is out.

- Treat the intersection as an all-way stop: the driver who stops first goes first.
- Before crossing the intersection, come to a full stop. Look both ways for other traffic, pedestrians and cyclists.When it is safe, drive cautiously through the intersection.
- If in doubt, yield to the driver on your right.

TripCheck cameras

TripCheck cameras may not be operations during winter storms due to power outages and internet service failures. Extended camera outages are especially common in remote areas that take longer for utility crews to reach following a storm.

Be alert at railroad crossings

Power outages can also affect railroad crossings. Railroad crossing signals have built-in backup battery power and should continue to operate for a short time during power outages. During a long-term power outage or other problem, railroad-crossing arms will automatically move to the "down" position. Never drive around railroad-crossing arms in the down position. A train may be coming.

Use headlights for tunnels and bridges

It may be more difficult to see tunnel entrances and bridge approaches if there is a power outage. Use your headlights whenever there is reduced visibility and be careful.

Additional downloadable resources:

- Photo: A bank of traffic lights without power.
- Photo: A single traffic light without power.

ODOT

Driveway snow can't go in the road

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Shoveling ice and snow onto the road creates a safety hazard and can cost you a fine.

When snowplows create berms of snow at the end of driveways, ODOT asks property owners to help by shoveling that snow to the sides of their driveways, rather than back onto the road or shoulder. Shoveling snow onto the road or shoulder creates hazards for travelers and snowplow drivers.

If you shovel snow onto the road, ODOT may remove the snow and bill you for the cost of doing so. In addition, you may be cited under Oregon law; violations are punishable as a misdemeanor under ORS 374.990.

Shoveling snow onto the road is a safety hazard.

ODOT

Social media resources

Help spread the word about safe winter travel in Oregon

These social media copy and photo resources promote safe winter travel tips and trip-planning resources. You can copy the posts as is or use them to inspire your own messaging.

Additional downloadable resources:

- Graphic: TripCheck features.
- Graphic: TripCheck logo.
- Graphic: TripCheck home page.

Know before you go

Being **#OregonWinterReady** starts with TripCheck! Visit our mobile-friendly travel information website for real-time road and weather updates. Save the site to your mobile home screen and the site will launch like an app! **#TheMoreYouKnow** TripCheck.com

If you prefer phone calls over phone apps, check the latest winter travel conditions by calling 511. You'll hear the same immediate road and weather information available on TripCheck.com. For travelers outside of Oregon, dial 503-588-2941.

Navigation systems and smartphone apps are great tools, but keep in mind that the device you count on for guidance could instead guide you into trouble. Plan ahead with TripCheck.com where info is updated 24/7 by dispatchers in real time.

You don't need acting experience to know that winter driving conditions can be a bit dramatic. When winter's plot thickens, TripCheck TV and camera options give you a preview of road and weather conditions — giving you the choice to keep the drama on screen vs unfolding before you as you drive.

Additional downloadable resources:

- Graphic: Sharing the road with a snowplow.
- Photo: Tandem plowing.
- Photo: Snow blower.
- Video: Five tips for driving in the snow.
- Video: Snowplows at Santiam Pass b-roll.

Driver responsibilities

#QuickTips: Never pass a snowplow on the right. That's where the snow goes! Drive slowly. Beware of flying snow, spray and gravel, and remember, a plow driver's field of vision is limited. Be smart, be patient. Give plows space. **#orwx**

We know it's tempting to keep driving when you're so close to your destination, but if you're feeling tired, take a break. It's better to get there late than not at all.

Snowplow operators keep our winter roads safe. Let's thank them by keeping them safe too. Slow down, stay patient and never crowd the plow.

Social media resources

Oregon winters

Higher elevations can mean higher chances of heavy rain and snow. If you plan on driving through central or southeastern Oregon, be extra alert during the winter months. The desert isn't always dry. Use TripCheck.com before every trip to find the latest road and weather conditions.

Before heading out in wet weather, check your wipers for signs of damage. If you haven't used them in a while, it might be time to replace them.

An electric vehicle's regenerative breaking has its benefits, but if you're driving in icy conditions, this feature can be less than ideal. On icy roads and bridges, turn off regenerative braking and increase your stopping distance.

Additional downloadable resources:

- Graphic: Be prepared for winter travel checklist.
- Graphic: Check your car's systems checklist.
- Graphic: Driving in wet weather.
- Graphic: TripCheck features.
- Photoset: Low-visibility conditions.

Traction tires and chains

Studded tires can be more effective than all-weather tires on icy roads, but they're less effective in other conditions. If you're planning for winter travel, ask your tire dealer about effective alternatives.

