

## Tips for Staying Healthy in the Cold Weather Season



With shorter days and colder weather, it is important to maintain healthy habits. Here are ways to stay healthy during cold weather.

- **Wash your hands often.** When washing your hands, remember to get a good lather of soap on your hands and scrub for at least 20 seconds with warm water.
- **Try to Keep Moving & Get Outside Often.** It is easy to avoid going outside in winter. Choose a day when the sky is blue and clear or it is not raining or snowing. Take a walk and get some fresh air.
- **Eat for immunity.** As part of your efforts to stay well and avoid cold and flu this winter, it is important to eat healthy foods that support your immune system.
- **Try to Keep a Regular Sleep Schedule.** Our sleep-wake cycle is regulated by the hormone, melatonin, which is released in response to light. Exposing yourself to too much light at night – such as that emitted from electronic devices – inhibits the release of melatonin which decreases sleep quality and quantity. Try to get up and go to bed at the same time of day regardless of the season.

## Prepare For Winter Conditions



### Prepare and Train Drivers for Winter Conditions

1. **Accept Responsibility** – it is drivers job to be prepared for winter conditions.
2. **Maintain Visibility** by keeping the windshield clear of snow, ice and fog. Have your headlights on and be sure nothing is blocking the heater or defroster vents.
3. **Be Aware and Adjust Speed to Conditions.** Be aware of roads that are wet, snow covered or icy and remember bridge-decks, overpasses and ramps freeze first. Watch for black ice, especially in shaded areas. It is suggested to reduce your speed by 1/3 on compact snow and by 1/2 on icy roads.
4. **Brake Gently – Understand and Use Anti-Lock Brakes Correctly.** Slamming on the brakes can lock the wheels and throw you into a dangerous skid. Slowly apply the brakes when needed.
5. **Follow at a Safe Distance.** Give yourself room to stop. Experts say “without tire chains, it takes 3 to 12 times the amount of distance to stop on snow and ice as on dry concrete.”
6. **Get the “Feel” of the Road.** When you are away from traffic, try the brakes occasionally while driving slowly to see just how slipper the road may be. Never make sudden movements like hitting the accelerator or slamming on the brakes which could throw you into a skid.
7. **Use Snow Tires, Tire Chains, or Studded Tires on Snow and Ice.** They can cut your stopping distance and offer more starting and climbing traction ability. Even with the help of chains or studs, it is important to recognize -- slower-than-normal speeds are a “must” on snow and ice.
8. **Do Not Use Cruise Control** when roads might be slick.
9. **Dress Warm** or have warm clothes on board in case you need them. Be sure you are able to maintain your visibility when you are bundled up. It is important to see and to be seen.

## 6 Tips for Safe Materials Stacking and Storing



It is important to ensure proper stacking and storing of materials in the workplace so that these items do not endanger workers. Follow these 6 general tips to help keep your workplace and yourself safe when storing and stacking materials.

1. Ensure materials are not stacked so high that they are in danger of toppling over or collapsing.
2. Store heavy and unsteady items as low as possible to the floor.
3. Where possible, try to stack articles of the same size and weight together.
4. Ensure all storage shelving is adequately rated based on maximum loads intended and secure approved shelving to the wall.
5. Install caster wheel locks to be employed when the mobile shelving unit is in storage and only store lightweight materials on shelves.
6. Ensure that materials are not stacked so high that they could come into contact with fire ignition sources or are near energized electrical wires.

## Prepare Vehicles for Winter Conditions – Checklist



**All buses should be equipped for winter weather prior to the start of the season, here is a quick checklist.**

- ✓ All tires have sufficient tread or switch to winter snow tires.
- ✓ New windshield wipers
- ✓ Test all batteries
- ✓ All lights are functional
- ✓ Add brake line antifreeze
- ✓ Rain repellent on outside glass and mirrors
- ✓ Kitty litter or oil absorbent on board for emergency traction.

### Winter Pre-Trip Inspection – Checklist

- ✓ Clean snow and ice buildup from windows, mirrors, lights and stop arms
- ✓ Check the wiper blades and washer fluid levels
- ✓ Check the heater and defroster units to make sure they are working properly
- ✓ Keep fuel level as close to full as possible
- ✓ Check for road and weather conditions

If any defects are found, they should be addressed before the driver begins the route.

### Prevent a Slip or Fall

- ✓ Keep the bus clear of snow and ice, especially the steps.
- ✓ Always have 3 points of contact when you enter or exit the bus.
- ✓ Wear shoes or boots with a high traction outsole.
- ✓ Be aware as you walk around the vehicle, icy patches may be under and around the perimeter of the vehicle as well as forming near exhaust pipes.

***The material in this newsletter should be part of your Injury & Illness Prevention Plan (IIPP).***