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Dufferin police share practical tips for motorists navigating icy road conditions this winter season

Dufferin Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) issued a statement on Tuesday, Nov. 11, reminding residents and visitors to the region that it's always better to arrive a little late than not at all.

?While the OPP is committed to keeping our roads safe, your safety begins with you. Drive smart, drive safe, and enjoy a worry-free winter season,? reads Dufferin OPP's statement.

Dufferin OPP shared the following winter driving tips for motorists in Dufferin County:

Check your tires

Ensure your vehicle is equipped with winter tires. These provide! better traction on snow and ice, which is especially important in Dufferin County's often unpredictable winter conditions.

Keep your distance

During the winter months, leave plenty of space between your vehicle and the one ahead. Snow and ice can greatly extend braking distances, so give yourself extra room to stop safely.

Watch for black ice

Black ice is a common hazard on Dufferin's rural roads, particularly early in the morning and after dark. It can form quickly and is difficult to see, so always drive cautiously, even on roads that appear clear.

Know your roadways

Dufferin County has a mix of urban and rural routes. Be extra cautious on less-travelled roads where snow can accumulate quickly and plowing may be less frequent. Keep a shovel, an ice scraper, and a blanket in your car ? just in case.

Slow down on steep hills

Some areas of Dufferin County, especially near the escarpment, have steep inclines and declines that can become icy. Reduce your speed on hills and avoid sudden braking or acceleration.

Be prepared for snowstorms

Dufferin County can experience heavy snowfalls throughout the winter. Before heading out, check the weather and road conditions using the Ontario 511 website or app. If conditions are poor, it's always safer to stay home.

Keep a full gas tank

If you're travelling through rural areas, make sure your gas tank is topped up. Cold temperatures can cause fuel lines to freeze, and you don't want to run out of fuel during a snowstorm.

Use your headlights

Snowy, cloudy, or overcast days can reduce visibility. Even during the day, keep your headlights on when driving in winter

conditions. It improves visibility for you and makes your vehicle more noticeable to others.

Don't use cruise control

Cruise control can be dangerous on slippery roads. It may cause your vehicle to accelerate unexpectedly if traction is lost, increasing the risk of losing control.

Clear your vehicle completely

Before driving, clear all snow and ice from your vehicle, including the roof, windows, headlights, and taillights. It's essential for safety and required by law in Ontario.

Keep emergency supplies in your car

Always carry essentials, including a first-aid kit, blankets, non-perishable snacks, water, a flashlight, and extra warm clothing. Winter conditions can cause unexpected delays or emergencies.

Listen to local alerts

Stay informed by monitoring Dufferin County's social media channels and local radio for weather and road condition updates. Being aware of changing conditions can help you avoid dangerous situations.

Stay safe this winter, and remember: driving slower and more cautiously can help you avoid a slippery situation. Winter in Dufferin County can be beautiful, but it also demands extra care behind the wheel.