Driving with studded tires out of season can be a Class C violation. To avoid tickets and fines in Oregon, only use studded tires between Nov. 1 and March 31. Learn more about traction tires on TripCheck: tripcheck.com/Pages/Traction-Tires

Level up your winter driving skills by adding chain installation to your achievements. To gain experience, practice installing your chains at home when the weather is fair. When bad weather strikes, you'll have what it takes to complete the challenge. Full tire chains tutorial: youtube.com/watch?v=0JvGi7g4PBs

Putting on tire chains is a multi-step process. After you put your chains on, drive a short distance, pull over in a safe place and check the installation. Re-tighten if needed. Full tire chains tutorial: youtube.com/watch?v=0JvGi7g4PBs

Additional downloadable resources:

- Video: How to install tire chains.
- Video: Five tips for using chains.
- Graphic: Tips for installing tire chains.
- Photo: Chaining up by the road.
- Addtional downloadable resources available in our Winter Flickr album.

Commercial vehicles

Winter is here and with it — the responsibility to be a safe and prepared trucker. Keep your rig in top shape, carry chains and follow Oregon Chain Law. Show other drivers what being a professional is all about. **#WinterPro #TruckLife Oregon** Chain Law: tripcheck.com/Pages/Chain-Law

Oregon law requires all commercial vehicles to carry chains whenever road conditions might require their use. Start carrying chains before the weather takes you by surprise. Learn Oregon Chain Law: tripcheck.com/Pages/Chain-Law

Additional downloadable resources:

- Photo: Jackknifed rig.
- Photo: Truck driver chaining up.
- Photo: Truck chain checkpoint at the Siskiyous.
- Photo: Snow chains required sign.
- Video: B-roll of snow zone sign with trucks pulled over.

Social media resourcess

When a truck loses traction, it can delay its delivery and everyone else behind them. Take the extra time to chain up and reduce your chances of a costly delay. Learn Oregon Chain Law: tripcheck.com/Pages/Chain-Law

Snow zone signs

Snow zone signs provide current requirements for using chains or traction tires. Read carefully! Not all signs share the same message. Find snow zone signage examples and descriptions: tripcheck.com/Pages/Chain-Law

Additional downloadable resources:

- Photo set: Snow Zone signs.
- Photo set: Traction tire options.

WHAT DO YOU GET
ON TRIPCHECK?

TripCheck
www.tripcheck.com

TRAFFIC CAMERAS

More than 1,000 images from cameras statewide and neighboring states.

INCIDENT ALERTS

Real time alerts for weather, construction and crashes.

SPEED MAP

Current travel times for key highway connections in the Portland metro area.

TRAVEL INFORMATION

Roadside services, travel options, Waze reports and more!

CUSTOMIZED INFO

Ability to create and bookmark custom camera pages, get alerts.

Oregon Department of Transportation

Winter Travel Checklist

Be sure your car is in good working order before you travel.

Be prepared with:

Emergency kit
- Rechargeable flashlight
- Matches or a lighter
- Jumper cables
- First aid kit

Snow and traction tools
- Chains or traction tires
- Ice scraper and snow brush
- Jack, lug wrench, shovel
- Reflectors or safety flares
- Salt, sand or kitty litter

Food and clothing
- Extra warm clothes, boots, hat, gloves
- Blankets or sleeping bag(s)
- Extra food and water

Other essentials
- Cell phone, charger, car adapter
- Extra washer fluid
- Paper towels
- Pocket knife
- Road maps

Winter Travel Checklist

Be sure your car is in good working order before you travel.

Check your car's systems:

