

# Winter driving means safety first

While we've had fits and starts of winter weather, it looks now as if the snow is here to stay.

And with winter comes the hazards of negotiating ice and snow covered roads.

It has been found that if every driver had one more second to react, 80 per cent of all crashes would be avoided. The following tips may help you gain that elusive second of reaction time this winter:

- Make sure to brush all the snow off your car. That includes the hood, roof, and trunk so loose snow won't blow back on your windows.

- Contrary to what you might have learned, the nine o'clock and three o'clock position is the preferred steering wheel grip of all advanced driving schools. It's comfortable and affords the most steering movement in an emergency.

- Always keep a safe distance between the vehicle ahead of you-never tailgate.

- Always look down the road for possible trouble spots because you can't react to what you haven't seen. Also, check all three mirrors regularly.

- Never try to stop by pumping or slamming on

your brakes. Squeeze hard, but back off on the brake if your wheels lock. This is called "threshold braking" and it requires practice.

- If you find yourself skidding in a turn, don't touch the brakes at all. Instead, take your foot off the accelerator and look to where you want to go. Turning the wheel further can also cause you to lose more traction, so less steering is better.

- If something gets in your way and you can't stop in time, apply threshold braking and steer around the obstacle. Be sure you brake before you steer and make cer-

tain your wheels are all unlocked before making your move.

- When all else fails, pick an escape route that will do the least damage to yourself and those around you. A snow-filled ditch is usually much softer than an on-coming truck.

- Keep a flashlight, first-aid kit and a sleeping bag or warm blanket (or a space saving lightweight "space" blanket) with you in the car and consider carrying the following items in the trunk, even if you do mostly city driving:

- shovel
- sand/salt mixture (or kitty litter, which is lighter)
- warning light or flares
- warm clothing, footwear, and mittens
- emergency food (cookies, candy bar, etc.)
- booster cables
- ice scraper and brush
- waterproof matches and a survival candle in a deep can (to warm hands or use as an emergency light)
- fuel line de-icer
- winter windshield fluid
- traction mats (carpet or cardboard)
- fire extinguisher.



**BOWLING ALONG:** Holly Wiscomb, 10, tries for a strike at a bantam league practice at Acton Lanes last Saturday. (Karen Wetmore photo)

## RIDE nets fewer charges

Halton Regional Police Service reports that the 1996 Christmas Reduce Impaired Driving Everywhere (RIDE) campaign netted positive results with impaired driving charges decreasing in 1996 over 1995.

The campaign, which officially started Nov. 28 and ran through Jan. 1, stopped 23,285 vehicles, an increase

of 6,175 over 1995. Police conducted 83 more road-side sobriety tests and issued 18 12-hour licence suspensions, an increase of 17 from 1995.

On a more positive note, region-wide police charged five drivers for operating a vehicle while impaired, down from seven in 1995.

The continuing joint efforts of the police, the com-

munity and the provincial government in deterring motorists from drinking and driving are making the roads a safer place.

Motorists are reminded that they can expect to be stopped in RIDE lanes throughout the year, as RIDE is a year-round campaign.

Overall last year, 57,330 vehicles were checked.

### Dan C. Dolliver

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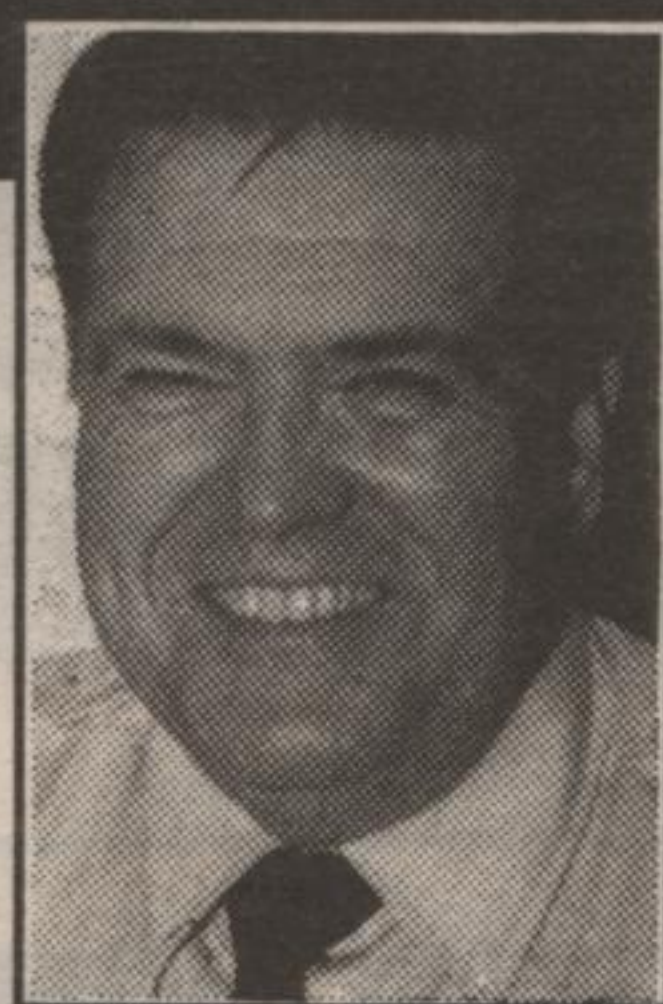
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Applicants selected for an interview will be contacted by telephone.

## CORRECTION

In the ad of December 18, 1996, from Outdoor Power Equipment, the \$4,599 cost is for the Formula 'S' Model, not the Formula 500 Deluxe as shown.

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