

# Driving habits should change in wet weather

(SOP) Many rainy-day wrecks are caused by motorists failing to appreciate the vast difference between driving in wet and dry conditions.

To drive safely on wet pavement, you have to recognize the demands that you, your vehicle and your tires face.

It's very different than driving on dry pavement, but many motorists fail to change techniques and attention. That's when many wet-weather accidents occur.

### WET WEATHER DRIVING TIPS

- Slow down. As your speed decreases, the tire footprint (the amount of the tire's tread contacting the road surface) increases, providing better traction.

You also reduce the risk of hydroplaning, should you run into deeper water puddled on the road.

- Maintain a safe distance. Even with a good wet weather tire, be prepared for longer stopping distances on wet pavement.

Since other cars may not have proper tires for wet weather driving, be extra alert at stop signs and red lights.

- Choose tires carefully. Too many drivers buy a tire based on initial price or appearance.

For optimum performance in the rain, select a tire with tread design and rubber compounds that provide enhanced wet weather driving capabilities.

- Properly maintain your tires. No tire can provide good wet traction once the tread is worn below 2/32-inch tread depth.

Check your tires regularly and replace them at the proper time. Also, maintain the proper air pressure in your tires; check your vehicle manufacturer

**PROPERLY MAINTAIN YOUR TIRES. NO TIRE CAN PROVIDE GOOD WET TRACTION ONCE THE TREAD IS WORN BELOW 2/32-INCH TREAD DEPTH.**

handbook or the door jamb for the proper air pressure for your particular vehicle and tires.

Go smoothly. When braking, accelerating or turning, avoid jerky, abrupt movements.

- Avoid hydroplaning. If you feel your vehicle starting to hydroplane (riding on the surface of the water), take your foot off the accelerator — don't hit your brakes.

If you have a manual transmission, push in the clutch and let the vehicle slow down until control is regained.

- Plan your braking. If you are entering a curve, slow down and brake gently before you start to turn.

- Turn on your lights. Most cars today automatically employ the headlights even in daylight, but if yours is an older model that doesn't, make sure you turn your lights on in wet weather.

It may not help you see, but it will help other drivers to see you.

- Check your wipers. Install new wiper blades at least once a year for good visibility.

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