Snowplow Safety

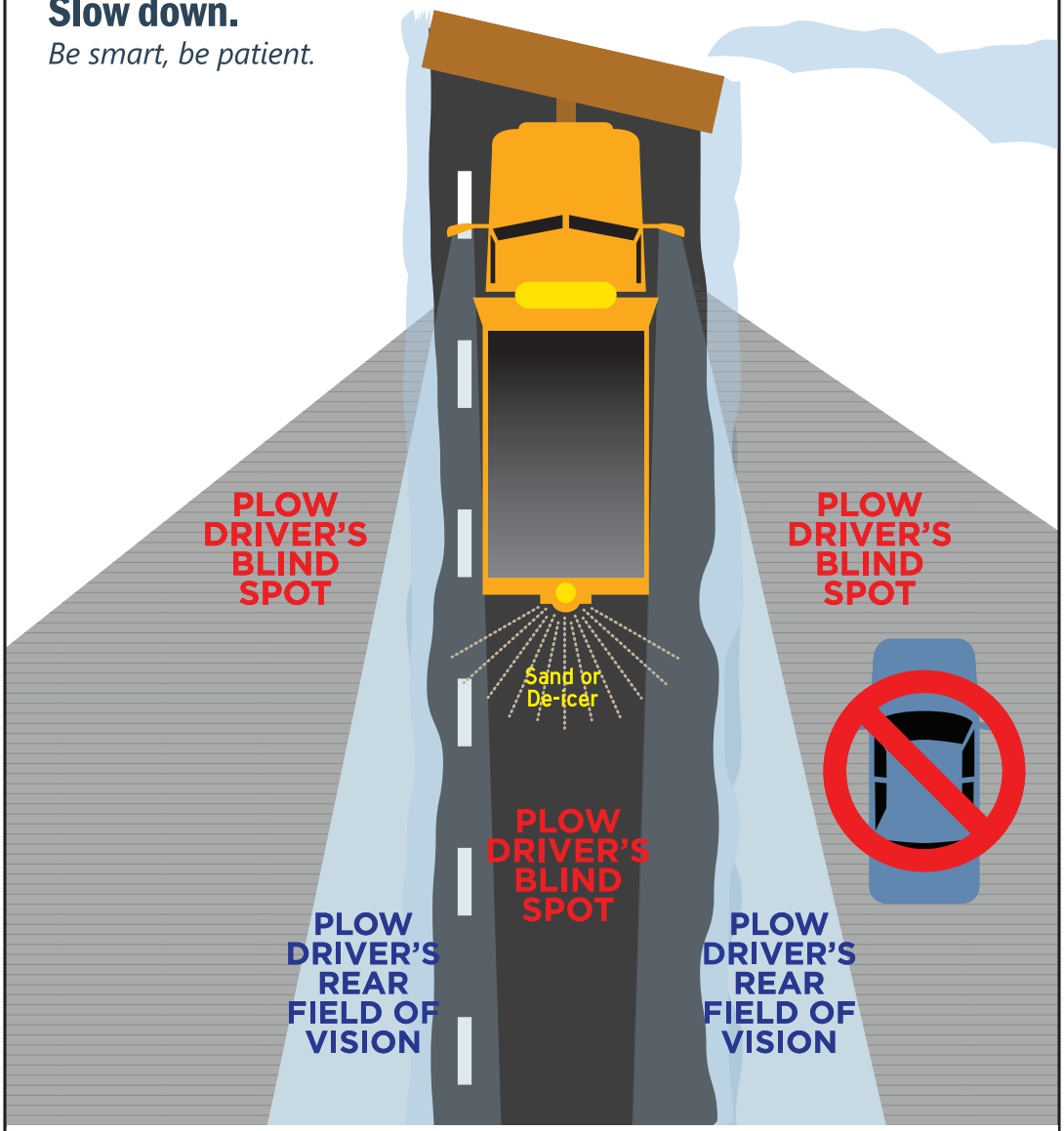
Sharing the road with a snowplow

Never pass a plow on the right.
That's where the snow goes!

Increase your following distance.
Beware of flying snow, sand and gravel!

Avoid blind spots.
A plow driver's field of vision is limited.

Slow down.
Be smart, be patient.



TripCheck
www.tripcheck.com

Oregon Department of Transportation

October 2024

Tips For Driving
In Wet Weather

Turn on your windshield wipers
Make sure you can see!

Turn on your headlights
Make sure you can be seen!

Turn off your cruise control
It gives you better control of your car.

Slow down!
Rain can make road surfaces slick.

Increase your stopping distance
It's harder to stop on a wet road.

Steer clear of standing water
Water can hide potential hazards.

TripCheck
www.tripcheck.com

Oregon Department of Transportation

October 2024

Putting on Tire Chains

Get the right size.

Consult your owner's manual.

Practice.

Know how to install your chains before you go.

Pull over.

Choose a safe and level area that's away from traffic.

Double check.

Retighten your chains after driving a short distance.

Slow down.

You can still slide with chains – don't drive faster than **30** mph.

When installing chains...

Wear protective gear:

A brightly colored jacket or a reflective vest.
A hat.
Warm gloves!

Stay dry!

Use a tarp or plastic sheet to protect yourself.

Know before you go.

TripCheck
www.tripcheck.com

Want to learn more?
Watch our YouTube video:
www.youtube.com/oregondot

Oregon Department of Transportation

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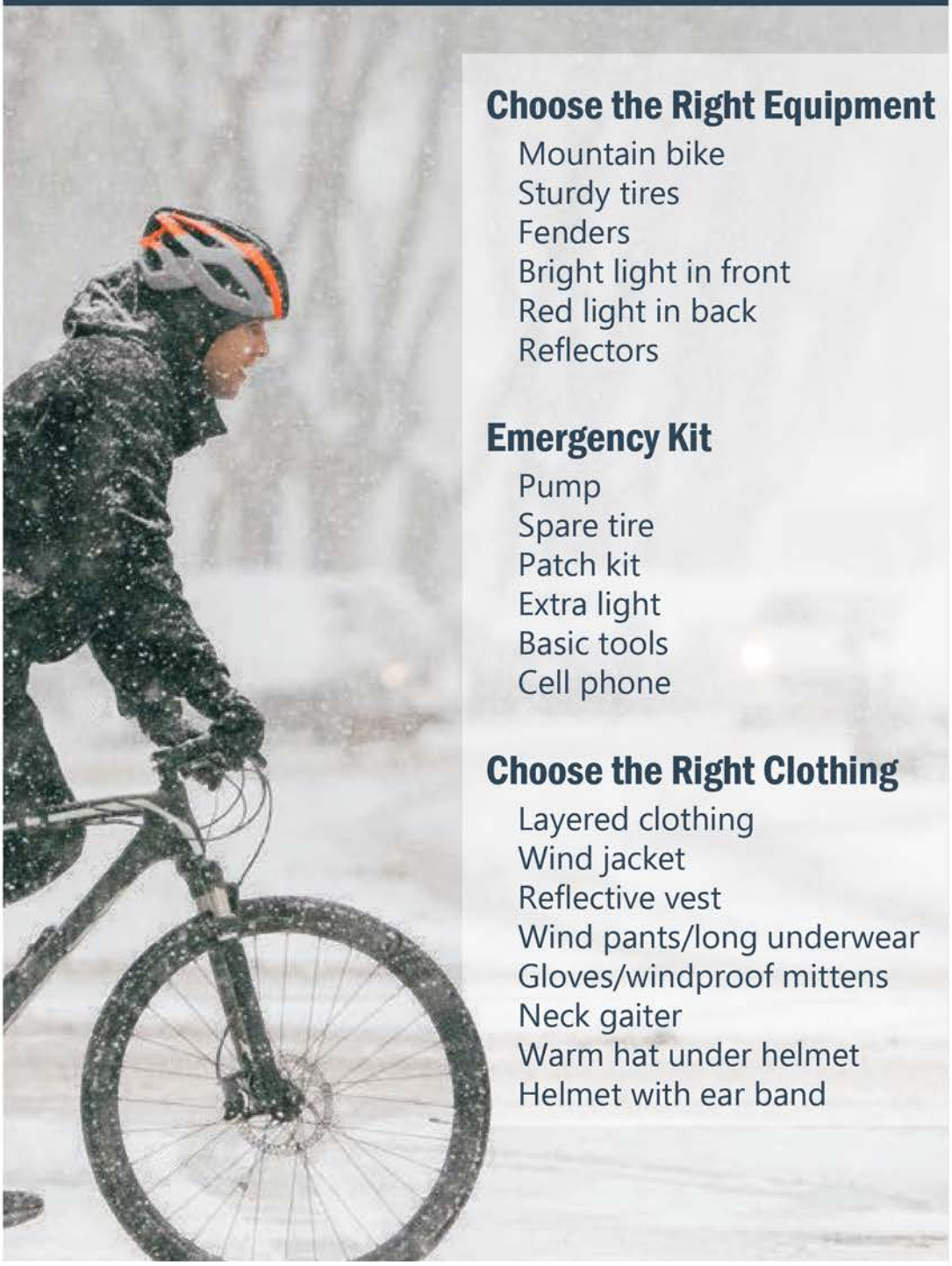
Bicycle Commuting
In Winter



Choose the Right Equipment

- Mountain bike
- Sturdy tires
- Fenders
- Bright light in front
- Red light in back
- Reflectors

Emergency Kit

- Pump
- Spare tire
- Patch kit
- Extra light
- Basic tools
- Cell phone

Choose the Right Clothing

- Layered clothing
- Wind jacket
- Reflective vest
- Wind pants/long underwear
- Gloves/windproof mittens
- Neck gaiter
- Warm hat under helmet
- Helmet with ear band

Source: Commute Options *(www.commuteoptions.org)*

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Reporting hazards

How do I report issues on state highways?

For emergencies, including hazards or debris or impaired drivers on the highway call Oregon State Police dispatch at *677 (*OSP) or dial 911.

To report needed repairs such as potholes or damaged signs contact our Ask ODOT staff online or call 1-888-275-6368 (1-888-ASK-ODOT).

How do I report unsafe operation of a commercial truck?

Call the Truck Safety Hotline 1-800-248-6782 or use the online form to report a truck speeding, tailgating, changing lanes unsafely, or spilling its load. This service is provided by ODOT's Commerce and Compliance Division. For life-threatening emergencies, call 911.

How do I report dirty or unsafe conditions at a rest area?

Many of the safety rest areas along state highways and freeways are managed by the Oregon Travel Information Council. Contact them at 877-527-6560. To determine who operates a Safety Rest Area go to Tripcheck.com and open the Travel Center drop-down menu.

When winter weather hits, we'll be on the job.
Remember: our goal is to keep roads passable,
not completely free of ice and snow.

Plowing and sanding OR 62 near Union Creek

Rev. 10/2025